

Press Release

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State Visits of President Emmanuel Macron to Ethiopia and Kenya France and Africa step up space cooperation

President Emmanuel Macron paid state visits to Ethiopia on Wednesday 13 March and Kenya on Thursday 14 March. CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall was part of the delegation, reflecting the development of space cooperation between France and Africa supported by the agency, notably in the fields of applications and new technologies.

Africa's interest in space covers many domains including telecommunications, navigation, weather services, mapping, detection of water resources, forest monitoring, natural disasters, climate change, agriculture, urban development, wildlife tracking, illegal fishing, coastal monitoring and defence.

Wednesday 13 March, in the presence of Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and Frédérique Vidal, Minister for Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Jean-Yves Le Gall and Solomon Belay Tessema, Director General of the Ethiopian Space Science and Technology Institute (ESSTI), signed a framework agreement in Addis Ababa. This agreement covers the Space Climate Observatory (SCO), designed for measuring the impacts of climate change, and space applications for water resource management, forest and crop monitoring, healthcare and developing connectivity. Formed in 2016, ESSTI is tasked with leading and coordinating Ethiopia's space activities, and represents the nation at specialist international institutions. On the strength of its increasing involvement in space, Ethiopia was accepted as a member of the Committee On the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) on 1 January.

Thursday 14 March, the French President's visit moved on to Nairobi for the 4th edition of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and the 3rd edition of the One Planet Summit, to which CNES is contributing through the SCO. To this end, it brought together 25 of the world's space agencies and international organizations on 1 February in Paris to work on the SCO initiative. CNES is now laying the groundwork for the signature of a joint statement of interest on the climate change coping goals of the Paris Agreement.

On the sidelines of the One Planet Summit, Jean-Yves Le Gall also took part with Frédérique Vidal in meetings with representatives of Kenya's universities and institutions, at which a cooperation agreement was renewed with the Kenyan Ministry of Education.

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