Boeing Holds 'Major Join' Ceremony for Qatar's 1st C-17

LONG BEACH, Calif., March 26, 2009 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] today celebrated the 'major join' of Qatar's first C-17 Globemaster III advanced airlifter in a ceremony at the company's C-17 final assembly facility in Long Beach. Qatar was the first Middle East nation to order the C-17.

During major join, the airlifter's four major fuselage sections -- the forward, center and aft fuselages and wing assembly -- are integrated, and the aircraft looks like a C-17 for the first time. Qatari officials drove ceremonial rivets into the aircraft's fuselage today as Boeing executives and hundreds of employees looked on.

Boeing will deliver Qatar's first C-17 this summer.

"This is an exciting moment for our country," said Gen. Ghanim Shaheen Al-Ghanim, deputy chief of staff for the Qatar Armed Forces. "Watching this C-17 nearing the end of the assembly line means we are now just months away from a new era in critical airlift capabilities in our region -- for our troops and for those in need of humanitarian supplies or disaster relief."

Boeing and the government of Qatar signed an agreement on July 21, 2008, for the purchase of C-17 advanced airlifters and associated equipment and services to provide new strategic-airlift capabilities for the country's defense forces.

"The C-17 will strengthen Qatar's ability to transport equipment and troops in the region, as well as participate in humanitarian operations in the Middle East and South Asia," said Brig. Gen. Ahmad Al-Malki, head of Qatar's airlift selection committee. "Its high reliability and operational flexibility are reasons why we selected it."

"Boeing is extremely proud to provide Qatar with the kind of strategic airlift capability and superior mobility that the C-17 continues to deliver to all of our customers," said Tommy Dunehew, Boeing International C-17 program manager. "In challenging military and humanitarian operations, the C-17 has proven again and again that it is the most advanced airlifter in the world and a global leader in mobility."

Boeing will provide support for Qatar's C-17s, including material management and depot maintenance support, under the C-17 Globemaster III Sustainment Partnership.

There are currently 198 C-17s in service worldwide -- 14 with international customers. The U.S. Air Force, including active Guard and Reserve units, has 184. International customers include the UK Royal Air Force, the Canadian Forces, the Royal Australian Air Force, and the 12-member Strategic Airlift Capability consortium of NATO and Partnership for Peace nations. The United Arab Emirates announced on Feb. 24 that it will acquire four C-17s.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses specializing in innovative and capabilities-driven customer solutions, and the world's largest and most versatile manufacturer of military aircraft. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $32 billion business with 70,000 employees worldwide.
###
Contact Info:
Jerry Drelling
C-17 Communications
Boeing Global Mobility Systems
office: (562) 593-5233
mobile: (714) 318-7594
jerry.a.drelling@boeing.com
Lorenzo Cortes
Middle East Communications
Boeing Integrated Defense Systems
office: (562) 797-1246
mobile: (714) 642-0580
lorenzo.r.cortes@boeing.com