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Iridium® NEXT Launch Campaign Reaches its Halfway Point with a Fourth Successful Launch

Iridium closes out 2017 with more than half of the Iridium NEXT constellation now in orbit

MCLEAN, Va., Dec. 22, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (NASDAQ:IRDM) announced today that at 5:27pm PST (1:27 am UTC on Dec. 23), SpaceX successfully launched the fourth set of 10 Iridium NEXT satellites into orbit from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Today's launch marks the midway point of the Iridium NEXT launch program, and was the first Iridium launch to use a SpaceX flight-proven rocket. The first stage booster for Iridium-4 was previously used for Iridium-2, making Iridium the first company to reuse the same rocket booster.

Each launch strategically delivers new satellites to specific orbital planes, so that the complete Iridium NEXT constellation will be operational as soon as possible after all launches are complete. The Iridium network is comprised of six polar orbiting planes, each containing 11 operational crosslinked satellites, for a total of 66 satellites in the active constellation. Of the 10 Iridium NEXT satellites launched today, nine were delivered to their operational orbital plane, and the tenth is set to drift to an adjacent orbital plane. Once fully deployed, Iridium NEXT will blanket the earth with satellite connectivity, enabling broadband connectivity from even the most remote parts of the planet.

"Today's launch is an incredible milestone — we have officially reached the halfway point," said Matt Desch, chief executive officer, Iridium. "It was an amazing sight to see the Iridium-2 booster back in flight today, carrying Iridium-4 into space. We are excited to be taking part in SpaceX's rocket reusability initiative and make history as the first company to reuse the same booster." Desch continued, "With over half of the new constellation now in orbit, momentum around the testing of our new broadband service, Iridium CertusSM, will continue to progress quickly. I know our customers are very excited about our expanding capabilities."

Iridium NEXT is not only delivering faster data speeds and other new capabilities with Iridium Certus, but also enabling revolutionary technologies from the hosted payloads onboard each satellite. Among these are the AireonSM real-time aircraft surveillance payload and the maritime Automatic Identification System (AIS) payload, co-operated by Harris Corporation and exactEarth. That payload, known as *exactViewTM Real Time (RT) Powered by Harris*, provides global real-time ship and vessel tracking across all the earth's oceans. Through the Aireon and exactView RT hosted payloads, both built by Harris Corporation, the Iridium NEXT satellite constellation is the only system capable of providing global, real-time surveillance and tracking of aircraft and ships.

"With each successful Iridium NEXT launch, Harris gets one step closer to bringing our service to market," said Bill Gattle, president, Harris Space and Intelligence Systems. "The Satellite Automatic Identification System is vital for the maritime market, and Harris is excited to help bring services, like exactView RT, global— providing the industry with access to the most accurate vessel information available. For the first time, the entire planet will have real-time AIS coverage from one network, and with the expected growth of maritime shipping and increasing access to polar sea routes, this service is needed more than ever." Gattle continued, "We can't think of a better way to end 2017 than with today's launch, and we are looking forward to what is coming in 2018."

All Iridium NEXT launches take place out of SpaceX's west coast launch facility at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Four additional launches are planned for the first half of 2018, including a unique rideshare that will carry five Iridium NEXT satellites, and the twin satellites for the NASA/German Research Center for Geosciences (GFZ) Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment Follow-On mission.

Iridium NEXT is the company's \$3 billion, next-generation, mobile, global satellite network scheduled for completion in 2018. Iridium NEXT will replace the company's existing global constellation in one of the largest technology upgrades ever completed in space. It represents the evolution of critical communications infrastructure that governments and organizations worldwide rely on to drive business, enable connectivity, empower disaster relief efforts and more.

For more information about *exactView RT Powered by Harris*, please visit <https://www.harris.com/solution/maritime->

geospatial-solutions

For more information about Aireon, please visit <https://Aireon.com/>

For more information about Iridium NEXT, please visit <https://www.IridiumNEXT.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 press release 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 Aireon. 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, 2016, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on February 23, 2017, 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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