

CANDACE JOHNSON

Financial and Global Business Entrepreneur,
and co-Founder of SES



Candace Johnson, co-founder of SES ASTRA and chief architect of SES Global has been doing “New Space” for the last 40 years, ever since she helped create some of the first commercial satellite television and radio distribution networks in the United States in the late 70’s and early 80’s before starting already in February 1983 on the journey that would lead to her co-founding SES, the world’s first private trans-border satellite system and to her conceiving and architecting it to be one of the largest satellite systems in the world today with the purchase of GE Americom Satellites by SES in 2001. After creating and substantially contributing to space ventures such as Loral Teleport Europe, Europe Online, Iridium, and ILS, Ms. Johnson is today Chair of the Advisory Board, Partner and Chair of the Investment Advisory Committee of Seraphim Space, the world’s largest Space Tech Venture Fund. She is also Founding Vice Chair of NorthStar Earth and Space, a dual mission satellite constellation bringing the next dimension of security and sustainability to near Space with Space Domain Awareness and Space Traffic Management and on earth with Hyper-spectral imaging. In addition, Ms. Johnson is also founding Chair of OWNSAT, Oceania Women’s Network Satellite, an early large investor in Kacific, bringing broadband Internet to the Pacific Islands. Ms. Johnson is a member of the Saudi Space Agency International Advisory Council and has recently named to the Singapore Space Agency Think Tank Council.



December 12, 1988, Candace Johnson proudly surrounded by her esteemed colleagues, including the Grand Duke Henri, when he was Crown Prince, and Mr. Pierre Werner, former Prime Minister of Luxembourg, in anticipation of the next day’s deployment of the first Astra satellite, ready to make history in under 24 hours.

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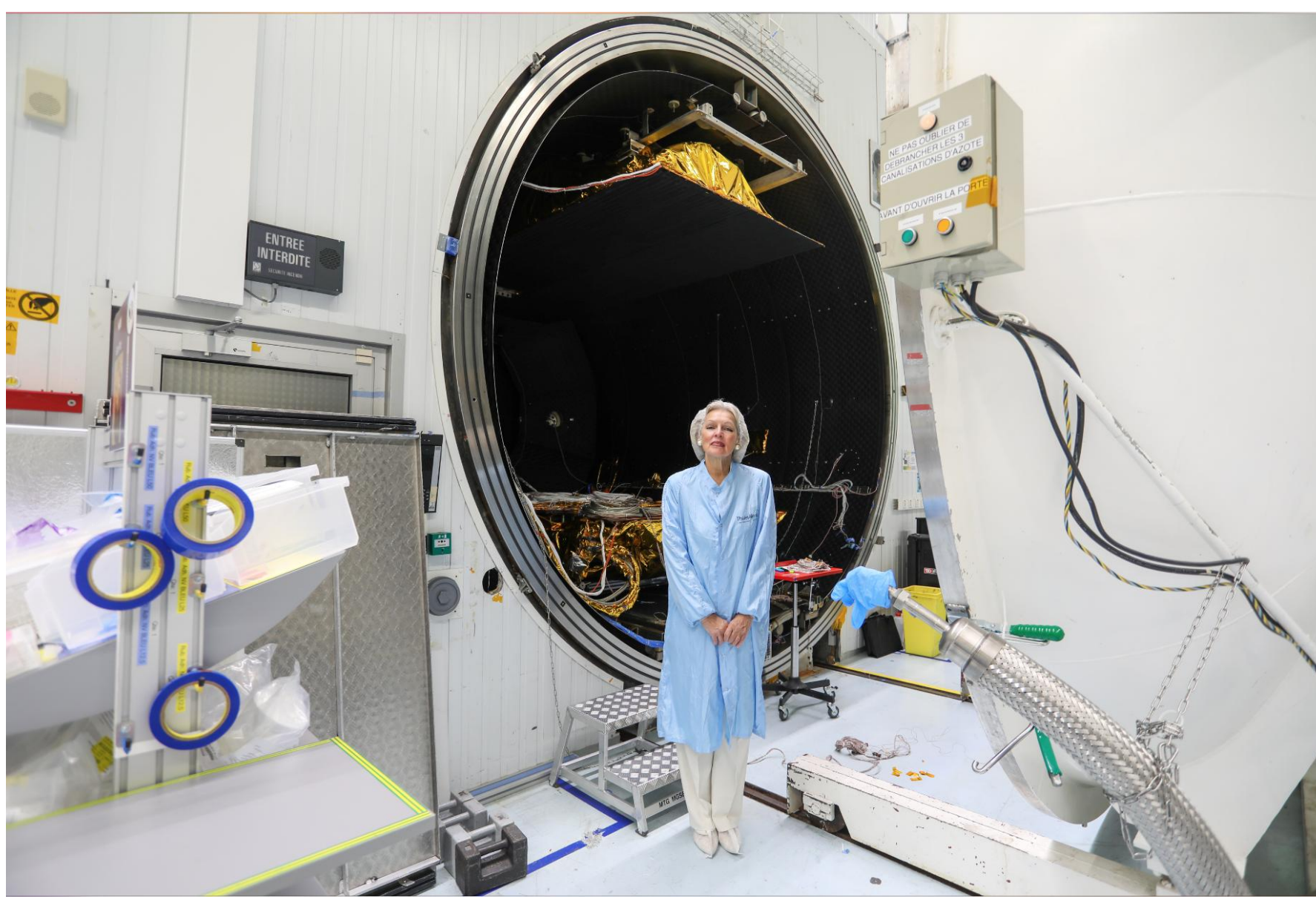
From her early, pioneering start in the 1970s and 1980’s, Ms. Johnson’s life has been devoted to starting and building “New Space” ventures, be they privately financed, commercial satellite television and telecommunication networks, satellite mobile networks, satellite Internet Networks or privately financed commercial satellite launch ventures. Today, Ms. Johnson continues her work with a number of satellite and launch ventures related to Space Situational Awareness, Earth Observation and Intelligence, High Through-Put Satellite Internet, micro satellite launchers, as well as promoting and creating “New Space” investment funds, etc. She is thrilled that the “Golden Era of Space” in this 68th anniversary year of Sputnik is coinciding with a democratization of space and equity investment throughout the world.

