



Le Bourget, 18 June 2009

**ALENIA AERMACCHI (FINMECCANICA) AND ITALIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SIGN AGREEMENT TO SUPPLY SIX M-346s**

At the 48th International Air Show at Le Bourget, Paris, the Italian Defence Ministry and Alenia Aermacchi, a Finmeccanica company, announced that the agreement to supply six M-346 Master aircraft and an integrated training service to the Italian Air Force is in the process of being finalised. The agreement foresees the acquisition of a further nine aircraft, for a total of 15 M-346s Master.

The agreement confirms the close partnership between the Italian Air Force and Alenia Aermacchi, and means that the former will be the first user of the M-346 Master, the most advanced trainer aircraft on the market today, which is aimed at military pilots flying 4th- and 5th-generation combat aircraft.

The agreement also includes a series of joint initiatives between Alenia Aermacchi and the Italian Air Force to develop international training support capabilities for the Air Forces of other countries through flight simulators, GBTS (Ground Based Training System) and integrated logistics.

The Italian Defence Ministry was an effective supporter of the M-346 during the recent tender process held in the United Arab Emirates, which selected 48 Alenia Aermacchi trainer aircraft after receiving several competitive bids. The contract is currently being negotiated.

This important success came following major investment begun by Alenia Aermacchi in 2000 in the field of advanced trainers, thanks to the significant support from the Italian Ministry for Economic Development.

The Aermacchi M-346 is the only next-generation trainer aircraft currently in production in Europe. The aircraft can train pilots of future combat planes and can be used in all phases of advanced and pre-operational training, thus reducing flight hours in more costly aircraft.

Currently the trainer program has achieved a comprehensive level of maturity, demonstrating its amazing capabilities and performance and delivering speeds which reached the sound barrier at the end of 2008. Aggressive development and test activities are underway to deliver the capabilities required by the Italian Air Force on time.