

Russia still unable to communicate with Mars probe

13 November 2011

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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