Ms. Johnson co-founded Oceania Women’s Network Satellite (OWNSAT) in 2013. OWNSAT has become a founding investor in the Kacific Satellite System based in Singapore, where Ms. Johnson has also been a Member of the Board. OWNSAT and Kacific are bringing high through-put satellite internet to the islands of the Pacific.

Ms. Johnson is Founding Vice Chair and Member of the Board of NorthStar, the world’s first dual-mission satellite constellation designed to address two of the most pressing issues of our time, climate change and space debris.

Ms. Johnson was also Vice President of Iridium from 1994 - 1996 during which time she secured the ITU country code, frequency allocations in many countries around the world as well as bringing the company into the GSMA and obtaining financing from Europe.

Ms. Johnson was also instrumental in facilitating the creation of ILS, the private spaceflight partnership between Lockheed Martin, Krunichev and Energia for the marketing of the Proton launchers which resulted in SES’s Astra 1 F satellite being the first commercial occidental satellite to ever be launched on a Russian launcher in 1995 as well as facilitating the relationship leading to the Arianespace Soyuz partnership.



Candace stands before a Thermal Vacuum Chamber (TVAC) where satellites experience a 4-8 week testing routine to simulate the hostile conditions in space (+220°C to -150°C in full vacuum) and ensure satellite electronics maintain functional for the 15-year minimum lifetime, at 36000 km from earth, with no possibility for human intervention.

Ms. Johnson is founding President of Europe Online Investments S.A., the world’s first internet-based online service and satellite broadband network, and founder of Loral Cyberstar-Teleport Europe, Europe’s first independent private trans-border satellite communications network.

Ms. Johnson is a Non-Executive Director of Vusion (formerly SES-Imagotag), a publicly quoted corporation (SESL) on the French Stock Exchange and former Chair of its ESG -Nomination-Remuneration Committee. She is also an Executive Board Member of the ICC - International Chamber of Commerce and the Vice Chair of the ICC Policy Commission. She was President of EBAN, the European Business Angel and Early-Stage Investment Network from 2014 - 2018. Under her presidency, Ms. Johnson was the Co-Founder of ABAN, African Business Angels Network and MBAN, MENA Business Angels Network as well as EBAN Space, EBAN Energy and the Global Business Angels Network (GBAN).

Ms. Johnson is President of Johnson Paradigm Ventures (JPV), a principal founding shareholder with AXA, Caisse des Depots, Bayerische Landesbank, and the SPEF of Sophia Euro Lab, Europe’s first trans-border early-stage investment company based in Sophia Antipolis. JPV is a principal founding shareholder in London-based Ariadne Capital, “Architecting Europe.net”, one of the earliest supporters and promoters of Skype, the global VoIP phenomenon. Ms. Johnson has served as Founding Member of the Boards of both companies. Ms. Johnson was also a principal shareholder in FMN, a telephone manufacturing company in Thuringen, Germany, for which helped arrange a Management Buy Out from the German Treuhand.

Ms. Johnson is founding President of the VATM, the Association of Private Telecom Operators in Germany and founding President of the Global Telecom Women’s Network (GTWN). She is also a founding member of the Global Board Ready Women Task Force, which helped bring about the landmark “Women on Boards” Law of the European Union.

Ms. Johnson is a musician and artist, and in 2006 she created the Festival of the Fourth Dimension, the world’s first festival of the Arts, Technology, and Sciences, which became a major French government global initiative for Industrial Innovation and Creativity.

Among many honors, Mrs. Johnson has been decorated as Commander of the Luxembourg Order of Merit and Officer of the Couronne de la Chene in Luxembourg as well as Officer of the Bundesverdienst Kreuz 1. Klasse (Germany) for her work in de-regulation, innovation, privatization, and globalization and the specific projects named above. Ms. Johnson is the second ever recipient of the UN-sponsored World Teleport Associations’ “Founders Award”. In 2002, Ms. Johnson received the “Lifetime Achievement Award” also bestowed on Vinton Cerf and Tim Berners Lee from the World Communication Awards, the prestigious global telecoms organization. In 2012, Ms. Johnson received the Lifetime Achievement Award from The International Alliance of Women, and in 2016 she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Women in Aerospace Europe. In 2022 she received the GTWN’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Ms. Johnson holds Master’s Degrees with Honors from the Sorbonne and Stanford Universities, and a Bachelor’s Degree from Vassar College. On November 12th 2016 she was awarded a Doctor honoris causa from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.