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EUTELSAT's HOT BIRD™ 7A SATELLITE LOFTED INTO SPACE
Eutelsat's 21st Ariane launch, 16th Alcatel Alenia Space satellite

Paris, 12 March 2006

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL) today announced that its HOT BIRD™ 7A broadcast satellite has been successfully launched by an Ariane 5 ECA rocket from the European spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.

Lift-off of the Ariane 5 launch vehicle carrying Eutelsat's 4.1-tonne satellite took place on March 11 at 19.32 local time (22.32 GMT, 23.32 Paris time). The satellite was separated from the launch vehicle at 23.04 GMT and first telemetry reception was confirmed by the Malindi station in Kenya.

After four firings over the coming 10 days of HOT BIRD™ 7A's apogee motors to inject the satellite into geostationary orbit, Eutelsat's new spacecraft will be transferred to the orbital position where it will go through a complete series of in-orbit tests before joining the HOT BIRD™ neighbourhood at 13 degrees East. These manoeuvres will be controlled by Eutelsat from its Rambouillet teleport, near Paris in collaboration with the satellite's prime contractor, Alcatel Alenia Space and Telespazio.

Giuliano Berretta, Eutelsat Communications CEO said: "This launch marks a new landmark in the development of our HOT BIRD™ neighbourhood which generates more than 40 per cent of our revenues and accounts for over 80 per cent of our backlog. The first of a second generation of HOT BIRD™ satellites, replacing the first HOT BIRD™, which was launched in 1995, its arrival coincides with the near completion of the transition to digital at our prime video neighbourhood which already hosts Europe's first commercial HDTV channels. My particular thanks also go to our industrial partners, Alcatel Alenia Space for completing this important satellite programme and to Arianespace for executing another faultless launch for our company".

Equipped with 38 Ku-band transponders HOT BIRD™ 7A's objective is to optimise capacity at Eutelsat's prime video neighbourhood which today broadcasts 850 television channels and 550 radio stations to more than 113 million homes in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, of which 40 per cent are equipped for satellite reception. The satellite will assume in April the video traffic broadcast by HOT BIRD™ 1 and increase to 102 from 100 the number of operational Ku-band transponders at 13 degrees East. Together with HOT BIRD™ 8, which will be launched in 2006, it will raise in-orbit security at Eutelsat's prime neighbourhood and enable Eutelsat to redeploy HOT BIRD™ 3 and 4 to other locations.

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| Prime contractor | Alcatel Alenia Space |
| Platform | Spacebus 3000 B3 |
| Mission | TV and radio broadcasting |
| Orbital position | 13 degrees East |
| Coverage | Europe, North Africa, Middle East |
| Launcher | Ariane 5 ECA |
| Dimensions | 3,7 x 1,8 x 2,3 m |
| Span in-orbit | 36,9 m with solar panels deployed |
| Launch mass | 4100 kg |
| Life span | > 15 yrs |
| Payload | 38 Ku-band transponders |
| Electric power | 10 kW |
| Downlink frequencies | 10.70 - 12.75 GHz |

About Eutelsat Communications

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL, ISIN code: FR0010221234) is the holding company of Eutelsat S.A. The Group is a leading satellite operator with capacity commercialised on 23 satellites providing coverage over the entire European continent, as well as the Middle East, Africa, India and significant parts of Asia and the Americas. The Group is one of the world's three leading satellite operators in terms of revenues. Its satellites are used for broadcasting nearly 1,800 TV and 900 radio stations to more than 120 million cable and satellite homes. The Group also provides TV contribution services, corporate networks, mobile positioning and communications, Internet backbone connectivity and broadband access for terrestrial, maritime and inflight applications. Eutelsat Communications is headquartered in Paris, and the Group's workforce comprises over 480 from 27 countries.

www.eutelsat-communications.com

For further information

Press

Vanessa O'Connor

Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88

voconnor@eutelsat.fr

Frédérique Gautier

Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88

fgautier@eutelsat.fr

Investors

Gilles Janvier

Tel: +33 1 53 98 35 35

investors@eutelsat-communications.com