



Defence – Space command to be created

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Thursday 25 July 2019, at Lyon-Mont Verdun Air Base, France's Minister of the Armed Forces Florence Parly outlined her country's forthcoming space defence strategy. Requested and approved by the President of the French Republic, the strategy will according to his speech on the eve of the national Bastille Day celebrations enable France "to secure our defence of and by space". It will be founded on three pillars a better understanding of the space context, increased and active protection of France's orbital systems, and a strengthened military space capability.

Key announcements from the Minister of the Armed Forces included:

- the creation of a space command in Toulouse on 1st September, in order to develop a full understanding of military space issues, provide France with a space operations policy and fully leverage its space resources. The space command will be placed under the authority of the French Air Force set to become the French Air and Space Force and will replace the existing Joint Space Command (JSC) ;
- by late 2019, to produce draft legislation amending the legal framework created by the law relating to space operations of 3 June 2008, in order to make the Minister of the Armed Forces operator of all defence satellites a role currently assumed by CNES engineers and technicians ;
- a strengthening of France's military space capability, mainly via the acquisition of patrol nanosatellites from 2023 and the testing of a very long-range radar demonstrator ;
- an additional 700 million euros dedicated to satellite renewal and investment, in order to reach full capacity by 2030.

Since its creation in 1961, CNES has worked closely with the French Ministry of the Armed Forces, which along with the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation is one of its line ministries. Defence leverages CNES resources and expertise to run and prepare for future military and dual space programmes, as well as for space surveillance and satellite operations. CNES has thereby been contributing to the operational capability of France's armed forces, and to the safety and security of its national civilians, for decades.