THAAD Weapon System Succesfully Intercepts Target Over Pacific Range

The U.S. Missile Defense Agency and Lockheed Martinconducted a successful flight test of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) weapon system on January 26, intercepting a unitary target in THAAD's first flight test at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) on Kauai, HI. This hit-to-kill intercept demonstrated THAAD's precision against in-bound threats and its ability to provide increased protection for troops and assets.

(PHOTO: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070127/NYSA002)

The flight test met all objectives, including demonstrating the integration of the radar, launcher, fire control and communications and interceptor operations; demonstrating radar and interceptor discrimination; and target acquisition and tracking by the interceptor's seeker.

"This successful test demonstrates THAAD's ability to take out hostile targets early and quickly," said Tom McGrath, Lockheed Martin's program manager and vice president for the THAAD program. "On the expansive range at PMRF, the THAAD missile can fly greater distances, increasing our testing options and creating a realistic tactical environment. We are happy to begin testing at PMRF with a success and look forward to many more exciting missions."

PMRF is the world's largest instrumented multi-environment range capable of supporting surface, subsurface, air, and space operations simultaneously. There are over 1,100 square miles of instrumented underwater range and over 42,000 square miles of controlled airspace.

The THAAD program began flight testing in November 2005 at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), NM. Three successful THAAD tests were conducted at WSMR including the intercept of a unitary target in July 2006.

THAAD is designed to defend U.S. troops, allied forces, population centers and critical infrastructure against short- to intermediate range ballistic missiles. THAAD comprises a fire control and communications system, interceptors, launchers and a radar. The THAAD interceptor uses hit-to-kill technology to destroy targets, and is the only weapon system that engages threat ballistic missiles at both endo- and exo-atmospheric altitudes.

A key element of the nation's Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS), THAAD is a Missile Defense Agency program, with the program office located in Huntsville, AL. The agency is developing a BMDS to defend the United States, its deployed forces, friends and allies against ballistic missiles of all ranges and in all phases of flight.

Lockheed Martin is a world leader in systems integration and the development of air and missile defense systems and technologies, including the first operational hit-to-kill missile. It also has considerable experience in missile design and production, infrared seekers, command and control/battle management, and communications, precision pointing and tracking optics, as well as radar and signal processing. The company makes significant contributions to all major U.S. missile defense systems and participates in several global missile defense partnerships.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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