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Press Release

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Defence Innovation Forum CNES and NEXEYA present ANGELS, France's first industrial nanosatellite

At the first Defence Innovation Forum being held at the Cité de la Mode et du Design in Paris from 22-24 November, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall welcomed Florence Parly, France's Minister for the Armed Forces, on CNES's stand in the French defence procurement agency DGA's Innovation area, where she was given a presentation of the ANGELS programme.

The ANGELS project, which got underway in March 2017, aims to develop and market a new series of commercial nanosatellites weighing less than 50 kilograms while shortening development time, reducing costs and increasing mission flexibility to offer constellations capable of delivering greater resilience for military systems.

ANGELS is a precursor demonstrator designed particularly for radiofrequency-type operational missions like data collection (Argos, AIS, M2M) and spectrum surveillance, as well as for scientific missions. The demonstration will revolve around data collection by an Argos Neo instrument, the first of a new generation of low-cost, highly miniaturized instruments.

ANGELS is being developed by NEXEYA, which is marshalling a range of talents from French SMEs to supply its components and ground segment, while CNES is bringing its disruptive innovation credentials to the engineering and governance sides of the project. The real disruptive element is the French NewSpace dynamic created by CNES and NEXEYA. To achieve the project's ambitious technical, schedule and cost goals, a specific governance structure has been put in place, notably with a dedicated work platform at NEXEYA accommodating team members from NEXEYA, CNES and subcontractors. CNES and manufacturers are thus inventing new processes and reshaping their design and production lines.

After the minister's visit, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "CNES is bringing its expertise to the ANGELS industry consortium through a team of engineers with solid experience of space systems, working within the integrated project team at NEXEYA. The agency is already a well-established player in NewSpace, for example through its Myriade microsatellite programme. ANGELS is amplifying this shift that is also reflected in other programmes that CNES is leading with the Ministry for the Armed Forces, such as the CO3D optical constellation. We are thus federating the sector's top players around an innovative and balanced collaboration by providing our skills and expertise to support entrepreneurial firms for the benefit of the defence community."

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