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Jean-Marc Astorg appointed Director of Launch Vehicles

Jean-Marc Astorg, previously Director of Procurement, Sales and Legal Affairs and a member of the agency's Executive Committee, has been appointed CNES's Director of Launch Vehicles, effective Tuesday 7 April 2015.

At a meeting today, Wednesday 11 March, at the agency's Paris Daumesnil facility, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall announced the appointment of Jean-Marc Astorg to head the Launch Vehicles Directorate, effective Tuesday 7 April 2015.

Born 2 December 1962 and a graduate of the Ecole Centrale des Arts et Manufactures engineering school, Jean-Marc Astorg began his career in 1985 at CNES's Launch Vehicles Directorate, where he occupied various management positions. From 1991 to 1998, he notably led studies paving the way for the Ariane 5 ECA and Vega programmes. From 2003 to 2011, he was in charge of the Soyuz in Guiana project from its implementation through to the successful first Soyuz flight from the Guiana Space Centre in October 2011. Since November 2011, he has been CNES's Director of Procurement, Sales and Legal Affairs.

CNES's Launch Vehicles Directorate is playing a key role in the development of Ariane 6. It is working alongside the European Space Agency's Launchers Directorate, co-located at the Paris Daumesnil facility since 2012, to oversee development of the new launcher and is also prime contractor leading construction of the Ariane 6 launch complex at the Guiana Space Centre.

Commenting on the appointment, Jean-Yves Le Gall said, "With Jean-Marc Astorg's appointment and a revamped internal organization, CNES's Launch Vehicles Directorate is primed for the challenge of developing Ariane 6. Europe's space programme has been assigned the very ambitious aim of sustaining the success of the Ariane series of launchers in a fiercely competitive world market. EU space ministers gave us the means to realize this ambition in Luxembourg last year. It is now up to Europe's launcher teams at ESA, CNES and industry partners to do just that."

Jean-Marc Astorg takes over from Michel Eymard, who is leaving the agency to pursue new opportunities. Jean-Yves Le Gall paid tribute to him for his many contributions to CNES: "Michel Eymard led our Launch Vehicles Directorate for over 10 years, during which it has achieved remarkable success with the unprecedented series of 63 Ariane 5 launches, Soyuz launches from the Guiana Space Centre, the development of Vega and more recently the go-ahead for the development of Ariane 6 and the directorate's reorganization. For all of these achievements, Europe's launcher programme owes him a great debt and on behalf of all concerned, I want to thank him most warmly."

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