



Rome, October 2011

## **Telespazio celebrates 50 years of operations**

**The company looks back over half a century of history with an exhibition at the Ara Pacis in Rome, a book published by Mondadori Electa and a television documentary by RAI Storia**

On 18 October 2011 Telespazio, a joint venture between Finmeccanica (67%) and Thales (33%), will celebrate its first 50 years of operations. Founded on 18 October 1961 – thanks to the vision of the chairman of Italcable, Carlo Enrico Martinato, and the CEO of RAI (the Italian state broadcaster) Marcello Rodinò di Miglione – the company's aim was to experiment with new forms of telecommunication using man-made satellites.

With the creation of Telespazio, Italy thus officially joined the select group of active participants in new space-based broadcasting – the other members being the US, USSR, France, and the UK.

From early 1962, with the installation of the first antenna in the Fucino plain, Telespazio's engineers and technicians, led by Piero Fanti, worked day and night on the "pioneering" phase of this project. The first broadcasts were made using the Telstar and Relay-1 satellites and, from 1964, the first transatlantic broadcasts of sounds and images were achieved. It took only a few months to move successfully from the experimental phase to the start of commercial services, with the launch, in 1965, of Intelsat's Early Bird satellite. Telespazio soon took on a leading role in the space communications market, broadening and diversifying its area of activity over the years.

Today, Telespazio possesses an international network of space centres and teleports, and operates throughout the world through many subsidiaries. It is a leader in sectors ranging from the design and development of space centres to the management of the launch and in-orbit control of satellites, as well as Earth observation, integrated communications, navigation and satellite location services, not to mention scientific programmes.

With the exhibition *Telespazio – 50 anni di storia spaziale* (Telespazio – 50 Years of Space History), which will open at the Ara Pacis museum in Rome on Tuesday 18 October, opening to the public from 19 to 21 October, the company will look back over the significant events in its first 50 years, through images, installations and a documentary by RAI Storia. This is a story that is intertwined with the history of the conquest of space, which began with the launch of the Soviet Sputnik satellite in 1957. The book by Giovanni Caprara, *Dallo Spazio alla Terra – Una storia di uomini e tecnologie*, ([From Space to Earth – a History of Men and Technology], published by Mondadori Electa, will be presented during the course of the event.

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**Telespazio**, a joint venture between Finmeccanica (67%) and Thales (33%), is one of the world's leading operators in satellite management services, Earth observation and satellite navigation, as well as in the field of integrated communications and scientific programmes. Telespazio plays a leading role in the reference markets harnessing technological experience acquired over the years and through its participation in major European space programmes such as: Galileo, EGNOS, GMES and COSMO-SkyMed. The company in 2010 generated sales of EUR 437 million, and employed around 2,500 staff.