



Press release

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Space cooperation with the Czech Republic CNES celebrates Czech Republic's 10 years of success in ESA

Tuesday 13 November, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall spoke at a conference held at the Prague Congress Centre to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Czech Republic's membership of the European Space Agency (ESA), in the presence of Andrej Babiš, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Dan Ťok, Minister for Transport, and Johann-Dietrich Wörner, Director General of ESA. He pointed to the Czech Republic's remarkable accomplishments in space and its successful integration in ESA. At a roundtable session on international space cooperation, he also underlined the partnership agreement signed with France, which further strengthens the bilateral actions by the two countries.

At the opening session of the conference, Jean-Yves Le Gall talked about the Czech Republic's growing involvement and investments in space, especially in telecommunications and navigation, since it joined ESA in 2008. These efforts have made the country a key player in the European space arena, as reflected in the choice of Prague for the headquarters of GSA, the European GNSS Agency. Jean-Yves Le Gall also stressed the need for European cooperation in today's shifting international space scene, driven by ambitious new players from NewSpace and the emergence of new space powers. Such cooperation is the necessary response to these challenges to ensure that Europe maintains its sovereignty by combining its scientific, industrial and financial resources.

During the roundtable session on international space cooperation, CNES's President underlined the success of bilateral space cooperation between France and the Czech Republic, exemplified by the Taranis mission to study storm phenomena in the atmosphere, which plans to launch in 2019. France's LPC2E and IRAP research laboratories have been working closely with Charles University in Prague to deliver the Data Processing Unit (DPU) and the Instrument for Detection of Energetic Electrons (IDEE) for this programme. Similarly, Charles University's space physics laboratory is working with IRAP to develop an instrument for Europe's Solar Orbiter mission, which will launch in 2020. Jean-Yves Le Gall also mentioned the space cooperation agreement between France and the Czech Republic, effective from 1 January 2018, to step up bilateral actions by the two countries in space research, student training, space system development and operation, space applications and public outreach.

After the conference, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "Our cooperation with the Czech Republic is emblematic of a Europe that is affirming itself by extending its boundaries. It shows once again that the space sector must not be a closed club and that each player must find its place within the European framework and in international cooperation. In this respect, the niche strategies we are developing are spinning off expertise in highly specialized areas and nurturing very valuable partnerships."

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