

Photo Release

SPACE SYSTEMS

Airbus built CHEOPS satellite flies to Guiana

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Toulouse, 16 October, 2019 – CHEOPS (CHaracterising ExOPlanet Satellite), built by Airbus in Madrid was loaded into the freighter aircraft that flew it today to Kourou, French Guiana. After arrival, the spacecraft will be prepared for its launch in mid-December on a Soyuz launcher.

Airbus will take charge of the satellite's Launch and Early Orbit Phase operations as well as the In Orbit Commissioning, after which, the spacecraft will be delivered to the European Space Agency (ESA).



Caption: CHEOPS' container is being loaded into the Antonov freighter, along with another Airbus satellite

The CHEOPS satellite is a partnership between ESA and Switzerland. The mission will analyse, for at least three and a half years, the transit of exoplanets as they pass in front of their stars. It will operate from a Sun-synchronous orbit, at an altitude of 700 km.

CHEOPS is the first ESA satellite to study exoplanets. Interestingly, one of the first Europeans to study exoplanets, Michel Mayor, was recently awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics while in Madrid last week. He laid the foundations for missions like CHEOPS.

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About Airbus

Airbus is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2018 it generated revenues of € 64 billion and employed a workforce of around 134,000. Airbus offers the most comprehensive range of passenger airliners. Airbus is also a European leader providing tanker, combat, transport and mission aircraft, as well as one of the world's leading space companies. In helicopters, Airbus provides the most efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions worldwide.

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