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INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR GRIPEN OFFSET PROPOSAL IN POLAND

Gripen International, a company jointly owned by Sweden's SAAB AB and BAE SYSTEMS of the UK, has organized a two-day Gripen Vendor Conference in Kraków on 13-14 May. The event has been attended by many representatives of the leading European, American and South African companies who are involved in the manufacture of the Gripen NATO-interoperable new generation multi-role fighter.

Representatives of some twenty-five defense and aerospace companies from Sweden, the UK, France, Germany, the USA and South Africa have visited Kraków to demonstrate their full commitment to the sale of Gripen to Poland and underline their readiness to participate in the accompanying economic compensation programs. During the conference, Gripen vendor companies have had an opportunity to meet representatives of the Polish defence and aerospace industry who could benefit through the procurement of Gripen, which will meet Poland's national and NATO defense needs in the next 30-40 years. Almost 150 delegates attended the symposium, including the British Ambassador Michael Pakenham and the Swedish Ambassador Mats Staffansson who represented their respective government's full support to the Gripen campaign in Poland.

Ian McNamee, Gripen International's Managing Director, said: "The Gripen Vendor Conference has been an excellent opportunity for our industrial team to further develop relations with Polish defense and aerospace companies and assess their advanced capabilities. We are confident that Polish industry and thus the economy will benefit from Gripen sales to Poland and, consequently, from co-operation and partnership with the broad international network of Gripen partners.

"We believe that we have the most advanced and capable, fully NATO-interoperable product to offer to Poland, at a most competitive price and with the lowest life-cycle costs. With the full support of the Swedish and UK governments, we are able to submit a very attractive financial solution for Poland. We also have a very strong team of international suppliers who are determined to offer the best proposal for industrial co-operation," added McNamee.

The Gripen team has already a well-established industrial base in Poland and activities that currently amount to around \$US 60 million. If Gripen is selected, it is committed to providing Polish companies with long-term benefits well beyond the delivery programme of the aircraft. Gripen International and its partner companies have already signed Memoranda of Understanding with a considerable number of Polish companies. These include for in-country final assembly and manufacture of Gripen parts and components, and for other proposals not directly linked to the production of Gripen .

Gripen partners SAAB AB and BAE SYSTEMS have a unique record within the aerospace and defense industry of always meeting their offset obligations. To date, programs in over 30 countries have been implemented with a total value in excess of US\$22 billion.



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Gripen vendor companies who have attended the conference in Kraków include:

Sweden: Gripen International, Saab Aerospace, Saab Avionics, Volvo Aero Corporation, Ericsson Microwave Systems, Aerotech Telub, Amphenol Scandinavia, Commercial Programmes.
UK: BAE SYSTEMS, Flight Refuelling, Martin Baker Aircraft Co., Meggit Aerospace Equipment, Page Aerospace, Pilkington Aerospace, The Hymatic Engineering Comp
France: ALKAN
Germany: Mauser Werke
USA: General Electric, Honeywell, Kaiser Aerospace & Electronic Co.
South Africa: Denel, Grintek

Notes to editors:

Gripen is the first fourth-generation multi-role fighter in service world-wide, designed to meet the demands of all current and future threats, while at the same time meeting strict peace-time requirements for flight safety, reliability, training efficiency and low operating costs.

Already in service with the Swedish Air Force, which has ordered 204 aircraft (including 28 dual-seaters), Gripen has also been ordered by the South African Air Force (28 aircraft) and Hungary has signed an agreement with the Swedish government for the lease of 14 Gripen fighters. Gripen has also recently been selected to meet the national, NATO and European defense needs of the Czech Republic, which has a requirement for 24 fighters.

Gripen International has begun negotiations with the Polish government, which is looking to procure 48 new fighters. An offer has been submitted to the Brazilian government based on the supply of 12-24 new Gripen and to the Austrian government, which has a requirement for up to 30 new Gripen.

Further information is available from:

Owe Wagermark, Senior Vice President Communications, Gripen International
Tel: +46 13 18 4014 Mobil: +46 70 889 60 00 Fax: +46 13 18 0055
owe.wagermark@saab.se

Joanna Sjölander, Communications Manager, Gripen International
Tel.: +46 13 18 4191 Mobil: +46 70 889 54 94 Fax: +46 13 18 0055
joanna.sjolander@gripen.com

www.gripen.com