Poland Announces Decision To Purchase 48 Lockheed Martin F-16 Aircraft

The government of Poland today declared Lockheed Martinthe winner in the fighter competition to supply the Polish Air Force with 48 advanced multirole aircraft. Poland selected Lockheed Martin's advanced Block 52 F-16C/D over Dassault's Mirage and the SAAB/BAE Systems Gripen.

"Lockheed Martin is truly honored to be entrusted by the government of Poland to provide its forces with new fighter aircraft," said George Standridge, Lockheed Martin's F-16 campaign director in Poland. "We look forward to working with the Ministry of Economy and Polish industry to immediately begin new, long term business relationships with our worldwide F-16 industrial team."

By selecting the advanced Block 52 F-16C/D, Poland has ensured its air force will be equipped with the most capable multirole fighter in NATO. Additional elements of the winning package include the most advanced U.S. weapons, training performed by the U.S. Air Force, and long-term support of the aircraft. The U.S. government has also provided a low interest loan to help the Polish government finance the purchase.

"I would also like to add my personal thanks to the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw for its very strong support and guidance during this campaign effort, and the excellent teamwork of U.S. government agencies in Washington," said Standridge. "Our team worked very hard to show the advantages of the F-16. We believe it is the best fighter in the world and it continues to prove itself in military operations daily. Poland's ever-growing strategic relationship with the United States and the F-16's proven capabilities made the U.S. fighter a logical choice. In joining the F-16 family, Poland has chosen to secure its place in NATO while establishing a clear path towards the future."

The F-16 has proven to be the most popular and successful modern fighter in the world market today with over 4,350 under contract. Poland will become the ninth European country and the 24th in the world to fly the F-16. Poland joins a NATO force of over 1,000 other F-16s throughout the region. Powered by Pratt & Whitney engines, the 48 Polish F-16s are projected to be in service for more than 30 years.

The F-16, the world's most sought-after fighter, is the choice of 24 countries. More than 4,000 aircraft have been delivered, hundreds more are on order for the United States and seven other countries, and production is expected to continue beyond 2010. Major upgrades for all F-16 versions are being incorporated to keep the fleet modern and fully supportable over the aircraft's long service life.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, is a leader in the design, development, systems integration, production, and support of advanced military aircraft and related technologies. Its customers include the military services of the United States and allied countries throughout the world. Products include the F-16, F/A-22, F-35 JSF, F-117, T-50, C-5, C-130, C-130J, P-3 and U-2.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. is a unit of Lockheed Martin Corp., headquartered in Bethesda, Md. Lockheed Martin is a global enterprise principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. Employing about 125,000 people worldwide, Lockheed Martin had 2001 sales of $24 billion.

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