

Finmeccanica and AgustaWestland JV in Libya in the aeronautics and security systems sector

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EUR 80 million contract signed for ten A109 Power helicopters

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Finmeccanica, AgustaWestland and the Libyan Company for Aviation Industry have signed an agreement to form a joint venture called the Libyan Italian Advanced Technology Company (L.I.A.TE.C.). LIATEC will be 50%-owned by the Libyan Company for Aviation Industry, with Finmeccanica and AgustaWestland holding 25% each.

The two Italian shareholders will provide know-how, training, technology and equipment, while the Libyan shareholder will mainly invest in infrastructure, plant and local marketing activities. Together, they will provide the financial resources necessary to start up operations.

LIATEC's headquarters have been set up in Tripoli. The company will invest in the aeronautics technology and electronics systems of most interest to the country. According to the company's development plan, the first task will be to develop the capacity necessary to make more efficient and modernise Libya's existing fleets of helicopters and aircraft, and to ensure that future fleets are maintained. A training centre open to all Libyan flight and maintenance personnel will also be set up.

The company's growth programme will continue in the short term with the establishment of a modern maintenance centre and a production assembly line in Tripoli. LIATEC will operate as a supplier of Libyan agencies responsible for procuring helicopters, medium-sized and light aircraft, electronics security systems and land-based infrastructure.

The company will have commercial rights to sell helicopters assembled locally in a number of African countries. Furthermore, with the collaboration of all Finmeccanica subsidiaries, LIATEC will be able to supply electronics systems and land systems to its core markets, and provide clients with technical assistance, maintenance and spare parts.

This technological and industrial co-operation will provide a great boost to the Libyan economy, and will in particular offer more employment opportunities to the young graduates of the country's technical colleges and universities.

The initiative will also help raise—in partnership with the University of Tripoli and the training centre—the level of professionalism of Libya's high-tech industry thanks to a period of intensive training that will be conducted in Italy for young Libyan engineers and technicians. This project will create a generation of highly-professional technicians, who, employed in LIATEC, will form the country's first research and development hub in aeronautics and electronics systems.

At the same time as announcing the creation of the joint venture, AgustaWestland announced a contract to supply ten A109 Power helicopters for border patrol, as part of a programme that is worth a total EUR 80 million, including equipment and services.

The deliveries of the first two helicopters are expected at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007.