

# Press Release

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## France-Israel space cooperation CNES co-organizes first International VEN $\mu$ S End-Users Conference

Wednesday 21 November at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall spoke at the opening of the first International VEN $\mu$ S End-Users Conference organized as part of the France-Israel Season 2018. On this occasion, in the presence of Avi Blasberger, Director General of the Israeli Space Agency (ISA), he underlined the innovative nature of CNES and ISA's joint VEN $\mu$ S mission (Vegetation and Environment monitoring on a New Micro Satellite) and its contribution to the Space Climate Observatory (SCO), a CNES initiative supporting efforts to tackle climate change.

Jean-Yves Le Gall recalled the inauguration of the France-Israel Season on 5 June in Paris, in the presence of the French President and the Israeli Prime Minister. The aim of this season is to highlight the vitality of the bilateral ties between the two nations in the cultural and scientific spheres up to November this year. Several events have focused on the VEN $\mu$ S satellite as a symbol of French-Israeli cooperation and CNES has helped to make the season a success by promoting its results in France and Israel.

CNES's President stressed the resolutely innovative nature of VEN $\mu$ S, which is delivering new insights into plant growth cycles and dynamics to advance understanding of the impacts of climate change on vegetation. He underlined the major contribution the microsatellite is making to the Space Climate Observatory (SCO) initiated by CNES on the sidelines of the One Planet Summit organized by France in December 2017, designed to pool climate data acquired from space and make them readily available to the international scientific community.

Jean-Yves Le Gall emphasized that the scientific workshop at this international conference is the most important event of the Season, as for the first time nearly 18 months after its launch and as a result of CNES's expertise in data acquisition and processing, the science results of VEN $\mu$ S are already clear to see, in particular in the fields of agriculture, water consumption and the atmosphere.

After addressing the conference, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "I am delighted to see this first International VEN $\mu$ S End-Users Conference, which confirms the great technological and scientific success of France and Israel's exceptional cooperation in space. The satellite is in great shape and as of today we are about to have acquired 10,000 images. These data are going to help scientists the world over to advance knowledge about climate change and its impacts, and cooperation between CNES and ISA is set to continue in the years ahead—because tackling climate change is one of the great challenges facing us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

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