

PRESS NOTE

Leonardo sparks debate on the future of aviation at Expo 2020 Dubai with “The Flying Society” event

The event, organised by Leonardo at the Italy Pavilion, was opened by an inspirational keynote speech by HH Sheikha Mozah bint Marwan Al Maktoum and hosted stories and visions from outstanding members of civil society, Italian Air Force, and industry

“Thanks its roots in the heritage of aviation and its constant focus on innovation, Leonardo will play a key role in this new era of aviation as it has done in its first 100 years,” said Valerio Cioffi, Leonardo General Manager

Dubai, 25/01/2022 – The Italy Pavilion hosted the “The Flying Society” event today at Expo 2020 Dubai. Organised by the Italy-headquartered global aerospace and defence company Leonardo, the company was honoured to welcome HH Sheikha Mozah bint Marwan Al Maktoum, the first member of the royal family to fly as a qualified commercial pilot for Emirates Airlines and the first woman to be appointed as First Lieutenant Pilot of Dubai Police. Introduced by Valerio Cioffi, Leonardo’s General Manager, the speakers shared their experiences and visions and included Dr. Nicoletta Iacobacci, global technologies and ethics advisor, Gen. Luigi Casali, Chief of staff of the Italian Air Education and Training Command, and Roberto Garavaglia, SVP helicopters strategy and innovation at Leonardo.

“Expo 2020 Dubai confirms the attention of UAE to new technologies, with a focus on those related to aviation. I believe that the three key themes of this Expo – ‘Opportunity, Sustainability, Mobility’ – perfectly encompass the promises and challenges of aviation that we want to highlight in today’s event” explained Valerio Cioffi, Leonardo General Manager. *“Leonardo – and Italy – have been part of the history of flight from the beginning, aiming, throughout the decades, at maintaining its technological edge. We have the ambition to continue as a leader in the next era of aviation and we are investing to meet this commitment,”* concluded.

“I was only 12 when I tasted the freedom of flying, the exhilarating feeling of soaring up in the sky: it was a chance encounter and love at first flight – said HH Sheikha Al Maktoum –. I truly hope my journey could serve as inspiration and encouragement to all young women still searching for a path, and prove to them that there is space for them in serving our country. It is time to tell the stories of the women who paved the way, so that the next generation grow up knowing the names of those women, their stories, dreaming of equal achievements and being inspired by their legacy” concluded.

General Luigi Casali, Italian Air Force, explained: *“One of the challenges that we are facing and that we will continue to face in the forthcoming decades is the capacity to adapt our selection and training processes in order to maintain the technological ecosystem boost that we are witnessing. We need a modular flexible system that will be able to adapt rapidly to the new technologies and social development of the younger population meeting the training needs of tomorrow. A deep analysis of what roles, the skills and the training pipeline of the future generation pilot needs to be a priority in order to recruit, train, and deliver the future aviators of our air forces.”*

“Is it possible, when dealing with technological choices to integrate feminine values? Should we reboot ethics that are not only managed by laws or principles, but also through empathy, compassion, and care?” asked Dr Nicoletta Iacobacci. *“Women are crucial in building the future. They are quick and determined, they are practical, collaborative, and savvy. Practicality, empathy, collaboration, respect, and determination are necessary to create an augmented but still humane future. Therefore, my message is for young girls and women in general: embrace technology and science, because it is not only an opportunity. Today it is a duty”.*

Leonardo's vision on the future of aviation is part of the company's contribution to the Italy Pavilion, which is displaying a nacelle of the Leonardo's AW609 tiltrotor. It is the only aircraft of its kind set to receive civil certification and revolutionise, among others, point-to-point transportation, thanks to its capability – that enables the changing of the position of the two nacelles and rotors in less than 60 seconds – it can take-off vertically like a helicopter while flying with the performance of an aeroplane.

As part of the company's strategic vision for urban aviation in the near future, Leonardo has built – with its Emirati partner Falcon Aviation Services – a new concept helicopter terminal at the Dubai Expo site. It represents the latest frontier in vertical mobility: travellers' spaces are designed to house showrooms where commercial and cultural activities can be offered, within a structure built with sustainable materials, which can be easily remodelled or reallocated as the needs of the city changes.

Leonardo's technologies have been present in the Emirates for over 50 years and the company continues to work – via its local branch in Abu Dhabi – with the UAE government, armed forces and partners. Leonardo high-tech platforms in the UAE include more than 100 helicopters, naval systems, secure communications applications, space technologies and training aircraft, including the Aermacchi MB-339 jet trainer, chosen for the Emirati national aerobatic team Al Fursan. Leonardo is proud that the Al Fursan pilots have trained in Italy, using the company's aircraft and Italian teaching systems.

Leonardo, a global high-technology company, is among the top world players in Aerospace, Defense and Security and Italy's main industrial company. Organized into five business divisions, Leonardo has a significant industrial presence in Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland and the USA, where it also operates through subsidiaries that include Leonardo DRS (defense electronics), and joint ventures and partnerships: ATR, MBDA, Telespazio, Thales Alenia Space and Avio. Leonardo competes in the most important international markets by leveraging its areas of technological and product leadership (Helicopters, Aircraft, Aerostructures, Electronics, Cyber Security and Space). Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (LDO), in 2020 Leonardo recorded consolidated revenues of €13.4 billion and invested €1.6 billion in Research and Development. The company has been part of the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI) since 2010 and has been confirmed among the global sustainability leaders in 2021. Leonardo is also included in the MIB ESG index.

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