

PRESS RELEASE

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS SINCE SPUTNIK WAS LAUNCHED ... SOME IMPORTANT DATES FOR CNES IN 2007

On 4 October 1957 an R-7 Semyorka rocket lifted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome carrying Sputnik, the Earth's very first artificial satellite. This date symbolically marked the dawn of Space exploration, seen as one of mankind's greatest triumphs. CNES is playing a leading role in the media activities organised to mark this fiftieth anniversary.

CNES's close association with the Sputnik anniversary stems from the fact that over the same half century it has been a major player in Space activities for the benefit of society.

During this period, although Russia and the United States led the way with a number of momentous firsts – in particular Yuri Gagarin and the first man on the Moon – France was historically the third Space power. From the outset, CNES, which was founded in 1961, has been a major player at the international level and the driving force behind Europe's Space policy. Space has always inspired man to dream, but today the real challenges are elsewhere: sustainable development, applications for the general public, science, security, etc. For this reason the events being organised will not just focus on the past, but will also stimulate the imagination to consider the role of Space activities over the next fifty years.

CNES is developing a variety of initiatives, to give the public several opportunities to participate.

- An educational exhibition in Toulouse: *Cosmomania*, at the Cité de l'Espace,
- A high-profile trade event: the Paris Air Show at Le Bourget,
- A key operation in Paris: a photography exhibition on the railings at the Jardin du Luxembourg, in association with the Sénat,
- A prestige publication from Michel Lafon, as well as other literary ventures,
- A philatelic event: a commemorative stamp issued by the French post office,
- An operation aimed at young people, with 50 projects from the Space forum for young people,
- A dedicated website on our internet portal: www.cnes.fr
- A series of lectures at the Cité des Sciences (in association with ESA),
- A specialist symposium in Bordeaux,
- Two major, popular events: the Fête de la Science and an evening at the Jardins du Trocadéro in Paris.

Cosmomania

CNES is one of the sponsors of the *Cosmomania* exhibition, devoted to 50 years of Space exploration, which will open at the Cité de l'Espace in Toulouse on 4 October 2007. Three months later it will undertake a tour of France, notably appearing in Bordeaux and at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie in Paris.

Paris Air Show

The Sputnik fiftieth anniversary will have a high profile in the CNES pavilion at the International Air and Space Show, to be held at Le Bourget from 18 to 24 June 2007.

A carousel exhibition will invite visitors to remain seated while discovering CNES's five emblematic themes: access to Space, sustainable development, applications for the general public, science, and security and defence. In front of the public pavilion will be three totem displays evoking the past, present and future of Space exploration. Extending the visit will be a central feature, devoted to demonstrations of applications involving Space technology. Among the examples CNES has selected will be an explanation of the COSPAS-SARSAT international search and rescue system, involving satellites and distress beacons.

Lastly, to wrap up this half century of Space exploration, a giant open-air screen will replay the highlights of the adventure. Just a reminder that, without the little Soviet satellite Sputnik in 1957, none of this would have been possible.

In parallel with the CNES exhibition, visitors will be invited to see the Airbus Zero-G plane and to participate in a great quiz game with the chance of winning a trip to Kourou.

There will also be a sneak preview of the other CNES initiatives planned for celebrating the 50th anniversary of Space conquest: the poster from the photography exhibition at the Jardin du Luxembourg, the commemorative stamp from the French post office and the book which will be published by Michel Lafon at the end of September 2007.

International Paris Air Show at Le Bourget, open to the public from 22 to 24 June, from 9:30 to 18:00. Standard entry fee: 12 euros.

Exhibition on the railings of the Jardin du Luxembourg

In association with the French Sénat, CNES is developing an exhibition of 80 photographs to be shown from 1 October 2007 to 2 January 2008. It will feature the most beautiful images and the most spectacular results from the conquest of Space.

A prestige publication

CNES has produced a book which will be published by Michel Lafon in September 2007. The major events of fifty years of the Space adventure will be retold in 250 pages and 400 photographs.

Commemorative stamp issued by the French post office

The French post office (La Poste) is to issue a special commemorative stamp. Entitled "1957-2007, la conquête de l'espace" (1957-2007, the conquest of Space), the stamp will feature Sputnik, Apollo, the SPOT 5 satellite and the Ariane 5 and Soyuz launchers.

On 4 October, first day covers will be issued from four temporary post offices set up in each of the towns where CNES has a facility:

- CNES headquarters in Paris
- Cité de l'Espace in Toulouse
- Evry 2 shopping centre
- Space museum at the Guiana Space Centre in Kourou

Space forum for young people: 50 projects for the future

On 17 and 18 May, fifty teams of middle and high school students, which were selected following a national appeal, presented their Space-related science projects at the *école polytechnique* in Palaiseau. Further information is available from www.cnes-edu.org **\$\$ faute dans lien hypertexte ("cnesedu" au lieu de "cnes-edu")**

Website

On its internet portal www.cnes.fr, CNES will have a website entirely devoted to the fiftieth anniversary. This will contain a variety of articles and videoed interviews with key historical witnesses, as well as a timetable of events.

A series of lectures at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie in La Villette, Paris

The Cité des Sciences will be marking the fiftieth anniversary with a series of lectures aimed at the general public, to be held between October and December 2007. CNES and ESA are partners in these lectures, which will focus more on the benefits and perspectives of Space activities than on past events. The first day will focus on five themes (the Earth, the Moon, Mars, Jupiter to Pluto, the Universe), then six other themes will be covered from 13 November to 18 December: Why Space? - Space watching over the Earth - Space, a Development Tool - Space and the Information Society - How Space can Contribute to Peace - the Future of Europe's Space Policy.

Bordeaux symposium

From 30 September to 2 October 2007, the public will be invited to a number of different cultural and festive events organised around a symposium on Space in the past, present and future. There will be a chance to meet local experts from the Space industry and the events will be particularly geared towards young people and students. A survey will be conducted among 12 to 18 year olds to find out their perceptions and expectations of Space exploration in a global sense. This will involve asking ten questions to 600 young people in Bordeaux and Toulouse in June 2007.

Events aimed at the general public

Fête de la Science

The themes of this major popular annual event will be "the boundaries of knowledge" and "science instruments", as well as two sub-themes: the International Polar Year and Fifty Years of Space Exploration. CNES will have a stand not only in Paris but also at several other locations in France (Toulouse, Kourou, etc), notably in association with the Community of Ariane Cities association, which this year is chaired by the Toulouse.

Trocadéro

On 15 June ESA and CNES are organising a special evening event, free and open to all, in the Jardins du Trocadéro in Paris, beginning at 21:30. It will feature many special guests including European astronauts and a *son et lumière* show with previously-unseen views of Space.

Find out more about all of these events on www.cnes.fr

Press liaison: Sandra LALY, tel. +33 (0)1 44 76 77 32, +33 (0)6 08 48 39 31 – Email: sandra.laly@cnes.fr
 Images available from PHOTON - tel. +33 (0)5 61 47 48 78, +33 (0)5 61 47 04 32 – Email: photothequecnes@labo-photon.fr

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