

## PRESS NOTE

### **Leonardo celebrates the opening of PZL-Świdnik's production line for the AW149 helicopters of the Polish Armed Forces**

**Less than two years following contract signature, localised AW149 production is now being undertaken through PZL-Świdnik, the Polish-owned Leonardo company**

**Leonardo is a long-term strategic partner of the Polish Ministry of Defence and the company has been based in the country for more than 30-years**

**Świdnik, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024** - Leonardo, a global leader in aerospace, defence, and security, has shown strong commitment to Poland through strategic partnerships and investments to the country's defence capabilities, further confirmed with the latest key milestone achieved today. Today PZL-Świdnik, the Polish company fully-owned by Leonardo, celebrated the opening of the production line for the AW149 helicopters of the Polish Armed Forces and launch of the new, localised manufacturing activities fulfilling its commitment to the new helicopter programme.

The company's dedication to technology transfer and local production has contributed to growth in the country's skills base and this has enabled new technologies to be delivered quickly to the customer, ensuring the Polish Armed Forces are equipped to meet challenges in the battlespace with the latest-generation multirole AW149 military helicopter.

The official opening ceremony took place in the presence of representatives and dignitaries from national and local institutions, Leonardo, PZL- Świdnik, and partner companies. This achievement marks a new technological era for both PZL-Świdnik plants along with the national supply chain and military service.

A part of Leonardo, PZL-Świdnik leverages unique industrial advantages in terms of speed of deliveries and flexibility to meet challenging deadlines and emergency requirements considering the geopolitical scenario. The very first AW149s were produced in Vergiate (Italy), where Polish workers took on-job training and secured timely deliveries within a tight time schedule, handing over helicopters 15 months since contract signing. The majority of the Polish Armed Forces' AW149 will be produced in Poland.

The Polish MoD's AW149 programme is based on localised production through PZL-Świdnik, which is a strategic decision of Poland to secure both national security and key industrial benefits. The contract for 32 AW149s was signed in Świdnik in 2022 and also covers the integration of the helicopter's systems, dedicated armament, future modernisations and technical support through the entire life cycle of the Polish AW149 fleet. Thanks to local production Poland gains a domestic logistics base and technical facilities located close to the Polish Land Forces, in addition to state-of-the-art helicopters.

**Gian Piero Cutillo, Managing Director of Leonardo Helicopters**, said: "PZL-Świdnik is an example of the highest level of excellence within our organisation, obtaining very good results in all areas and has great potential for further development. In line with this, there are growing requirements for our company based in Świdnik to continue to evolve from a manufacturer to a key market player that manages complex contracts and deliveries. The Polish MoD programme of AW149 is a clear example of this today.

"The localisation of industrial and logistical capabilities for these new helicopters to meet Poland's needs, leverage the long established and unique capabilities of PZL-Świdnik and its professional skills combined with the outstanding operational capabilities of the AW149s will deliver unparalleled advantages to the country."

**Jacek Libucha, President of PZL-Świdnik** said: "The past year was a period of multi-million investments, including infrastructure, equipment and facilities, specifically in the building where full production of the AW149 is now located. Along with the production of the AW149, we start new era for Świdnik plants – this was clear to me from very beginning when I was appointed CEO of PZL-Świdnik – we have needed a new most modern helicopter production line to develop our expertise, which must come with state-of-the-art technology transfer. This also meets the Armed Forces' high-end needs and those helicopters will provide them the best-in-class combat support. This is what the platform has been designed for."

The new production line is an accelerator of change as it was when PZL-Świdnik became a centre of excellence for helicopter aerostructure and contributed to the launch of the AW139 programme several years ago. Now, slightly more than a decade, the revenues of PZL-Świdnik have more than quadrupled, generating greater export sales and an expanding technological and product base. The Świdnik based business has grown significantly over the year, by acquiring new contracts, leveraging technological and capability investments guaranteed by Leonardo to become a solid player in the competitive market.

In Poland, at PZL-Świdnik a total of 3,240 employees (20% of which are engineers) are devoted to serve its customers, while Polish Military is recognised as a strategic one. PZL-Świdnik employs ambitious staff, of which engineers constitute 20%, young starters are a growing number, and the highest level (level-1) test pilots meet current and future needs of the Polish Army and other customers. These pilots performed a dynamic display of the AW149 during today's ceremony.

