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CNES INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SEMINAR SPACE PARTNERS TURN TO FRANCE

Wednesday 26 February, CNES held its annual European and international affairs seminar at the agency's Toulouse Space Centre (CST), attended by a broad range of institutional representatives and stakeholders in France involved in space cooperation initiatives. This seminar is a major event for CNES aimed at reviewing the accomplishments of the past year and looking at the challenges and prospects that lie ahead in the short and long term.

Opening this year's seminar, CNES Chief Operating Officer Lionel Suchet spoke about the strategic place of the international partnerships the agency has pursued for more than 50 years, with both traditional leading space players and emerging new space powers, to accomplish missions of scientific and technological excellence. He also underlined France and CNES's role in the success that spacefaring Europe has achieved, spearheaded by the European Commission, ESA and national agencies.

The day's programme was given over to a wide-ranging review of CNES's international actions, notably in Japan, Southeast Asia and India, and of future prospects in the fields of space exploration, climate science, innovation and applications. A session was dedicated to spacefaring Europe, focusing on the new European Commission and the ambitions of France's EU Commissioner Thierry Breton, in charge of space activities. The emphasis was on France's influence and CNES's role in shaping Europe's space policy, notably in the EU's flagship Copernicus, Galileo, GovSatCom and Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST) programmes, and on preparation of the financial framework for Horizon Europe 2021-2027. A presentation was also given on how France intends to insert its priorities in ESA's programmes in the wake of the Ministerial Conference in Seville.

Concluding the day's proceedings, Pascale Ultré-Guérard, CNES's Deputy Director of Planning, Quality and International Relations, said: "I am glad that we are continuing to foster our international partnerships at all levels, as they are vital to pursue ambitious projects that France would be unable to accomplish alone. These relations are promoting French excellence all over the world, for the benefit of our nation's industry and economy. They are also underlining the strength of France's commitments, notably in the fight against climate change with the Space Climate Observatory."

CONTACTS

Pascale Bresson
Raphaël Sart

Press Officer
Press Officer

Tel. +33 (0)1 44 76 75 39
Tel. +33 (0)1 44 76 74 51

pascale.bresson@cnes.fr
raphael.sart@cnes.fr