

## PRESS RELEASE

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### DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL: LONDON SIGNING FOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BBC AND MEDIASET FOR THE FREE BROADCASTING IN ITALY OF THE ALL-NEWS CHANNEL "BBC WORLD"

#### FEDELE CONFALONIERI: "FOR THE FIRST TIME ITALIAN VIEWERS CAN WATCH A GREAT INTERNATIONAL CHANNEL IN ENGLISH FOR FREE"

Fedele Confalonieri and Patrick Cross, the head of BBC World, the BBC's commercially funded 24-hour news and information channel, today signed an agreement at the BBC's headquarters in London for the inclusion of **BBC World** in the group of channels (multiplex) that Mediaset will transmit from the 1st December using a digital terrestrial broadcasting system.

**BBC World** is the award-winning 24-hour all news channel that for the first time will be available terrestrially for Italian viewers, giving them the opportunity of watching a channel of internationally recognised excellence entirely in English without the need for satellite dishes or subscriptions.

**Fedele Confalonieri**, the Chairman of Mediaset commented:

*"It's enormously satisfying for **Mediaset** to be here today to sign such a significant agreement with the BBC.*

*It is an agreement that brings together our strength among Italian viewers and the international renown of a brand that is synonymous with quality.*

*The more than 273 million households around the world that already receive **BBC World** will be joined by a very significant pool of potential Italian viewers who will receive digital terrestrial.*

*I am also particularly pleased that in Italy it is a commercial broadcaster that will be responsible for offering Italian viewers not only an indisputably high-quality source of news and information, but also, in a country where even Hollywood films are dubbed, the opportunity for everyone to become more familiar with the English language.*

*It is worth remembering that in the UK, the publicly-funded BBC, the parent company of BBC World, is the driving force behind the British consortium Freeview, the world's most successful free digital terrestrial service. We believe that this agreement with the BBC will help **Mediaset** to achieve a decisive role in the development of digital terrestrial television in Italy."*

Mediaset's multiplex, that includes a range of thematic channels, will be available to around 50% of the Italian population from 1st December 2003. To see the programmes it will be enough to have a TV equipped to receive digital or a set-top box, available from specialised stores, that transforms the digital signal for use with a normal analogue television.

For the three-year period 2003-2005 Mediaset has earmarked investments of €200 million for the spread of digital terrestrial technology in Italy.

Cologno Monzese, 29 October 2003