

First Lockheed Martin Advanced Block 50 F-16 Unveiled For Turkish Air Force

ANKARA, Turkey, May 23, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Turkish Aerospace Industries, Inc. (TAI) and Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) unveiled the first of 30 new Turkish-built F-16s in ceremonies today at TAI's facility near Ankara.

Turkish officials at the event included the nation's Minister of National Defense, Vecdi Gonul; Undersecretary for Defense Industries Murad Bayar; Turkish Air Force Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Abidin Unal; General Manager of the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation Lt. Gen. (Retired) Hayrettin Uzun; and the Chairman of the Board of TAI, Lt. Gen. (Retired) Mehmet Yalcin Kaya.

The U.S. government was represented by Ambassador to Turkey Francis J. Ricciardone, Jr., Heidi Grant, Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs; and Maj. Gen. Stanley Clarke III, Chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation.

"Lockheed Martin values the partnerships we have established with the Turkish government, military and industry over the past quarter century," said Ralph D. Heath, executive vice president of Aeronautics for Lockheed Martin. "We look forward to continuing those relationships as a partner with Turkey in the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program."

The F-16 program has provided extensive industrial development and employment in Turkey over the past 25 years. The Turkish Air Force has more than 200 F-16 aircraft in its inventory presently and will take delivery of the 30 new, advanced Block 50 models between May 2011 and December 2012.

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 126,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's 2010 sales from continuing operations were \$45.8 billion.

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