

Russia launches telecom satellite

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The Russian space agency Sunday launched a telecommunications satellite into orbit from the Baikonur space center in Kazakhstan.

A Proton-M carrier rocket launched the Sirius 4 Ku/Ka-band satellite, which has a 15-year service life and carries 54 active transponders covering Europe and Africa, RIA Novosti reported.

"At the designated time (10:53 a.m. Moscow time), the foreign spacecraft separated from the Briz-M booster, went into orbit and control of it has been transferred to the customer," the Russian space agency Roskosmos said.

The launch followed the lifting of a ban imposed by Kazakhstan following a Sept. 6 crash of another Proton-M rocket.

The Baikonur space center is the oldest and largest operational space center and leased by the Kazakh government to Russia until 2050.

Roskosmos plans further launches for December, the report said.

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