

ARGOMOON FLIES TO NASA

Turin/Rome, 26th of May 2021, **ArgoMoon** is ready to take off to the Moon. The microsatellite designed and developed by **Argotec**, financed and managed by **the Italian Space Agency (ASI)**, is about to be shipped to the United States to NASA's integration site in preparation for launch activities scheduled for the end of the year.

ArgoMoon will be part of the precious cargo of **Artemis 1**, the first mission of the new American rocket - Space Launch System (SLS) - for NASA's extensive Artemis programme that will mark the return of man, and first-ever woman, to the Moon.

On the inaugural flight of NASA's SLS rocket, thirteen microsatellites will be on board, as well as the Orion capsule, which will be the heir to the Apollo astronaut modules. Ten of these microsatellites will be American, two Japanese and ArgoMoon, the only European satellite. The Italian microsatellite will be released while the rocket is approaching the Moon and will take important photos of the Space Launch System to support NASA in ensuring the success of their mission.

More of ArgoMoon's and Italy's objectives are to develop and demonstrate new technologies useful for nanosatellites, an orbital and space flight control system, and the resistance of components and units to the radiation typical of the space environment.

This Made in Italy mission will be performed by a technological masterpiece measuring just 30x20x10 cm. This small device has the same features as a larger satellite with technologically advanced miniaturised subsystems able to withstand the harsh conditions of deep space. With the aid of software based on artificial intelligence, which was developed entirely in Argotec's laboratories, the satellite can identify objects at close range and perform major orbital and precision manoeuvres autonomously while maintaining the correct distance and capturing images of high technological quality with great public impact.

"In developing the Hawk platform for the ArgoMoon project, we have created a new microsatellite concept for space exploration. It represents a platform, which is the first of its kind, capable of achieving high performance, reliability and autonomy in a very limited space. - said David Avino, Managing Director of Argotec - Artemis 1 will be a stepping stone for a return to the Moon, a strategic mission that will also include Argotec's support for the operational validation of the new US launch vehicle. In the run-up to the launch, we are completing the operational procedures with our NASA colleagues for the exchange of data and images that we will be receiving at our control centre. Being the only Europeans on board the US mission makes us proud of the work done by our company".

On completion of the project, Argotec handed over the platform to the Italian Space Agency and preparations to deliver the satellite to NASA have begun. ArgoMoon will first arrive in Los Angeles and by early June will be transferred to Florida, at the Kennedy Space Center, where it will complete its integration onboard the Space Launch System. While in the United States, the Argotec team will support all the satellite's operations.

"ASI confirms Italy's role and prestige alongside the world's leading space agencies," explains **Mario Cosmo, Director of Science and Research at the Italian Space Agency** - "Thanks to the ArgoMoon mission and the credibility it has built up over the years, especially with its American partner, ASI has succeeded in guaranteeing its country the unique opportunity to place its flag onboard the first deep-space mission by a crewed vehicle since the Apollo missions. ArgoMoon, an all-Italian mission, will be the first of many activities that ASI has launched in the framework of a major Italian partnership in the Moon exploration programme".

The launch of Artemis 1, currently scheduled for November 2021, will be a unique opportunity to promote a very innovative Italian product that represents the first of many projects that will put Italy and Made in Italy once again at the forefront of space exploration programmes.

ARGOTEC

Argotec is an Italian aerospace engineering company founded in Turin in 2008, where innovation and research have always been the factors that characterise design and development in the company's two main business areas: the creation of innovative systems for the comfort of astronauts and future space explorers, and the production of small satellites for deep space. All activities have as their primary objective the development of space systems with potential spin-offs for terrestrial applications. Since its foundation, the company has always collaborated with the main space agencies, putting into orbit experiments and products of high technological and scientific value. Recently, Argotec's Hawk satellite platform was selected by NASA to go on board two important US missions: Artemis 1 and DART. In 2021 Argotec will be the only company in the world to have two small satellites operating in deep space.

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