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Oggetto : Avio successfully launches the SMILE satellite with Vega C

Testo del comunicato

Vedi allegato



AVIO SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHES THE SMILE SATELLITE WITH VEGA C

Kourou (French Guiana), 19 May 2026 – Today at 00.52 AM local time (03.52 UTC; 05.52 AM CEST), Avio successfully launched the *Solar wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer* (SMILE) scientific satellite for the European Space Agency (ESA) and Chinese Academy of Science (CAS) from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana with a Vega C launcher. The satellite was delivered to a circular low Earth orbit, at an altitude of approximately 700 km, for a mission to a high inclination and high elliptical orbit with a perigee of 5,000 km and an apogee of 121,000 km. The flight lasted 57 minutes from lift-off to separation of the satellite.

SMILE will measure the solar wind and its dynamic interactions with the Earth's magnetosphere, enhancing our understanding of the connection between the Sun and the Earth.

The mission, called VV29, has been the first Vega C launch operated by Avio as Launch Service Operator.

Giulio Ranzo, CEO of Avio said *"Today's success is a major milestone for Avio as we take full responsibility of Launch Service Operator for Vega C launches. The launcher has once again demonstrated its performance and flexibility. I want to thank all our team for the outstanding job done and all our partners. We are proud to have contributed to this important scientific mission. We thank ESA and CAS for their confidence and we are ready to continue supporting ESA scientific missions."*

Avio is a leading international group engaged in the manufacturing and development of space launchers and solid, liquid and cryogenic propulsion systems. The experience and know-how built up over more than 50 years puts Avio at the cutting-edge of the space launcher sector and defense program. Avio is present in Italy, France, United States and French Guiana, employing more than 1,500 highly qualified personnel. Avio is the prime contractor for the Vega program and a sub-contractor for the Ariane program, as well as a leading solid rocket motor subcontractor for the design and manufacturing of major European tactical missile programs.

For further information

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