Sagem delivers first of three NIRSpec telescopes for James Webb Space Telescope to EADS Astrium

Paris, January 9, 2009

Sagem (SAFRAN Group) delivered to Astrium, on January 8, the first of three telescopes intended for the NIRSpec instrument (Near Infrared Spectrograph) on the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST). Sagem will deliver the other two telescopes during the first half of 2009.

For Astrium, this delivery kicks off the integration of the flight model.

The NIRSpec instrument, which can observe more than 100 objects simultaneously, is designed to improve our understanding of the formation and evolution of the first stars and galaxies. It is one of Europe’s contributions to the James Webb Space Telescope, a collaborative effort between NASA, the Canadian Space Agency and the European Space Agency. A successor to the Hubble Space Telescope, the JWST will be launched by an Ariane 5 rocket in 2013.

Sagem is producing the telescopes for the NIRSpec instrument at its Reosc unit in Saint-Pierre du Perray, near Paris. With the only production unit of this type in Europe, Sagem offers world-class expertise in all the advanced polishing and large substrate treatment techniques needed to provide the required nanometer-scale precision.

Sagem is producing nearly 40 mirrors in all for the NIRSpec program.

Each telescope is tested at cryogenic temperatures (-255°C), representing the operating environment of the JWST, by the Liege Space Center in Belgium.

Sagem's Reosc unit develops and produces high-performance optics for satellites, large astronomy telescopes, high-energy lasers and semiconductors for industry. A major player in international scientific programs, Sagem has for instance produced the 8-meter monolithic mirrors for the European Southern Observatory’s Very Large Telescope in Chile, and the 11-meter mirror for the Gran Telescopio de Canarias. It is also developing prototypes for the 42-meter telescope in the European Extremely Large Telescope (E-ELT), and the large mirrors for ESA’s Gaia astronomy satellite, to be built by Astrium as prime contractor.

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Sagem is a high-tech company in the SAFRAN Group. It is a world or European leader in solutions and services in optronics, avionics and critical software for the civilian and military markets. Sagem is the European No. 1 and worldwide No. 3 in INSs for aeronautic, naval and land applications. It is also the worldwide No. 1 in
helicopter flight controls and the European No.1 in optronic and tactical UAV systems. Present across the globe via the SAFRAN Group’s international network, Sagem and its subsidiaries employ 6000 people in Europe and the US. For more information: www.sagem-ds.com

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