

Soyuz Carries 6 Satellites

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KOUROU, French Guiana — The second Soyuz rocket to be launched from French Guiana blasted off late Friday carrying six military spy satellites, space officials said.

About an hour after launch, five of the satellites separated from the rocket. First to separate was Pleiades, a 1-ton observation satellite to be used by the French Defense Ministry. Several minutes later, four ELISA (Electronic Intelligence by Satellite) demonstrator satellites to test space-based mapping of radar transmitters globally for France's Defense Procurement Agency were released by the rocket.

The sixth satellite for Chile's armed forces was to be released later.

The satellites also have nonmilitary civilian applications.

This mission was the second time that Soyuz, which first flew in 1966, has been launched from outside its former Soviet bases.

(Reuters)

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