First Italian F-35A 'Rolls Out' Of Cameri Production Facility

CAMERI, Italy, March 12, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- History was achieved today when the first Italian F-35A Lightning II rolled out of the Cameri Final Assembly and Check Out (FACO) facility, marking the first F-35A assembled internationally and the first of eight aircraft currently being assembled. The aircraft, designated as AL-1, will now proceed to additional check-out activities before its anticipated first flight later this year.

The rollout exhibits the ongoing strong partnership between the Italian Ministry of Defense, industry partner Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi, and Lockheed Martin [NYSE: LMT]. The Italian FACO is owned by the Italian Ministry of Defense and is operated by Alenia Aermacchi in conjunction with Lockheed Martin with a current workforce of more than 750 skilled personnel engaged in F-35 aircraft and wing production.

"The Cameri FACO is truly a national crown jewel, currently assembling the first eight Italian F-35As and producing wings for all F-35As fleet-wide," said Lorraine Martin, Lockheed Martin executive vice president and F-35 program manager. "Additionally, as the European F-35 airframe Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul and Upgrade center, it will generate thousands of long-term, high-tech jobs for the Italian people for decades. Lockheed Martin is proud of its relationship with Italy and values the highly-skilled Alenia Aermacchi workforce building this incredible jet."

The FACO will build all Italian F-35A and F-35B aircraft, is programmed to build F-35As for the Royal Netherlands Air Force and retains the capacity to deliver to other European partners in the future. In December 2014, it was selected by the U.S. Department of Defense as the F-35 Lightning II Heavy Airframe Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul and Upgrade facility for the European region. The 101-acre facility includes 22 buildings and more than one million square feet of covered work space, housing 11 assembly stations, and five maintenance, repair, overhaul and upgrade bays. The first full F-35A wing section was recently completed and will soon be shipped to Lockheed Martin's Fort Worth, Texas, F-35 production line for final assembly.

The F-35 Lightning II is a 5th generation fighter, combining advanced stealth with fighter speed and agility, advanced mission systems, fully fused sensor information, network-enabled operations and cutting-edge sustainment. Three distinct variants of the F-35 will replace the A-10 and F-16 for the U.S. Air Force, the F/A-18 for the U.S. Navy, the F/A-18 and AV-8B Harrier for the U.S. Marine Corps, and a variety of fighters for at least 11 other countries. The Italian F-35As and Bs replace the legacy Panavia Tornado, AMX and AV-8B aircraft. More than 130 F-35s have been built and delivered fleet-wide and they have flown more than 28,500 flight hours.

About Lockheed Martin:

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 112,000 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 net sales for 2014 were $45.6 billion.

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