

## **60<sup>th</sup> straight launch success for Ariane 5 ATV Georges Lemaître on its way to the International Space Station**

**Tuesday 29 July, Ariane 5 completed a flawless launch from Europe's spaceport in French Guiana, placing into orbit ESA's Automatic Transfer Vehicle (ATV), which is scheduled to dock with the International Space Station (ISS) on Tuesday 12 August. This fifth and last ATV in the series is named Georges Lemaître after the Belgian physicist who first formulated the modern Big Bang theory. This flight marked the European launcher's 60<sup>th</sup> straight success since 2003.**

Carrying a 20,060-kg payload into a highly inclined low-Earth orbit, the launch of the ATV Georges Lemaître was a very special mission for Ariane 5. The upper stage of the launcher performed two successive firings, which both went according to plan, to orbit the ATV, the fifth and last in the series that began launching in 2008. This success illustrates the effective partnerships built by CNES, ESA, Arianespace and their industry partners in Europe and around the world.

After the ATV had been placed into orbit, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall stated: "This is the 60<sup>th</sup> straight success for Ariane 5 and I would like to thank Geneviève Fioraso, our Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, for taking part in the launch here at the Guiana Space Centre. I would also like to congratulate all the teams involved in accomplishing this latest success, those at ESA, Arianespace and our industry partners. And I would like to thank CNES's teams at the Launch Vehicles Directorate, the Guiana Space Centre and the Toulouse Space Centre, who once again played a pivotal role in this launch. CNES's engineers in Toulouse will now be guiding the ATV and coordinating ground systems until its scheduled docking with the International Space Station on Tuesday 12 August."

The most ambitious European spacecraft ever built, the ATV is designed to ferry air, food, fuel, spares, experiment equipment and other supplies to the International Space Station, and to boost its orbit. At the end of its mission lasting several months, the ATV will be loaded up with waste and other equipment to be discarded before undocking from the station and burning up on re-entry over the Pacific Ocean. Flying alone after separating from the launcher, the ATV will use its own power delivered by four large solar panels and batteries, and its own GPS and star tracker guidance system, closely monitored by the Toulouse Space Centre. The ATV was built in Europe by a consortium of European contractors. A cylindrical craft 10 metres long and 4.5 metres across, it comprises an avionics and propulsion module (service module) and a pressurized module (freight module).

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