

Rome, 16 December 2008

**Finmeccanica confirms its commitment to Africa and promotes the “Mwana Simba” charity project in Nigeria, Congo and Cameroon**

Finmeccanica, the international leader in the aerospace, defence and security sectors, is renewing its commitment to helping others by promoting three important projects in Africa, presented today on the occasion of the traditional Christmas concert, performed by the Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini from Parma and with the special presence of Lucio Dalla and Cecilia Gasdia.

“Companies like Finmeccanica cannot fail to fulfil the social and cultural responsibilities dictated by the current environment. We have always paid special attention to helping people, as shown by the support we have provided over the years to the D.R.E.A.M. (Drug Resource Enhancement against AIDS and Malnutrition) project for AIDS prevention and treatment” said Pier Francesco Guarguaglini, Chairman and CEO of Finmeccanica. “Following this positive experience, we are getting involved in an important long-term support programme in Africa, with a series of measures intended to create local structures able to provide both healthcare and education for young people, as we are convinced that knowledge can fuel development and help them improve their own lives”.

The “Mwana Simba” project in Nigeria, Congo and Cameroon takes its name from a saying in Swahili, a common Bantu language in much of Western, Central and Southern Africa, which says “mwana simba ni simba”, “a lion cub will one day be a lion”.

A Science Festival will be organised in Nigeria, and a Science Centre will be created in Owerri, capital of the State of Imo located in the South-East of the country. Promoted at local level by the Assumpta Science Center Association and the Archdiocese of Owerri, with the involvement of Universities and various youth and student associations, the project will be developed in Italy by the Assumpta Science Center Association and supported by the Pontifical Council for Culture and the University pastoral office of the Vicariate of Rome. The programme, which promotes the use of technology, is based on the conviction that science is a prerequisite for growth and economic development, and can be a real tool to fill the gap between developed and under-developed countries, and allow the latter to control their own destinies.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, in partnership with Salesian missions, Finmeccanica will develop and improve the professional and educational training of students at the Collège “Technique Don Bosco”, in the Masina district of the capital Kinshasa. The fostering of expertise in various professions, as well as personal development, will mainly target young people experiencing economic and social deprivation, to allow them to find their place in society and give them a better quality of life.

A mini village will be built in the Republic of Cameroon, in the agricultural area of Mbanda, Diocese of Eseké (Youndè). It will have a place of worship, educational and medical facilities, and areas used for professional training, particularly in the textile sector. The centre, which will be a real multifunctional core of support for the development of socio-educational and charitable activities, will be under the

patronage and the direct responsibility of the Diocese of Eseka, which donated the land on which the entire complex will be built.

The common theme of “Mwana Simba” is the desire to help young Africans and offer them a better future without forcing them to abandon the communities they grew up in. The initiative will also directly involve Group’s employees, who will take part in projects as volunteers, supporting the professionals active in the regions.