

Visit of the Head of State to Pomigliano d'Arco

P. F. Guarguaglini

Chairman and CEO of Finmeccanica

Pomigliano d'Arco, 1 December 2008

Mr President

On behalf of the entire Finmeccanica group, I would like to thank you for accepting our invitation to include the Alenia Aeronautica factory in Pomigliano d'Arco in your visit to Campania's centres of excellence.

Finmeccanica's presence in this region is extremely significant, especially in terms of employment.

The group has more than 7,800 employees here – around 18.5% of the total – of whom more than half work for Alenia Aeronautica. This makes Campania the group's most important region together with Lazio.

Since 2004 Finmeccanica's workforce in Campania has grown from 7,200 to 8,200 – a major boost to the employment situation, especially in the south.

But what is more important in my view is the quality of Finmeccanica's presence, and particularly that of Alenia Aeronautica.

This factory is a historical site for Italian aviation, since it was here that the first Italian supersonic aircraft was made after the Second World War. But the facility also forms the heart of our long-standing partnerships with Boeing, the most exciting result of which is without a shadow of a doubt our participation in the B787 Dreamliner programme as a partner of Boeing to all intents and purposes.

The programme – which has also led to the development of our global centres of excellence in the manufacture of composite aerostructures in Grottaglie in Puglia, and Charleston in South Carolina – was created here. At Pomigliano d'Arco some of the most essential parts of the aircraft are produced, such as the titanium and carbon fibre joint components.

But that's just the start of it.

Pomigliano d'Arco is also the production site for the fuselages of two of Alenia Aeronautica's biggest commercial and strategic success stories.

The first is the C27J, the world's best tactical transport aircraft, which has been ordered by the armed forces of eight countries, including Italy and the United States, and of which more than 120 have been produced to date.

The second is the ATR, the best propeller aircraft available on the

market, with a total of more than 950 orders, of which the 800th example was delivered just a few days ago.

Mr President, I would like to highlight that these important successes represent the best response to the new challenges that international competition and emerging economies currently pose to Italian manufacturing.

They are extremely high-tech products, and this, in my view, is the main route we should be taking to tackle the challenge. It is the technological aspect of innovation which constitutes a real competitive advantage and raises barriers that others cannot quickly overcome.

Conversely, innovation without technology can be easily imitated and sold at more competitive prices, especially by countries that benefit from lower labour costs due partly to the fact that workers are less protected.

And this is a point which I – in full agreement with you, Mr President – would like to make very clear: commercial necessity, or the temptation to become more competitive on prices, will never cause us to attach less importance to job security.

We have just heard two of our colleagues who have proudly spoken of their membership of an industrial group that has made a risk-aware management culture one of the cornerstones of its success.

And from here in Campania, thanks to your visit today, we would like to give the whole country this message: we can compete on the international markets – and win – without sacrificing worker protection, and without asking any of our staff to run risks that we ourselves would not be prepared to accept.

The rebirth of Italy will not be achieved by risking the health and safety of our workers, but by striving to attain excellence – something that can only be gained by investing in technological development and professional training, and by having a clear plan with shared objectives that involves all staff.

Thank you.