

## **CNES chooses Telespazio and Thales Alenia Space to extend fiber-optic system, as Europe's Spaceport gears up for Ariane 6**

**Toulouse, Madrid, April 27, 2018** – French space agency CNES has chosen the Space Alliance, formed by Telespazio (Leonardo 67%, Thales 33%) and Thales Alenia Space (Thales 67%, Leonardo 33%), to extend the fiber-optic communications system (STFO) at the Guiana Space Center (CSG), Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana, to include the new launch complex under construction for Ariane 6 (ELA4). CNES is in charge of the CSG ground segment. The extended system will be ready to meet the needs of Ariane 6 customers by the end of 2019.

The STFO communications system acts as an interface between launch customers' test benches and satellites throughout the different launch preparation phases at CSG, including spacecraft fueling, satellite encapsulation under the launch vehicle fairing and launch pad operations. In operation since the 1990s, this system will now be extended and upgraded to serve Ariane 6 customers. The new system is specially designed to meet the needs of the very high throughput satellite (VHTS) market, since it extends radio-frequency (RF) services to 40 GHz and allows the simultaneous operation of two satellites in Ka-band.

Telespazio France, as prime contractor, and Thales Alenia Space in Spain, as subcontractor, will bring to the project their complementary skills in system engineering, communications networks, software systems, RF and fiber-optics, as well as in the operation and maintenance of the current STFO system.

"Telespazio France has played a lead role as communications service provider at Europe's Spaceport since the first commercial launch of Ariane 1," said Jean-Marc Gardin, deputy CEO of Telespazio and CEO of Telespazio France. "We are very proud to have won this contract for the extension of the STFO system. Telespazio is already responsible for highly critical and demanding activities in the CSG, and this is our first opportunity to take an active role also in the installation of the new Ariane 6 launcher in French Guiana. I am sure that the Space Alliance's comprehensive expertise in manufacturing and services will ensure top-flight performance for CNES and ESA."

"We are proud to be able to deploy our expertise for Europe's Spaceport, under the banner of the Space Alliance," said Eduardo Bellido, CEO of Thales Alenia Space in Spain. "This latest success once again shows the complementary fit between our two companies' areas of technical expertise and associated services."

### **Notes to Editors**

The development of Ariane 6 was approved by the ESA Council in December 2014 to ensure that Europe maintains its leadership in the fast-changing commercial launch market, while also addressing requirements for European governmental missions. The launcher will be developed in two versions: Ariane 62, with two solid propellant strap-on boosters and Ariane 64, with four solid-propellant strap-on boosters. The first Ariane 6 launch is expected in 2020.

## About the Space Alliance

The Space Alliance, founded in 2005, is a strategic partnership between Leonardo and Thales, the major industrial groups in the aerospace industry in Italy and France. It includes two joint ventures: Telespazio (Leonardo 67%, Thales 33%) and Thales Alenia Space (Thales 67%, Leonardo 33%). The complementary capabilities of Thales Alenia Space in satellite systems and Telespazio in the services associated with them provides the Space Alliance all the assets needed to respond positively and effectively to the needs of the market, which today are increasingly focused on applications related to space technologies. In this scenario, Telespazio and Thales Alenia Space have a unique offering of its kind, ranging from the field of communications to navigation, as well as scientific research and observation, which enables both companies to consolidate their position in the aerospace and defence and security markets.

## About Telespazio

Telespazio, a Leonardo and Thales 67/33 joint venture, is one of the world's leading operators in satellite services. Its activities range from the design and development of space systems to the management of launch services, from in-orbit satellite control to Earth observation, from integrated communications, satellite navigation and localisation services to scientific programmes. Telespazio plays a leading role in the reference markets harnessing technological experience acquired over the years. Since its establishment, the company has participated in major European space programmes such as Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus and COSMO-SkyMed. In 2017, Telespazio generated sales of EUR 564 million while employing approximately 2,500 people in eight countries.

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## About Thales Alenia Space

Combining 40 years of experience and a unique diversity of expertise, talents and cultures, Thales Alenia Space architects design and deliver high technology solutions for telecommunications, navigation, Earth observation, environmental management, exploration, science and orbital infrastructures. Governments, institutions and companies rely on Thales Alenia Space to design, operate and deliver satellite-based systems that help them position and connect anyone or anything, everywhere, help observe our planet, help optimize the use of our planet's – and our solar system's – resources. Thales Alenia Space believes in space as humankind's new horizon, which will enable to build a better, more sustainable life on Earth. A joint venture between Thales (67%) and Leonardo (33%), Thales Alenia Space also teams up with Telespazio to form the parent companies' Space Alliance, which offers a complete range of services and solutions. Thales Alenia Space posted consolidated revenues of about 2.6 billion euros in 2017 and has 7,980 employees in nine countries. [www.thalesaleniaspace.com](http://www.thalesaleniaspace.com)

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