

**[United Launch Alliance Release]
[Jan. 17, 2009]**

First ULA Delta IV Heavy NRO Mission Successfully Lifts Off From Cape Canaveral

Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, FL, Jan. 17, 2009 - United Launch Alliance's Delta IV Heavy rocket carrying a payload for the National Reconnaissance Office successfully lifted off from Space Launch Complex 37 at CCAFS at 9:47 p.m. EST today.

This was the first Delta IV Heavy mission for the NRO. Designated NROL-26, the mission is in support of national defense.

This was the third Delta IV Heavy launch in Delta program history. A Delta IV Heavy demonstration flight occurred in December 2004, and the first Air Force operational mission was launched in November 2007.

"This first Delta IV Heavy launch for the NRO is the culmination of years of hard work and dedication by the combined NRO, Air Force, supplier and ULA team," said Jim Sponnick, ULA Vice President, Delta Product Line. "We appreciate the support from our mission partners in achieving this milestone. ULA is pleased to contribute to our nation's security, and to continue our strong partnership with the NRO. We look forward to launching many more NRO missions on ULA's Delta IV Medium, Delta IV Heavy and Atlas V vehicles."

The ULA Delta IV Heavy vehicle featured a center common booster core with two strap-on common booster cores. Each common booster core was powered by the RS-68 cryogenic engine. An RL10B-2 cryogenic engine powered the second stage. Both engines are built by Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne.

The payload was encased by a 5-meter diameter (16.7-foot diameter) aluminum, tri-sector payload fairing. ULA constructed the Delta IV Heavy launch vehicle in Decatur, Ala.

This was the first launch for ULA in 2009. ULA's next launch is NASA's NOAA-N Prime mission currently scheduled for Feb. 4, aboard a Delta II from Space Launch Complex-2 at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.