

Rome, 23^h of April 2007

Galileo Avionica on board the Italian Space Agency mission AGILE The satellite to be launched today from the Indian base of Shriharikota

Galileo Avionica, a Finmeccanica Company, leader in Italy in the Space exploration technologies announces its participation to the mission AGILE of the Italian Space Agency ASI.

Agile principal aim is to study the astrophysics high energy: for two years the Italian satellite will explore the Universe searching for X and Gamma rays sources that, for the first time, will be studied simultaneously. Agile will acquire precious knowledge on dark holes, neutrons stars, supernovae, active galaxies and other relevant galactic phenomenon.

The mission is the result of effective collaboration between Italian research centres and Space industry. Agile has been entirely created and manufactured in Italy. The satellite will be launched today from the Indian base of Shriharikota at 12 Italian time.

The ASI mission features Solar Panels and Autonomous Stellar Sensors produced by Galileo Avionica. These are two among the most important equipments on board the satellite. For such products, Galileo Avionica is worldwide acknowledged as a leading company.

The Solar Panels have been designed and manufactured by Galileo Avionica with the contribution of the CESI (**Centro Elettrotecnico Sperimentale Italiano**), which supplies the triple junction Gallium Arsenide solar cells and with Oerlikon Contraves Space, supplying the mechanical substrates. The state of the art Solar Array has an installed power exceeding the 500W, which will allow Agile to complete all the research activities in the two years lifetime mission.

The two stellar sensors are based on a very successful product of Galileo Avionica, the **A_STR Autonomous Star Tracker** which has flown on board various ESA and NASA satellites and probes, with a sun shadowing system and a data interface dedicated to the mission.

The Star Trackers are able to determine in an autonomous and very accurate way the satellite attitude data, starting from the stars position; during the mission phase they are used to precisely define the direction of the X and Gamma rays detected by the scientific instrumentation.

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