Lockheed Martin, U.S., Italian Officials Celebrate F-16 'Peace Caesar' Rollout

Lockheed Martin officials, along with officers from the United States and Italian Air Forces, participated in a rollout ceremony today at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, for the first of 34 F-16 fighter aircraft to be provided to Italy under a program known as "Peace Caesar."

The Italian Air Force chose the leased F-16 option as the most cost- effective solution to replace its aging fleet of Tornado and F-104 fighters. The lease is for five years with a five-year follow-on option. Four non- flyable F-16 aircraft are being supplied for generation of spare parts.

"The F-16 being rolled out here today is the result of more than two years of effort at Hill Air Force Base that have produced an F-16 fighter jet with additional airframe service life, an upgraded engine and other modifications," said Robert T. Elrod, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company's executive vice president of programs. "This was a complex program, and the teamwork it took to make it happen is unmatched. The U.S. Air Force has done a tremendous job getting this plane ready, and Lockheed Martin stands ready to fulfill its obligations after the plane is delivered to Italy in June."

Approximately 100 Italian Air Force maintenance officers, instructors and technicians are receiving F-16 maintenance training at Lockheed Martin facilities in Fort Worth, Texas. Italian instructors in Italy will train an additional 181 Italian maintenance technicians.

The Air Force and Lockheed Martin are also providing other types of logistics support as part of the Peace Caesar Foreign Military Sales Program, to include supply chain management and full engineering technical services.

The F-16, the choice of 24 countries, is the world's most sought-after fighter. 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.

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-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin Corp. 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 2002 sales of $26.6 billion.

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