



PARIS, 29 June 2007
PR 028-2007

PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR LAUNCHING EXPERIMENTAL ROCKETS

Annual gathering of young space enthusiasts
From 30 July to 4 August 2007 – at La Courtine (23)

CNES (the French Space Agency) and the Planète Sciences association are holding their annual national campaign of experimental rocket launches at the La Courtine army base in the Creuse département, central France, from 30 July to 4 August 2007.

Every year, this campaign draws young people aged 15 to 25 from about 20 clubs. Throughout the year, these groups of youngsters design and build rockets or balloons using the same approach and methods as aerospace professionals.

Groups that have built mini rockets will launch them on Monday 30 and Tuesday 31 July, while those that have developed experimental rockets will take over from Wednesday 1 to Saturday 4 August.

Wednesday 1 August will feature two special projects of a unique nature. First, the new CESARONI solid propellant motors will be tested and then the new Perseus programme rocket built by CNES, with a hybrid engine, will be launched from a new launch ramp. For safety reasons these tests will not be open to the public or press.

On Saturday 4 August, Space events will take place in the village of Feniers near La Courtine.

Throughout the afternoon, visitors will be welcomed by a team from *Planète Sciences* who will encourage local youngsters to build and launch water-powered rockets and micro-rockets, to make satellites and to learn more about Space science.

Since 1962 CNES and the Planète Sciences association have played a key role in outreach and education for young people by providing them with a learning environment in which they can handle and launch solid-propellant rocket boosters in total safety. CNES provides the boosters, trains the pyrotechnicians and performs the necessary air and range safety checks during launch.

With over 100,000 young people taking part in space activities at 700 science clubs and 1,000 schools across France, CNES and Planète Sciences play an active role in nurturing science and technology culture among young people today and in encouraging them to choose science and technology studies.

Press liaison: CNES: Sandra Laly – tel. +33 (0) 1 44 76 77 32 / on-site Jean-Jacques Velasco – tel. +33 (0) 5 61 28 32 51
Planète Sciences: Anabel Hurel – tel. +33 (0) 1 69 02 76 29

Websites: www.cnes-edu.org, www.planete-sciences.org

Images available from PHOTON – tel. +33 (0) 5 61 47 48 78, (0) 5 61 47 04 32 – Email: photothequecnes@labo-photon.fr

For more information on CNES: www.cnes.fr