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France-Spain space cooperation A foundational element of Europe's construction

Thursday 5 and Friday 6 April, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall was in Madrid for a status review of space cooperation between France and Spain. On this occasion, he presented an overview of CNES's strategy to an audience of personalities from Spain's space sector and civil society at the Institut Français. A visit to the European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen) then gave him the opportunity to detail the foundational areas underpinning CNES's strategy, after which he met with Juan Carlos Cortés, Director of European Programmes at CDTI, the Spanish government agency with responsibility for space.

In his address at the Institut Français, Jean-Yves Le Gall underlined CNES's five areas of focus—Ariane, science, Earth observation, telecommunications and defence—and its key role in building and sustaining Europe's successful space programme. He pointed to the many actions tackling climate change in which the agency is involved, such as the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters and the Paris Declaration aimed at establishing a Space Climate Observatory (SCO) geared towards standardizing climate data from space and making them more easily accessible to the world scientific community.

SatCen is an agency of the European Union tasked with generating and exploiting information derived from satellite Earth imagery. On his visit, CNES's President explained the key tenets of innovation, climate and exploration that form the backbone of CNES's strategy and detailed the thrust of its actions as a climate-driven space agency.

He concluded his visit to Madrid by meeting Juan Carlos Cortés, Director of European Programmes at CDTI. This was the first bilateral meeting since CNES and CDTI signed their framework cooperation agreement in February last year, which provides the foundation for joint activities in domains related to national space programmes, ESA, the European Union, international cooperation and strategic coordination.

After his visit, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "We are working together with Spain across many areas involving both space agencies and industry. Spain is strongly committed to playing a central role in space in Europe and I would like to hail once again the signature of our framework agreement in 2017 through which we are stepping up our cooperation with CDTI."

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