Lockheed Martin, Hellenic Air Force Celebrate Inauguration Of Newest Advanced F-16 Fighter

Ceremonies were held today at Lockheed Martinin Fort Worth, Texas, to commemorate the F-16 Peace Xenia IV program for Greece. The ceremony marks an important production milestone, demonstrating that the program is on schedule and on budget. This F-16 acquisition is the fourth for the Hellenic Air Force (HAF) and the nation of Greece.

Lt. Gen. Ioannis Giagkos, chief of the Hellenic Air Force General Staff, accepted the first Peace Xenia IV F-16 Block 52 advanced aircraft on behalf of his nation and expressed satisfaction with its timely delivery. "I am grateful to everyone who contributed to the design and construction of this ultra-modern weapon system. With these new aircraft, the defense and deterrent force of the Hellenic Air Force will be significantly enhanced," he said.

U.S. officials attending the ceremony included Bruce Lemkin, deputy undersecretary of the Air Force for International Affairs. Hosting the ceremony were Ralph D. Heath, executive vice president of Lockheed Martin and president of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics; Dennys Plessas, vice president of business development in Greece; and John Larson, vice president of F-16 Programs.

"Lockheed Martin is pleased that through this government-to-government agreement, we are able to offer for the first time, a fully integrated and comprehensive weapon system, including a self-protection system, weapons and other subsystems which make this advanced version of the F-16 particularly effective for the operational needs of the Hellenic Air Force," said Plessas. "The recent completion of the infrastructure facilities as a special project in conjunction with this aircraft buy at Araxos Air Base, 116 Combat Wing guarantees the immediate use of this weapon system by the Hellenic Air Force."

"The F-16 we see before us today is a symbol of our 66-year friendship with the Hellenic Air Force, providing a path for the future to the next generation in aircraft with the F-35, as we continue to deliver on our promises between Lockheed Martin and the country of Greece," said Larson.

The Peace Xenia IV purchase program raises the total fighters ordered by the HAF to 170. The aircraft rolled out today is the first of 30 Block 52 Advanced F-16s being produced in the newest lot. The HAF received the F-16 Block 30 version starting in 1988, the Block 50 version starting in 1997 and the Block 52+ version in 2003. Greece has been a Lockheed Martin customer since 1943, when it acquired its first squadron of Martin A-30 Baltimore Mk III, IV and Vs.

The Peace Xenia IV program includes 20 F-16Cs and 10 F-16Ds, all powered by the Pratt & Whitney F100-PW-229 engine. This first aircraft - a single-seat F-16C model - was accepted by the U.S. government (as agent for Greece in the Foreign Military Sales process) in January 2009, one month ahead of schedule. The U.S. government also accepted the first two-seat F-16D version in January. The first four aircraft will be ferried to Greece in May with the remainder following in 2009 and 2010.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The F-16 is the choice of 25 nations. More than 4,400 aircraft have been delivered worldwide from assembly lines in five countries. The F-16 program has been characterized by unprecedented international cooperation among governments, air forces and aerospace industries. Major upgrades to all F-16 versions are being incorporated to keep the fleet modern and fully supportable over the aircraft's long service life.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 146,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2008 sales of $42.7 billion.

High resolution photo will be available this afternoon at Web site:
http://www.lockheedmartin.com/

F-16 is a registered trademark of Lockheed Martin Corp.

First Call Analyst:
FCMN Contact: karen.l.hagar@lmco.com

SOURCE: Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company

Web Site: http://www.lockheedmartin.com/

Company News On-Call: http://www.prnewswire.com/comp/117281.html

---

https://news.lockheedmartin.com/2009-03-19-Lockheed-Martin-Hellenic-Air-Force-Celebrate-Inauguration-of-Newest-Advanced-F-16-Fighter