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AgustaWestland and Heliconia Aero Solutions Sign Distributorship Agreement for Morocco

AgustaWestland, a Finmeccanica company, and Heliconia Aero Solutions, the flagship Company of Heliconia Group in Morocco, are pleased to announce the signing of a Distributorship Agreement for AgustaWestland helicopters models in Morocco.

Both companies are also pleased to announce that Heliconia has placed a first order for two AW139 intermediate twin helicopters, plus a number of options, to perform offshore transport missions in Morocco. Pending delivery of the two helicopters, set for June/July this year, Heliconia has meanwhile started its offshore transportation missions with two AW139s leased from Agusta Westland since end February 2014. The dual announcement was made during the Marrakesh Air Show today by the Partners.

Emilio Dalmaso, AgustaWestland Senior Vice President Commercial Business Unit, said "This distribution agreement for our world class helicopters with such a leading partner in Morocco, as well as the introduction of the AW139 type into the growing offshore market in Morocco, marks a major event for the future of helicopter operations in the regional commercial market. We are confident that this is the beginning of a fruitful collaboration in a market which offers significant potential in the Oil&Gas industry and EMS services."

Daniel Sigaud, President of Heliconia, said "This is a major milestone development for Heliconia, but also for Morocco as it will bring into the Moroccan market a new generation of aircrafts, which have proved over the last five years to have a major impact on Oil and Gas Offshore activities worldwide, at a time when very substantial investments are being earmarked to explore Moroccan territorial waters. Heliconia has had to beef up very substantially its internal structures and procedures, to secure required Authorizations and Permits from the Morocco Civil Aviation Authorities, and match up the high technology requirements of this new generation of aircrafts. It will also permit Heliconia to extend its activities in Africa in the future."

The best selling helicopter in its category with a 56% share in the global market, the AW139 has become the benchmark platform for offshore transport operations, experiencing a growing success for a variety of applications in Northern Africa as well and is well positioned to find even greater success across the region.

Over 200 customers from more than 60 countries have ordered almost 760 AW139 helicopters so far. More than 650 AW139s are already in service in the world market with over 850,000 flight hours logged by the global fleet. The AW139 is part of the AgustaWestland Family of new generation helicopters that includes the AW169 and AW189 models, which possess the same high performance flight characteristics and safety features as well as sharing a common cockpit layout, design philosophy and maintenance concept. This commonality will allow more effective operations for customers operating helicopter fleets across the 4 to 8.5 tonne categories.

Heliconia Group, with companies based in Morocco and France, is already a major player in helicopter operations in those countries offering a range of services also including aerial work and more recently offshore transport in Morocco. Heliconia is already working on further regional developments from its Morocco based operations.