

PARIS, 15 March 2006

CNES AND SNSB SIGN NEW AGREEMENT

Yannick d'Escatha, President of the Centre National d'Études Spatiales (CNES), and Per Tegnér, Director-General of the Swedish National Space Board (SNSB), yesterday signed a new agreement to establish closer cooperative ties in space.

After 30 years of French-Swedish cooperation on many space projects, CNES and SNSB are establishing closer ties.

The two agencies have previously played a key role together in a variety of fields. These include assuring independent access to space for Europe through the Ariane programme; Earth observation with the SPOT series of satellites and the agreement on the Pleiades dual-use programme signed in March 2005; space science with Sweden's ODIN aeronomy and astronomy satellite; and, last but not least, regular collaboration in atmospheric research through science experiments flown by CNES balloons launched from Kiruna in Sweden.

Under the agreement signed yesterday, CNES and SNSB are committed to working together in new areas such as future launch vehicles and the Prisma satellite programme to validate technologies for future in-orbit rendezvous and formation flying missions. Per Tegnér said: *"I am delighted, on behalf of SNSB, to welcome CNES on board for this new project."* Yannick d'Escatha added: *"I am very satisfied to see that the relationship between our two agencies continues to bear fruit and evolve in a constantly changing European context."*

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