#### **Note for Editors:**

In order to build strong cooperation with Polish industry, Leonardo sees PZL-Świdnik as a main pillar in its helicopter business through its partnering on Polish military programmes and delivering not only the equipment to Polish Armed Forces but it also provides important added value through technology transfer. PZL-Świdnik - the only helicopter OEM in Poland - has a full range of competences in its design, production, certification, modernisation and servicing throughout their entire life cycle. Full competences are confirmed by certificates of compliance with AS9100 and AQAP2110 standards and EU aviation regulations Part 21J, Part 21G, Part 145, Part-M/CAMO, Part 147. PZL-Świdnik conducts production and research activities in the field of aerostructures, constituting a helicopter Aerostructures Centre of Excellence within Leonardo and is involved in the development of uncrewed technologies and other R&D programmes, both civil and defence. Today, PZL-Świdnik is one of the three most important research centres worldwide at Leonardo, where activities such as full-scale fatigue tests are carried out. PZL-Świdnik's leading role on the domestic market and continuous investment allows PZL laboratories to be available for SMEs, facilitating open innovation and the development of Polish industry. The newly-launched production line of the AW149 is one of the key powers to spin not only the development of PZL-Świdnik, but the entire Polish economy. PZL-Świdnik recognises the importance and values cooperation with academic and scientific communities as well as military universities and schools, while integrating the domestic supply chain for the Polish military helicopter programmes. Cooperation with domestic entities and PZL-Świdnik's current participation in international projects, and integration with the Leonardo Group, are intended to bring benefits to the Polish industry and military; PZL-Świdnik has consolidated its role as strategic technical and logistic base for helicopters for the Polish Armed Forces. Further investments in the development of production lines, R&D and the flight line, boosted by the AW149 contract and by the prospect of other helicopters procurement, accelerate the continuous development of industrial and scientific research capabilities, including academia, institutions and research centres.

#### **The AW149 Multirole Military Helicopter**

The contract for 32 AW149s, worth 8.25 billion PLN gross (approximately EUR 1.76 billion) includes logistics, training and simulator packages. The logistics package includes a stock of spares and consumable parts, as well as equipment for the ground handling of the helicopters. The training and simulator package includes comprehensive training of pilots and technical personnel and the delivery of a set of advanced simulators and training equipment. The new Polish military helicopters' configuration allows combat support missions among others. Fully meeting the requirements of the Polish Armed Forces, the configuration will also include, among others, observation systems, small arms, guided/unguided rockets and missiles and self-defence systems. The armament, depending on the helicopter variant and configuration, is installed in the cabin or on the helicopter's external hard points. The AW149 platform, already in service with international operators for a range of applications and under evaluation among various countries, is ideally suited to modernise defence helicopter fleets and replace a range of ageing types in the medium weight category. The AW149 is a latest generation multirole military helicopter designed from the outset to meet the most demanding needs of armed forces. The platform can be reconfigured to perform a wide variety of demanding tasks in the toughest operational conditions. The AW149's advanced equipment, weapons and system technologies, combined with its agility, range/endurance and high power margins, highest levels of safety and survivability, provide defence users with high operational availability, mission effectiveness and cost efficiency of the fleet.

**Leonardo** is an international industrial group, among the main global companies in Aerospace, Defence, and Security (AD&S). With 53,000 employees worldwide, the company approaches global security through the Helicopters, Electronics, Aircraft, Cyber & Security and Space sectors, and is a partner on the most important international programmes, within these sectors, such as Eurofighter, NH-90, FREMM, GCAP, and Eurodrone. Leonardo has significant production capabilities in Italy, the UK, Poland, and the USA. Leonardo utilises its subsidiaries, joint ventures, and shareholdings, which include Leonardo DRS (72.3%), MBDA (25%), ATR (50%), Hensoldt (22.8%), Telespazio (67%), Thales Alenia Space (33%), and Avio (29.6%). Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (LDO), in 2023 Leonardo recorded new orders for €17.9 billion, with an order book of €39.5 billion and consolidated revenues of €15.3 billion. Included in the MIB ESG index, the company has also been part of the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI) since 2010.

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