

Ceremony for the entry into force of ATAK contract

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*Honourable Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan,
Honourable Minister of National Defense, Mr. Vecdi Gonul,
Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Franco Frattini,
Mr. Undersecretary Murad Bayar,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

as we stand here today, for the entry into force of the ATAK program, we have an opportunity to celebrate a long-standing success history of cooperation.

Finmeccanica is a relevant investor in Turkey and our companies, such as AgustaWestland, Alenia Aeronautica, AerMacchi, Selex Comms and Selex SI, have all significant cooperation programmes with Turkish defence industries.

Selex Communications have a Turkish subsidiary, Selex Komunikasyon, a company with more than one hundred employees based in Ankara, operating in the secure communications business, with activities in R&D, customer service and marketing.

Both AgustaWestland and Alenia Aeronautica have representative offices in Ankara to support their relationships with Turkish industry and institutions, and AgustaWestland recently upgraded his presence setting up a regional business headquarter.

In order to better coordinate all these activities, Finmeccanica as well will open in the next future its own representative office in Turkey.

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The AgustaWestland cooperation with Turkey dates back to the early 60s, with Agusta honoured by supplying its helicopters to the Turkish armed forces, coast guard and the gendarmerie: up to now the company provided more than 200 helicopters to Turkey, mainly in cooperation with Tusas Aerospace Industries (TAI).

We are also proud to have had the occasion, while supplying helicopters, to participate at the beginning of Turkish aerospace industry growth by collaborating with the local production of the SF260 trainer.

This collaboration has been further expanded by installing Turkish systems on the coast guard helicopters and, more recently, by cooperating on one of the most advanced AgustaWestland's products: the AW139 medium twin helicopter, whose whole fuselage is produced by Turkish aerospace industry.

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The ATAK contract will strengthen our industrial cooperation, since Turkish aerospace industry is the prime contractor and the platforms will be partially manufactured (the fuselage) and final assembled by TAI.

TAI shall also integrate the avionics – that will be produced locally – into the T129, while Aselsan shall take part to the ATAK programme too.

Production and export licenses as well as the intellectual property ownership of the T129 are granted to Turkish companies.

This solution allows to produce a more custom-oriented version of the T129, which shall fully satisfy Turkish armed forces' requirements, while boosting transfer of technology between Turkish and Italian companies.

Moreover, this complex system integration approach will make the T129 the most advanced in its category satisfying the requirement of the land forces as well as making it very appealing to the international market on which the Turkish industry, by this helicopter, will play a primary role.

We are proud of the success this collaboration has generated, which we share with our Turkish industrial partners: we are ready and committed to further building upon this success.

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It has been a long journey for us to come to this point and I thank all parties involved for their vision and their dedication.

Finmeccanica is, and can be an even more important partner of Turkish industry and institutions.

Our partnership agreements with Turkish companies, by means of transfer of technology and advanced technologies sharing, may help the modernisation of Turkish armed forces and strengthen the Turkish defence technological and industrial base.

I personally hope that this deep cooperation between Italian and Turkish industry will provide also a good contribution to the further improvement of the relationships between Italy and Turkey and eventually between Turkey and Europe.

Thank you.