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Successful Third Iridium® NEXT Launch Brings New Services Closer to Life

All 10 satellites deployed, providing telemetry and beginning system checkout

MCLEAN, Va., Oct. 09, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (NASDAQ:IRDM) announced today the successful third launch and deployment of 10 Iridium NEXT satellites. The satellites were delivered into low-Earth orbit approximately one hour after a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifted off from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California at 5:37 a.m. PDT. With two successful launches having already been completed this year, this third batch of 10 satellites brings the total number of Iridium NEXT satellites in orbit to 30, nearly half the amount required for a full Iridium NEXT operational constellation.

While already able to deliver fully global communications coverage, the Iridium constellation is undergoing a technological transformation. At the center of this transformation are three new capabilities; Iridium CertusSM, the company's new L-band broadband service; Aireon's space-based automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B) hosted-payload, that will provide real-time tracking and surveillance of all ADS-B equipped aircraft globally; and Harris Corporation and exactEarth's ship tracking service.

"Each successful launch brings us one step closer to both a technological and financial transformation," said Iridium CEO, Matt Desch. "One of our core strategies is to offer new services that are either flat out impossible or not easily replicated by more traditional "bent pipe" and geostationary systems. Satellite Time & Location, Short Burst Data[®] and Iridium PTT are just a few examples of global services only possible on our network. For us and our partners, Iridium NEXT is an engine for innovation, and services like these are just the start. Moreover, we're on track to completion in 2018."

Iridium NEXT is the company's next-generation satellite constellation, replacing and enhancing its existing network of interconnected, low-Earth orbit satellites spanning the entire globe — the largest commercial satellite constellation in space. The constellation's unique architecture features interconnected satellites that form a web of coverage around the earth, enabling connectivity over the oceans, in the poles and other remote areas.

The Iridium NEXT system and satellites have been designed and managed by Thales Alenia Space, serving as prime contractor for the program. The satellites are integrated at Thales Alenia Space's subcontractor, Orbital ATK's, satellite manufacturing facility in Arizona. Thales Alenia Space and Orbital ATK are managing a state-of-the-art, high production rate assembly line system, similar in approach to the process that built the first Iridium satellite constellation over twenty years ago.

Iridium and SpaceX are partnered for a series of eight launches, seven deploying 10 Iridium NEXT satellites at a time and one deploying five. A total of 81 Iridium NEXT satellites are being built, with 66 required for the operational constellation. A total of 75 satellites are currently planned for launch with nine of those serving as on-orbit spares and the remaining six as ground spares. The entire Iridium NEXT network is scheduled to be completed by mid-2018. For more information about Iridium NEXT, please visit www.iridium.com.

About Iridium Communications Inc.

Iridium is the only mobile voice and data satellite communications network that spans the entire globe. Iridium enables connections between people, organizations and assets to and from anywhere, in real time. Together with its ecosystem of partner companies, Iridium delivers an innovative and rich portfolio of reliable solutions for markets that require truly global communications. The company has a major development program underway for its next-generation network — Iridium NEXT. Iridium Communications Inc. is headquartered in McLean, Va., U.S.A., and its common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbol IRDM. For more information about Iridium products, services and partner solutions, visit www.iridium.com.

Forward Looking Statements

Statements in this press release that are not purely historical facts may constitute forward-looking statements as defined in

the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The Company has based these statements on its current expectations and the information currently available to us. Forward-looking statements in this presentation include statements regarding the timing for deployment, development and capabilities of the Iridium NEXT constellation and services to be offered over the constellation, including Iridium Certus and AireonSM. Forward-looking statements can be identified by the words "anticipates," "may," "can," "believes," "expects," "projects," "intends," "likely," "will," "to be" and other expressions that are predictions or indicate future events, trends or prospects. These forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of Iridium to differ materially from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. These risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, uncertainties regarding potential delays in the Iridium NEXT deployment, the development and functionality of Iridium NEXT and related services, and the company's ability to maintain the health, capacity and content of its satellite constellation, as well as general industry and economic conditions, and competitive, legal, governmental and technological factors. Other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the forward-looking statements include those factors listed under the caption "Risk Factors" in the Company's Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2015, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on February 25, 2016, as well as other filings Iridium makes with the SEC from time to time. There is no assurance that Iridium's expectations will be realized. If one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or if Iridium's underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual results may vary materially from those expected, estimated or projected. Iridium's forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this press release, and Iridium undertakes no obligation to update forward-looking statements.

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