80th straight success for Ariane 5

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On Wednesday, June 28, Ariane 5 completed a flawless launch from Europe’s spaceport at the Guiana Space Centre (CSG), orbiting two new telecommunications satellites: Hellas Sat 3-Inmarsat S EAN, built by Thales Alenia Space for Hellas Sat – Inmarsat, and GSAT-17, built by ISRO/ISAC for the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). The flight marked the European launcher’s 80th straight success since 2003, the seventh launch of the year from the CSG and Ariane 5’s fourth in 2017.

With a launch mass of 5,780 kilograms, Hellas Sat 3-Inmarsat S EAN is a satellite built by Thales Alenia Space in Cannes. It will deliver in-orbit back-up direct-to-home (DTH) and telecom services, bringing video content in high definition and ultra-high definition to the covered regions and S-band in-flight connectivity for the European Avian Network (EAN), an integrated satellite and ground network designed to deliver reliable inflight broadband to airline passengers across Europe. The satellite will cover Europe, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan African countries. It has an expected service lifetime of more than 15 years.

With a launch mass of 3,551 kilograms, GSAT-17 is a satellite built by ISRO/ISAC. GSAT-17 will strengthen ISRO’s current fleet of 17 operational telecom satellites, providing continuity of fixed satellite services (FSS), mobile satellite services (MSS) and data relay and search-and-rescue services. It will cover India, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. It has an expected service lifetime of 15 years.

Commenting on this latest success for Europe’s space programme, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall said: “This launch confirms how proud we are to be operating Ariane 5, the world leader in satellite launch services for nearly 15 years. The Guiana Space Centre (CSG) is the best launch base in the world, with seven launches already completed this year.”