

Vega rocket fails after takeoff in French Guiana

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The Guiana Space Centre in Kourou, on the northern coast of the French territory in South America

A rocket carrying a satellite for the United Arab Emirates failed shortly after taking off from French Guiana on Wednesday night, launch

company Arianespace said.

"About two minutes after takeoff a major anomaly occurred, leading to the loss of the mission," said Luce Fabreguettes, director of operations in Kourou, on the northern coast of the French territory in South America.

It is the first failure after fourteen successful launches of Vega—Arianespace's lightweight launcher—since operations began at the Guiana Space Centre in 2012.

"On behalf of Arianespace, I wish to express our deepest apologies to our customers for the loss of their cargo," Fabreguettes added.

Video of the launch showed the rocket's trajectory began to deviate after two minutes, then was significantly "degraded", according to Arianespace.

The reason for the failure was not immediately known.

The launch was postponed twice due to high winds over the Spaceport.

Vega was meant to take the UAE's FalconEye1 satellite into the Earth's orbit.

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