MEADS Demonstrates Advanced Plug-And-Fight Capabilities In Integration Test

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ORLANDO, Fla., MUNICH and ROME, Nov. 10, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS) system elements have successfully performed a simulated engagement against real-world air and representative missile threats demonstrating MEADS' plug-and-fight capabilities.

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In the simulated test, the MEADS battle manager demonstrated a revolutionary network-centric open architecture that allows any combination of sensors and launchers to be organized into single or multiple air and missile defense battle elements. Through its plug-and-fight capability, the sensors, shooters and Tactical Operations Centers (TOC) simply act as nodes on the network. The MEADS battle manager lets a commander dynamically add or subtract these elements as the situation dictates without shutting the system down.

System elements, represented by MEADS test equipment, provided data inputs and communicated with the TOC. The test series demonstrated successful integration of BMC4I hardware and software by completing essential system functions including attaching and detaching the launcher from the MEADS plug-and-fight network; configuring and initializing the MEADS launcher and simulated sensors; performing track management functions, threat assessment and identification; and transmitting a valid launch command to the launcher.

These accomplishments represent the first of several planned integration and test events at Pratica di Mare,Italy to finalize development of this advanced air and missile defense system.

NAMEADSMA General Manager Gregory Kee said, "Because of its advanced capabilities, there is international interest in MEADS. In budget-constrained times, nations need a capability that is modern, operationally more capable than existing systems today with reduced manning requirements and lower operational costs. MEADS will offer superior capabilities with unprecedented flexibility compared to current systems. Its 360-degree rotating capability will absolutely bring value to the warfighter – both in situational awareness and in being able to address threats from any direction. It provides dramatically increased capabilities over what's available today."

The lightweight MEADS launcher is easily transportable, is tactically mobile and is capable of rapid reload. It carries up to eight Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) Missile Segment Enhancement (MSE) Missiles and achieves launch readiness in minimum time. Through improvements in range, interoperability, mobility and full 360-degree defense capability against the evolving threat, MEADS improves the capability to defend troops, friends and allies.

MEADS International Executive Vice President Volker Weidemann said, "This initial demonstration of the MEADS plug-and-fight network is only part of the advanced battle command architecture that MEADS provides. Through cooperative, disciplined engineering, MEADS is showing its advanced capabilities and user-defined growth potential to manage new system-of-systems operational requirements when they occur."

Using its 360-degree defensive capability, the advanced MEADS radars and MSE missile, MEADS defends up to eight times the coverage area with far fewer system assets and significantly reduces demand for deployed personnel and equipment, which reduces demand for airlift.

MEADS International, a multinational joint venture headquartered inOrlando, Fla., is the prime contractor for the MEADS system. Major subcontractors and joint venture partners are MBDA in Italy and Germany, and Lockheed Martin in the United States.

The MEADS program management agency NAMEADSMA is located in Huntsville, Ala.

SOURCE MEADS International