

CNES at the Copernicus Conference in Athens, Monday 12 and Tuesday 13 May 2014

On Monday 12 May, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall gave a talk at the introductory session of the Copernicus Conference in Athens, organized by the European Commission, the Greek Presidency of the Council of the EU and ESA. The CNES President also met with Christos Vasilakos, General Secretary for Research and Technology at the Greek Ministry of Education.

One month after the successful launch of the first Sentinel satellite from the Guiana Space Centre, Christos Vasilakos and Vittorio Prodi, Chair of the Sky and Space intergroup at the European Parliament, welcomed key players from across Europe's space sector to the introductory session of the conference. Delegates included Paul Weissenberg, Deputy Director General, DG Enterprise & Industry, European Commission; Volker Liebig, ESA Director of Earth Observation Programmes; and Alain Ratier, Director General of Eumetsat.

The purpose of the conference was to present public administrations and agencies with geospatial solutions in sectors such as risk management, energy and land planning, and to provide the space community with insights into the future needs of end-users and downstream service providers to enable them to make the most of Copernicus. Jean-Yves Le Gall also met with Christos Vasilakos to continue talks in preparation for the ESA Ministerial Council in December. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss French-Greek cooperation in space, for which the Greek delegation has shown real interest.

At the end of the day's proceedings, Jean-Yves Le Gall stated: "I am particularly pleased with the substance of our talks, which show that European space is first and foremost about combining our strengths, our skills and our resources around key unifying projects. It is important to remember that space generates growth and jobs. As such, business activities arising from the Copernicus programme are set to become a pillar of the global economy between now and 2020. Copernicus is a real opportunity for Europe, and we must do everything we can to ensure its economic success. I would like to express my warmest thanks to Greece, the European Commission and ESA for the quality of this conference."

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