

OPS  
cc M. L. S.  
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Reference: Skynet  
10/81

Dear Prime Minister,

At the last Franco-British summit, the President of the Republic underlined the importance of developing the commercial promotion of the Ariane European launcher which has just successfully completed its qualification launches.

The decision taken by the Member States of the European Space Agency to cooperate on developing a family of competitive and reliable satellite-launchers reflects their common will to master advanced technologies and to take their share of the world space market.

At the time when your Government is about to choose the launches for the Skynet satellites I wish to draw your attention to the commercial and industrial impact which a choice for Europe would undoubtedly have on the future of the Arianespace company responsible for commercializing the launcher.

The French Government is prepared to ask CNES to send a party of senior officials, in the next few days, who in close contact with Arianespace, will be in a position to provide, if necessary, all relevant clarifications on delivery dates, the cost of the European offer and the problems of coverage of the industrial risks involved.

I am convinced that we shall continue every day to broaden the paths of cooperation open to both our two countries' industries and European industry generally.

Yours sincerely,

Pierre Mauroy