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## **Full success for the Neuron flight test campaign at Decimomannu Italian Air Force base**

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- Neuron flight test campaign in Italy successfully completed
- 12 highly sensitive sorties to verify the characteristics of radar-cross section and infrared signature for the European experimental drone
- The Neuron is dedicated to the demonstration of key technologies for combat aircraft for future piloted and non-piloted systems

The flight test campaign in Italy of the Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle Neuron has been successfully concluded with the achievement of all established goals, thus allowing an important step forward for the program.

The Neuron is the European full-scale technological demonstrator for an Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV) developed by an industrial team led by Dassault Aviation with the collaboration of Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi, Saab, Airbus Defence and Space, RUAG and HAI.

The aircraft has been deployed at the Italian Air Force's Decimomannu Air Base, in Sardinia, Italy, where it has fulfilled a series of important operational tests. In particular, the 12 highly sensitive sorties have allowed to verify the characteristics of Neuron's combat capability, its low radar-cross section and low infrared signature, during missions flown at different altitudes and flight profiles and against both ground-based and air radar "threats", using in this latter case, an Eurofighter Typhoon.

During the deployment in Italy the Neuron has confirmed its already ascertained excellent performance and high operational reliability.

Starting this summer, the next testing phase will be run in Sweden, at the Vidsele Air Base, where tests of low observability and use of weapon delivery from the aircraft's Weapon Bay will be carried out.

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**Finmeccanica** is Italy's leading manufacturer in the high technology sector and ranks among the top ten global players in Aerospace, Defence and Security. Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (FNC IM; SIFI.MI), in 2014 Finmeccanica generated revenues of 14.6 billion Euro. With 273 locations and production facilities in 20 countries, Finmeccanica is a multinational and multicultural group which boasts a significant presence in four markets: Italy, the United Kingdom, the U.S. and Poland. Finmeccanica's core business activities are in the following sectors: Helicopters (AgustaWestland), Defence Electronics and Security (Selex ES, DRS Technologies), Aeronautics (Alenia Aermacchi). The company also has a significant position in Space (Telespazio, Thales Alenia Space), Defence Systems (OTO Melara, WASS, MBDA) and Transportation (Ansaldo STS, AnsaldoBreda).

The demonstrator's development activity is an important step in the technology maturation process of the acquired technology, mitigating the level of risk of future investments for UAS in Europe and moving towards systems' development for operational uses.

**Background info:**

The Neuron is dedicated to the demonstration of key technologies for combat aircraft for future manned and unmanned systems. It includes the design, development, manufacturing and flight testing of a non-piloted aircraft featuring a low radar-cross section and low infrared signature, capable of autonomous flight and weapon delivery. The Neuron Demonstrator may well be considered representative of future combat UAS configurations.

From the industrial point of view, the Neuron is a program led by the French Dassault Aviation with Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi as a first level industrial partner, holding 22% of the programme. Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi is also the leader in an Italian high-tech group of companies, including Finmeccanica-Selex ES.

Finmeccanica-Alenia Aermacchi's contribution to the programme includes design and production of the generation and electrical distribution system; the innovative air data system (with stealth characteristics); low-observability components and, most importantly, the system of the so-called Smart Integrated Weapon Bay, SIWB. This system allows for the automatic detection and recognition of the target in stealth mode and enables the sending of an attack's approval request to the ground station commander before the launching of weapons.