

CNES and Swiss Space Office step up cooperation in launch vehicles and Earth observation

Wednesday 18 December, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall met Daniel Neuenschwander, Head of the Swiss Space Office (SSO), to formally engage the closer cooperation in space between France and Switzerland discussed at their previous meeting on 3 September.

The agreement between CNES and the Swiss Space Office (SSO) signed in 2012 provides in particular for closer cooperation in launch vehicles and Earth observation. Discussions pursued in recent months came to fruition today with a mutual commitment to work together to ensure the best chances of success for the Ariane 6 programme.

The meeting also gave the opportunity to strengthen the already constructive partnership ties between the two nations, through the signature by CNES, SSO and the European Space Agency (ESA) of an implementation plan for Switzerland's contribution to development of the IASI-NG instrument. IASI-NG will collect atmospheric measurements to improve weather forecasting and monitor gas concentrations and their impact on the environment and climate.

After the meeting, Jean-Yves Le Gall stated: "I am very pleased with the agreements signed today with SSO. France and Switzerland have been cooperating effectively for many years and share the same vision for independent access to space. We have one year to go to the next ESA Ministerial Conference that Switzerland will be co-chairing with Luxembourg. This conference will be decisive for the future of spacefaring Europe and Switzerland's valuable support for the Ariane 6 programme gives us the best chance of making it a success."

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