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CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall receives International Von Kármán Wings Award

Thursday 8 November in Pasadena, California, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall received the International Von Kármán Wings Award, honouring his career. CalTech, the Aerospace Historical Society and the Graduate Aerospace Laboratories of the California Institute of Technology (GALCIT) present this prestigious award annually since 1985 in recognition of space pioneers whose remarkable achievements have made an outstanding and lasting contribution to the aerospace sector.

Jean-Yves Le Gall is a qualified engineer and scientist who has devoted his entire career to the European space programme, holding positions within the French national scientific research centre CNRS, several French ministries, at Novespace, Starsem and Arianespace for 12 years, where he was CEO and then Chairman & CEO.

Jean-Yves Le Gall is President of CNES since 2013. In this capacity, he is Interministerial Coordinator for satellite navigation programmes and Chair of the Administrative Board of GSA, the European GNSS Agency. He is also Chair of the Council of the European Space Agency (ESA) and President of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF).

Jean-Yves Le Gall holds the rank of Commander of the National Order of Merit and Officer in the Legion of Honour in France. He has also been awarded the Order of Friendship by the Russian Federation and the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, by the government of Japan. He is Doctor Honoris Causa of Technion, the Israel Institute of Technology.

Theodore Von Kármán was a Hungarian-born American research engineer and physicist best known for his work in aeronautics. He was the first director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) from 1938 to 1944. He was personally responsible for a number of key advances in aerodynamics, in particular in characterizing supersonic and hypersonic airflows.

On the occasion of this award ceremony, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: “My whole career has been committed to space in France, Europe and at international level. My past and present positions have given and are giving me the wonderful opportunity to meet outstanding individuals, most of all the colleagues with whom I am privileged to be working from day to day. We are taking up ever bolder challenges, which CalTech and the Aerospace Historical Society have chosen to honour. I would like to thank these two prestigious U.S. institutions for organizing this ceremony and say how proud and happy I am to receive this 33rd Von Kármán Wings Award.”

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