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## **NEW GRIPEN OFFER FOR HUNGARY**

Swedish Ambassador to Hungary, Staffan Carlsson, has today offered the Hungarian Air Force the loan of up to 24 NATO-interoperable Gripen fourth-generation, swing-role fighters to meet its short-term NATO and national defence needs.

The offer, submitted on behalf of SAAB-BAE SYSTEMS Gripen AB, supported by the governments of Sweden and the United Kingdom, complements an RFI response for the longer-term purchase of new fighter aircraft submitted last December.

Speaking in Budapest today, Torbjörn Edberg, regional director SAAB-BAE SYSTEMS Gripen said: "We believe the cost of the new Gripen proposal is lower than that proposed for its older-generation competitors. If necessary, Hungary could extend the initial loan period or replace loan aircraft with the new Gripen fighters as part of a future purchase."

Gripen is one of the most modern multi-role/swing-role fighters available internationally today. Unlike its older in-service competitors, it can provide the Hungarian Air Force with a level of operational capability that will fully meet its NATO and national defence requirements for the next 30 years or more.

The proposal provides the Hungarian Air Force with five full years of operations, following deliveries, which would begin less than two years after contract signature.

A comprehensive offset programme, involving both the aerospace/defence and commercial sectors and high-technology transfer programmes will provide 100 per cent economic compensation for expenditure incurred by the Hungarian government.

The new Gripen proposal for Hungary is backed by a low-cost integrated support package which includes in-country pilot and technical representation, spares, technical publications, ground support equipment and training devices.

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"If Hungary selects a Gripen solution, it will act as a catalyst for huge economic and industrial benefits, providing real opportunities for employment creation, export promotion and the transfer of high technology," he Torbjörn Edberg. "This will assist with the future development of national industrial capabilities", he concludes.

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**Notes to editors:**

Produced and marketed internationally by a joint venture company in which Saab of Sweden and the United Kingdom's BAE SYSTEMS have equal shares, Gripen the world's first in-service fourth-generation swing-role fighter.

Designed to meet all known and perceived 21st century defense threats Gripen is the only fighter in service today with ease of maintenance and low operational costs designed-in. It is no ordinary fighter, combining high performance and outstanding manoeuvrability with a fully integrated digital information system, precision engagement weapons and reconnaissance capabilities for the future air war.

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