

European Community

News Release

EC COMMISSION GREETES SUCCESSFUL
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The European Space Agency (ESA) launched two satellites into orbit for the first time on 19 June 1981. The three-stage Ariane rocket lifted off toward the East from its base in Kourou, French Guiana, just five kilometres from the Equator.

European Commission President, Gaston Thorn, greeted the successful launch with the following message of congratulations to ESA Director-General Erik Quistgaard:

"My colleagues from the Commission of the European Communities and myself, meeting in Knokke, Belgium, watched together the launching of the Ariane rocket.

"We rejoice profoundly in the launching's success, which is of great significance for the future of the European space programme. We ask you to accept our warmest congratulations for this important step toward the mastery of space technology by Europe".

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 **Delegation of the Commission
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Press and Information Service