Lockheed Martin's THAAD Weapon System Program Conducts Successful Endo-Atmospheric Interceptor Test

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Final Flight Test at White Sands Missile Range

DALLAS, June 27 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA) and Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) conducted a successful low endo-atmospheric test of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) Weapon System interceptor, at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), NM. Last night's flight test was of the THAAD interceptor only; there was no target.

(Photo: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070627/LAW085)

Preliminary data indicate the THAAD flight test successfully met all objectives including interceptor launch, booster and kill vehicle separation, shroud separation in a low endo-flight environment, kill vehicle control and evaluation of the heating effects on the interceptor mid-body in a low endo-flight environment.

This is the final flight test scheduled to take place at WSMR. Additional flight testing of the THAAD Weapon System is under way at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) on the Hawaiian island of Kauai and will continue there through 2009.

"Last night's test of the THAAD interceptor was the lowest fly-out angle to date, with the interceptor successfully demonstrating its ability to properly operate at the system's minimum altitude," said Tom McGrath, program manager and vice president for THAAD at Lockheed Martin. "We are very grateful to the entire WSMR team for their excellent support of the THAAD flight test program from the mid 1990s to now."

Since November 2005 the THAAD Weapon System program has conducted six successful flight tests, including three tests involving the successful intercept of threat representative targets:

-- November 2005 -- Successful missile-only flight test
-- April 2006 -- Successfully integration of the entire THAAD Weapon System including launcher, interceptor, radar and fire control system
-- July 2006 -- Successful seeker characterization flight test including first target intercept
-- September 2006 -- Flight test designated a 'no-test' when the HERA target malfunctioned and was destroyed by WSMR Range Safety before the interceptor was launched; excellent ground data was acquired
-- January 2007 -- Successful intercept of a unitary target in THAAD's first flight test at the PMRF
-- April 2007 -- Successful intercept of a unitary target
-- June 2007 -- Successful missile-only flight test in low endo-atmosphere

The THAAD flight test program is scheduled to return to PMRF later this year for additional flight testing.

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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