

2 February 2023

# PRESS RELEASE

PR009-2023

## CNES Innovation Day Space and Digital in perspective

Tuesday 31 January, CNES organized its eighth Innovation Day on the theme of Space and Digital. This yearly gathering aims to highlight how the agency is laying the groundwork for the future by bringing together stakeholders from all corners of the national space ecosystem. It also provides a forum for French space stakeholders to meet.

Opening the day's discussions, CNES Chairman & CEO Philippe Baptiste reviewed the successes of the past year in the agency's five areas of focus. He notably pointed to the signature of the agency's Objectives and Performance Contract (OPC), which sets the course for the nation's space strategy. Under the banner of **New Spaces**, the OPC for the next three years is built around the four key ambitions of national sovereignty, science, economic competitiveness and climate. Philippe Baptiste also underlined that innovation remains a key priority for CNES. These ambitions are reflected in the operational actions already underway to meet the challenges the agency and the national space ecosystem face. These include the combined tests of Ariane 6 with a view to its maiden flight no earlier than the end of this year; the modernization and decarbonization of the Guiana Space Centre (CSG); the start of work on refurbishing the Diamant launch pad; the repeat of the AsterX simulation exercise by Space Command (CDE) to test its ability to keep France's satellites safe from threats; the launch of Syracuse 4B by Ariane 5; the launches of the JUICE and MMX missions and the Euclid and SVOM satellites for universe science; and the orbiting of MicroCarb to survey and map global sources and sinks of carbon dioxide.

CNES Director of Strategy Jean-Marc Astorg then outlined the outcomes of the ESA Ministerial Conference last November, underlining the team contribution by all national stakeholders to its success. He highlighted in particular the programmatic challenges addressed at the conference of making the transition from Ariane 5 to Ariane 6, evolutions to Ariane 6 to accommodate constellation launches, the refurbishment of the CSG, the IRIS<sup>2</sup> sovereign constellation, the salvaging of the ExoMars mission, future Earth-observation missions, the AEOLUS project and the LEO PNT navigation programme.

This year's Innovation Day was focused on digital transformation issues. Presentations from partner public stakeholders, research laboratories, SMEs, large primes and start-ups, and a round table session covered the various facets of this transformation, from data platforms, simulation, virtual reality and artificial intelligence—in space and on the ground—to digitization of space missions and industrial scale-up. Guest of honour Laurent Lafaye, co-CEO of Dawex, a leader in data exchange, data sharing, data marketplaces and data hubs supporting data sourcing, distribution and exchange, gave a talk on trends now shaping the data distribution value chain in the context of the establishment of EU-wide regulations.

A specific time slot was also set aside for presentations to highlight start-ups' business activities and nurture contacts for them at the event.

The round table session on Space and Digital recapped the key topics addressed during the day, providing expert insights from a range of horizons: Laurent Lafaye was joined on the panel by Marlène De Bank (engineer at Aero Decarbo), Olivier Hirt (Head of Development at the ENSCI design research centre),

François de Vielleville (Agenium CTO) and Judy Wallace (Director of Industrialization and OneSat programme ramp-up at Airbus Defence & Space).

Closing the day's proceedings, CNES Chief Operating Officer Lionel Suchet reflected on the challenges of stakeholder cooperation in the context of the increased complexity that comes with the digital transition, and reaffirmed the agency's determination to help the ecosystem's players meet this challenge.

The hybrid format of this event, with attendees present in person at the Pierre Baudis Congress Centre in Toulouse and virtually—notably thanks to the WHOVA application—is a fine example of how CNES's Directorate of Communication is harnessing the digital transformation to conceive flexible, resilient and environmentally-friendly events.

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