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TerraSAR-X scheduled for 31 October 2006 launch from Baikonur

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German radar satellite will deliver new, high-quality radar data

Friedrichshafen/Cologne - The German radar satellite TerraSAR-X will be launched on 31 October 2006 from Baikonur; this launch date was recently fixed by the German Aerospace Center (DLR), its industrial partner EADS Astrium GmbH and Infoterra GmbH, responsible for the commercial exploitation of TerraSAR-X data.



German radar satellite TerraSAR-X

The spacecraft will be operational within just a few weeks after launch, with the first high-resolution radar data sets planned to be available in late December 2006. Scientists and customers around the globe are eagerly awaiting this data.

"Already, there's a great deal of interest in TerraSAR-X data and our business is already going strong," said Joerg Herrmann, CEO of EADS Astrium's subsidiary Infoterra GmbH, founded specifically to pursue commercial exploitation of the satellite. "We are looking forward to delivering the first datasets to our customers before the end of the year."

TerraSAR-X is the first German satellite to be built in a Public Private Partnership (PPP) between DLR and EADS Astrium. EADS Astrium, Europe's leading satellite system specialist, is contributing to the cost of development, construction and deployment of the spacecraft. The scientific exploitation of TerraSAR-X data will be conducted by DLR, while Infoterra GmbH is responsible for the commercial marketing.

Circling the Earth in a polar orbit at an altitude of 514 kilometres, TerraSAR-X — with its active antenna — will collect high-quality X-band radar data of the entire planet. The satellite will operate independent of weather conditions, cloud coverage, and illumination and will be capable of delivering data at a resolution of up to 1 metre.



TerraSAR-X is being built by EADS Astrium, Friedrichshafen, Germany

DLR is Germany's national research centre for aeronautics and space. Its extensive research and development work is integrated into national and international cooperative ventures. As Germany's space agency, the German federal government has given DLR responsibility for the forward planning and implementation of the German space programme as well as international representation of Germany's interests.

Infoterra GmbH was launched in 2001 for the purpose of exclusively pursuing the exploitation of TerraSAR-X. The company is responsible for marketing not only TerraSAR-X data, but also geo-information products and services derived from, or based upon, this data. Infoterra GmbH employs a workforce of 30 in Friedrichshafen and is part of the Infoterra Group, which comprises companies in France, Germany and the United Kingdom with more than 300 employees and revenues of 50 million Euro per year.

EADS Astrium is Europe's leading satellite system specialist. Its activities cover complete civil and military telecommunications and Earth observation systems, science and navigation programmes, and all spacecraft avionics and equipment. EADS Astrium is a wholly owned subsidiary of EADS SPACE, which is dedicated to providing civil and defence space systems.

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