

Press Release

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CNES New Year wishes to French Guiana

Thursday 10 January in Cayenne, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall and Didier Faivre, Director of the Guiana Space Centre (CSG), presented the agency's traditional New Year wishes to French Guiana's members of parliament, institutional and socio-professional representatives, town councillors and government officials. They also paid tribute to the centre's teams for their accomplishments in 2018, another record year in which 11 launches were conducted from the base and Ariane 5 reached the milestone of its 100th flight.

2018 was a year of consolidation, celebration and construction—consolidation of CNES's operational role, with a sustained rate of activity and the launch of emblematic European missions like Galileo, Aeolus, BepiColombo and Metop-C. And consolidation of the agency's role in French Guiana and of its support for the region's development via the PHEDRE 2 plan, refocusing actions on education and training through partnership agreements with the University of French Guiana and the education authority, the tripling of the number of student grants and increased funding. The industrial team was also consolidated as CNES renewed its partnership of trust for the next five years.

2018 also marked the 50th anniversary of the CSG, which launched the first Veronique sounding rocket in April 1968. These celebrations offered the opportunity to underline the space sector's importance in French Guiana, where its 4,700 direct, indirect and induced jobs account for 15% of the region's GDP, and to confirm French Guiana's importance to Europe's space programme thanks to its ideal equatorial location. Ariane 5 also celebrated its 100th launch in 2018, confirming the reliability of this launch vehicle conceived and developed by CNES.

Last but not least, construction work on the ELA4 launch complex came on in leaps and bounds during the year and everything will be ready on schedule for Ariane 6. On 16 July, the successful first hot-fire test of the P120C solid-rocket booster at the CSG marked a key step forward in the development of Europe's Ariane 6 and Vega C vehicles.

2019 is set to be another year of intense activity for the CSG as it prepares to welcome customers from all over the world, launch satellites like ANGELS and EYESAT, begin operations with Ariane 6 and Vega C, and present plans for modernizing the launch base.

At the end of the gathering, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "The Guiana Space Centre, Europe's spaceport and a key asset projecting French Guiana on the international stage, is the world's top-performing launch base. We owe this success to each and every one of you here and I want to thank you personally for the remarkable results achieved. I would also like to most warmly thank all of our partners, the Préfet, government agencies and armed forces, institutional stakeholders and local authorities, and all of the manufacturers and firms involved."

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