



For more information please contact:

Andrew Lloyd & Associates
Carol Leslie/Neil Hunter
Tel: +44 1273 675100
carol@ala.com / neil@ala.com

Sofradir executives to give talks on advances in infrared detectors at leading European imaging technology conferences

The Sofradir presentations will cover new designs in Mercury Cadmium Telluride infrared detectors for tactical and space applications, such as SGLI, an observation instrument in a global climate change space mission led by Japan

Veurey-Voroize, France, September 14, 2007--Sofradir, a leading developer and manufacturer of advanced infrared detectors for military, space and commercial applications, today announced that company executives will give three presentations on advances in Mercury Cadmium Telluride (MCT) infrared detectors (IR) at two conferences organized by SPIE, the international society promoting an interdisciplinary approach to the science and application of light in Florence, Italy, from September 17 – 21, 2007.

With 600 presentations programmed, the SPIE Europe Remote Sensing conference is the largest European annual meeting offering comprehensive coverage of remote sensing. It addresses the latest innovations including next-generation satellites, Satellite Access Request (SAR) image analysis, and Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) technologies.

MCT IR detectors play a key role in earth observation, meteorology and monitoring the environment and regular improvements in this technology help solve satellite payload and mass issues as well as enrich data collection.

The SPIE Europe Security + Defence conference addresses all aspects of defense and security covering materials, optical devices, enabling technologies, advanced system concepts, sensors, silicon microsystems, nanotechnology, electro-optic systems, lasers, and millimeter wave/THz technology.

"We are especially pleased about our presence at SPIE Europe," said Philippe Tribolet, VP R&D, Technologies and Products at Sofradir. "Sofradir has acquired leading technological capabilities in qualifying and deploying MCT IR detectors in space and military applications and looks forward to sharing these experiences with the surveillance and defense & security research and academic community."

Sofradir is involved in a lengthening line of space projects that benefit from the company's know-how and experience in the manufacturing of MCT IR detectors covering shortwave (SW) to longwave (LW) and very longwave range, as well as bi-spectral.

The space projects are: SPIRALE (Système Préparatoire Infra-Rouge pour l'Alerte), a French early warning satellite program for military application; BepiColombo, a European Space Agency (ESA) mission to Mercury; Meteosat Third Generation (MTG) a European program for the development of the new system of satellites dedicated to the follow-up of the Meteosat Second Generation system used for weather forecasting; Venus Express, an ESA mission to observe Venus; and the Second Generation Global Imager (SGLI), an observation instrument for the Global Change Observation Mission (GCOM) being carried out by Japan.

At SPIE Europe Remote Sensing, Philippe Chorier, Space Department Manager at Sofradir, will present a paper entitled the "Latest developments for space applications at Sofradir". The paper highlights new results in the visible and very long waveband infrared (VLWIR) areas and gives the latest data for space qualified IR detectors. It also covers the particular qualities of Sofradir's MCT technology that make it highly suitable for space applications, such as high operating temperatures and the ability to optimize the detector's spectral bandwidth to improve sensitivity.

A second paper involving space applications will be given by Aurelien Dariel, Project Manager at Sofradir, on the "Development of a bi-spectral long-wave infrared detector for SGLI instrument". The SGLI will provide high accuracy measurements of the atmosphere (aerosol, cloud), the cryosphere (glaciers, snow, sea ice), the biomass and the Earth temperature (sea and land) for Japan's climate change monitoring program.

Dariel describes the main technical requirements of the VLWIR, such as the long waveband MCT materials needed for two detection bands with custom silicon CMOS readout circuit. The paper also covers the design features of this packaged detector, including trade-offs regarding performance optimization, and preliminary electro-optical results.

Michel Vuillermet, Deputy Technical Director in charge of new technologies and products at Sofradir, will talk about the: "Latest developments in MCT infrared staring arrays at Sofradir". He discusses the improvements in the compactness and performance of MCT staring arrays. These new detectors include the family of 15 μm pixel pitch detectors including a mid-TV format (384 x 288), a TV format (640 x 512) and a double-TV format (1280 x 1024) that are lower in power consumption and cost. Vuillermet will address the key issues surrounding avalanche photodiodes for improving infrared detector capacity of detection especially in low flux conditions. This very promising technology is dedicated for low flux applications in active imagery hyper spectral applications or small aperture systems.

About Sofradir

Sofradir develops and manufactures advanced infrared detectors (IR) for military, space and commercial applications. It specializes in cooled IR detectors based on a

sophisticated high performance technology, Mercury Cadmium Telluride (MCT). Together with its subsidiary Ulis (specialists in uncooled IR detectors), created in 2002, Sofradir generated revenues of EUR 93 M (USD 121 M) in 2006. Sofradir directly exports more than 60 per cent of its products. Customers include the US Army, Thales, Sagem, Selex, Alcatel Alenia Space and the ESA (European Space Agency). Sofradir's manufacturing facilities are located in Veurey-Voroize, near Grenoble, France. Sofradir and Ulis employ 360 people.