

Press Release

20 June 2018

PR083-2018

UNISPACE+50 CNES celebrates 50th anniversary of United Nations space conference

Wednesday 20 June, at the invitation of Simonetta Di Pippo, Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall took part in Vienna, Austria, in the symposium celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

In his speech at the opening of the UNISPACE+50 High-Level Segment, Jean-Yves Le Gall underlined how honoured he felt to be representing France, which has supported the conference from the moment the initiative was launched in 2016 and helped to put together the draft resolution guaranteeing free and fair access to space and the long-term sustainability of space activities through rules established and adhered to by all.

CNES's President recalled that on the occasion of the UNISPACEIII conference in 1999, CNES and ESA had jointly proposed the adoption of the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, which delivers satellite data rapidly in the event of natural disasters to bring immediate aid to populations and relief teams in affected countries. This charter today is able to call on 17 member space agencies and has been activated more than 500 times in response to disasters around the globe, proof of the genuine success of this initiative launched within the framework of the Committee On the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

Jean-Yves Le Gall also emphasized CNES's commitment to tackling climate change through the creation of the Space Climate Observatory (SCO) at the One Planet Summit in Paris last December. The SCO's objective is to pool climate data acquired from space and make them readily available to the international scientific community. CNES is currently stepping up its international partnerships with other space agencies to set up the SCO, which will be key to acquiring and using climate data.

In conclusion, CNES's President commented: "The space sector is bringing significant benefits to our daily lives in many areas, and tackling climate change is notably one of them. CNES and French space players are fully committed to all of these efforts. France believes the Space Climate Observatory will help to implement the Paris Agreement signed in 2015 and its sustainable development goals. It will also constitute a strategic contribution to the United Nations Space2030 agenda and its future actions to tackle climate change and assure the long-term viability of space activities."

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