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PRESS RELEASE

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Ariane 6 to launch CSO-3 military satellite for its first commercial mission on March 3

3 March 2025 at 13:24 local time (16:24 UTC, 17:24 CET), Ariane 6, operated by Arianespace, will lift off from Europe's spaceport at the Guiana Space Centre (CSG) to orbit France's CSO-3 optical military observation satellite on behalf of the French defence procurement agency DGA for the Air and Space Force's Space Command (CDE). The launch will be the first in 2025 from the CSG and the second for Ariane 6. VA263 marks the first commercial mission for Europe's new launcher, following its successful inaugural flight on 9 July 2024. CSO-3 will be placed into Sun-synchronous orbit at an altitude of approximately 800 kilometres.

CSO-3 is the third in a constellation of three military Earth-observation satellites for the DGA-led MUSIS programme (Multinational Space-based Imaging System). CSO-1 and CSO-2 were launched in 2018 and 2020 respectively.

DGA delegated oversight to CNES for construction and launch of the CSO satellites, and for the mission ground segment (SSM). CNES is also system co-architect and in charge of launch, in-orbit commissioning and station-keeping operations throughout the satellite's lifetime. DGA and CNES are working closely together as overall architect to ensure system-level consistency across prime contractor activities. As part of an integrated team with DGA and CDE, CNES's team has been involved in every phase of the project from early-stage studies to final satellite qualification. A consortium formed by Thales Alenia Space and Airbus Defence & Space is the prime contractor for the CSO satellites.

After its inaugural flight on 9 July 2024, the new modular and versatile Ariane 6 heavy-lift launcher has succeeded Ariane 5 and restored Europe's independent access to space, taking European space transportation into a new era.

Watch the launch live at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ua1vG3Vhok>

Download the CSO-3 launch media reel [here](#)

Mention to be included in the credits (or on the images used) for any use of images of the Ariane 6 launcher.
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CONTACTS

Nathalie Blain

Tel.: +33 (0)1 44 76 75 21

nathalie.blain@cnes.fr

Pascale Bresson

Tel.: +33 (0)1 44 76 75 39

pascale.bresson@cnes.fr

Raphaël Sart

Tel.: +33 (0)1 44 76 74 51

raphael.sart@cnes.fr