

# Russia still unable to communicate with Mars probe

November 13 2011

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Russian space engineers are still struggling to fix a probe bound for a moon of Mars that instead got stuck in Earth's orbit.

The Phobos-Grunt (Phobos-Ground) was launched Wednesday and reached preliminary orbit, but its engines never fired to send it off to the [Red Planet](#). The [unmanned probe](#) will come crashing down in a couple of weeks if engineers fail to fix the problem.

The ITAR-Tass news agency reported Sunday that efforts to communicate with the [spacecraft](#) have so far been unsuccessful. The agency said U.S. and European space engineers also were attempting to retrieve data from the probe as it passed over their territory.

A satellite tracking website showed the Mars probe steadily losing altitude as it passed over Asia on Sunday afternoon.

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Citation: Russia still unable to communicate with Mars probe (2011, November 13) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-11-russia-unable-mars-probe.html>

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