

Fucino, 25 October 2008

## **Fucino Space Centre (Finmeccanica/Thales) successfully acquires the third COSMO-SkyMed satellite**

At 05:35:43 Italian time, the third satellite of the COSMO-SkyMed Earth observation constellation was duly acquired by Telespazio's Fucino Space Centre, which will be in charge of its operations for the mission's entire duration.

The satellite had been successfully launched 67 minutes earlier, at 04:28:25, via a Boeing Delta II rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. The launch phase lasted around 58 minutes. Subsequently, the satellite was released from the launcher into a polar orbit at a height of about 690 km, on the same orbital plane as the two other satellites in the constellation, which are already in orbit and were launched respectively in June and December last year. Around ten minutes after the separation, the Telespazio team at Fucino acquired a connection with COSMO-SkyMed 3.

Other terrestrial stations involved in the satellite control operations managed by the Fucino Control Centre are in Kiruna (Sweden), the North Pole (Alaska) and Cordoba (Argentina). All the stations are equipped to receive telemetric signals, transmit commands and perform functions related to defining the orbit.

*The COSMO-SkyMed program was originally developed through an agreement between the Italian space agency (ASI) and Ministry of Defense. Thales Alenia Space (a Thales/Finmeccanica joint venture) is the prime contractor, with responsibility for the entire system. Telespazio (a Finmeccanica/Thales joint venture) was responsible for manufacturing the civil and military ground segments. It manages the constellation's in-orbit operations and data acquisition and processing.*

*For civil applications, COSMO-SkyMed data are marketed by e-geos, a company created by the Italian Space Agency and Telespazio.*