Most Advanced Lockheed Martin F-16 Fighters Featured at Dubai Air Show

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DUBAI, United Arab Emirates; FORT WORTH, Texas, Nov 22, 2005 /PRNewswire via COMTEX News Network/ -- Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) is featuring the most advanced F-16 fighters this week at the Dubai International Air Show -- the Block 60 F-16 E/F and the Block 50/52 F-16 C/D.

The new Block 60 aircraft made its aerial debut at the show on Monday November 21 -- in the home country of the first and only nation flying this aircraft today. Troy Pennington, Lockheed Martin test pilot, is flying the aircraft in the demonstrations this week.

"The Block 60 is a great plane to fly and is an outstanding addition to our air force," said Brigadier General Ali Khadem Salem Al Mansoori, [UAE] Assistant Air Force commander for air defense during the F-16 briefing today. "The aircraft meets our requirements and we look forward to the continued support of Lockheed Martin as we work together to build a great air force structure for our nation. We are proud to see our new aircraft perform aerial demonstrations during the show this week."

"This is a proud moment for the UAE and for Lockheed Martin. The Block 60 possesses breakthrough technological features and advanced systems. It exemplifies the evolution of Lockheed Martin aircraft, matching capability with customer needs," said John Larson, vice president and deputy, Lockheed Martin F-16 programs. "We are honored to provide the UAE with the Block 60 and are committed to sustaining and maintaining their F-16s to the highest levels of capability and readiness into the future."

Both new F-16 versions have the latest technology in avionics, weapons, sensors and systems integration that provide pilots with increased situational awareness. Recent F-16 milestones include the arrival in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) of the first group of 10 Block 60 UAE aircraft, rollout of the first Block 50 aircraft for Chile, delivery of the first two Block 50 aircraft to Oman and Turkey's announcement of a major capabilities upgrade for its fleet of F-16s.

"The F-16 is still the world standard when it comes to versatile multirole fighters. We have two new products in production today with the Block 60 for the UAE and the Block 50 which we're producing for Oman, Chile and Poland. Each has a range of upgrade options available to fit the needs of any potential customer seeking a combat proven, technologically advanced aircraft," said Larson.

Oman is now flying new aircraft with the delivery in October of their first two F-16 Advanced Block 50 aircraft. "This makes Oman the fifth Arab nation and the third member of the Gulf Cooperation Council to acquire the F- 16," said Larson. "Oman's selection of the F-16 provides further opportunities for interoperability and closer ties among airmen throughout the region," said Larson.

"Couple these new aircraft deliveries in the region with the Government of Turkey's decision in July to begin a major capabilities upgrade for the Turkish Air Force fleet of F-16s -- the $1.1B Common Configuration Implementation Program (CCIP) -- and you have the most advanced aircraft systems available being flown by countries in this region," said Larson. "The Turkish CCIP upgrade shows how F-16 technology continues to evolve, even for customers who are no longer ordering new aircraft."

Dubai 2005, a biennial air show, features more than 700 exhibitors from 46 countries. The show site has more than 376,000 feet of exhibit space as well as purpose-built facilities. Other Lockheed Martin products featured at the show include the C-130J and the T-50 Golden Eagle trainer.

"Lockheed Martin is committed to continuous production, modification, and sustainment of the F-16 fleet worldwide. We take great pride in providing a reliable product and services that allow our customers to do their jobs," Larson said.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2004 sales of $35.5 billion.

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