

# Press Release

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## France-United Arab Emirates space cooperation CNES, UAESA and MBRSC meet in Dubai

Monday 11 February, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall took part in the World Government Summit in Dubai, where he met Mohammed Al Ahababi, Director General of the United Arab Emirates Space Agency (UAESA), and Yousuf Hamad Al Shaibani, Director General of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC). Discussions focused on current and future collaborations, in particular the joint hyperspectral Earth-observation mission that CNES and UAESA are working on together, experiments for forthcoming Emirati spaceflights and projects in the field of space exploration and robotics.

The meeting with Mohammed Al Ahababi notably provided the opportunity to mark the progress of the hyperspectral mission and emphasize execution of the next actions to be completed. In this respect, Jean-Yves Le Gall and Mohammed Al Ahababi welcomed the forthcoming finalization of the satellite's preliminary definition. They also exchanged views on possible collaboration between France and the UAE in the domain of the Internet of Things (IoT).

Working closely with UAESA, which is responsible for coordination at national level, MBRSC is tasked with executing the UAE's space programme—its Emirates Mars Mission (EMM or HOPE), astronaut corps, Mars Science City and Earth-observation programme.

To help plan future Emirati missions, especially in the fields of Earth observation and space exploration, Jean-Yves Le Gall underlined CNES's expertise and the good prospects offered by missions now in the study phase, notably for science and technology cooperation on exploration missions. He signalled that the CADMOS centre for the development of microgravity applications and space operations is ready to select and prepare experiments that future Emirati astronauts will be performing during their stays on the International Space Station (ISS).

Jean-Yves Le Gall and Yousuf Hamad Al Shaibani then discussed MBRSC projects, notably Mars Science City, the future international research and expertise centre currently in construction in Dubai, as well as development of future Emirati space exploration missions. Discussions will be pursued on topics identified at the meeting, and to further their cooperation Jean-Yves Le Gall invited MBRSC to visit the French Operations Centre for Science and Exploration (FOCSE) at CNES's Toulouse Space Centre, which centralizes all of the agency's microgravity science (ISS) and exploration operations (Mars rovers and landers, Rosetta/Philae and MASCOT).

After the meeting, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "We had most constructive meetings today with UAESA and MBRSC, confirming the importance that space holds in the rich and close ties between France and the UAE, our prime partner and a key new player on the space scene. The prospects for future cooperation are bright."

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