

## Press Release

### A lost opportunity for European Defence

Statement by Airbus Defence and Space on Belgium's Decision on the Fighter Jet Replacement

Munich, 26 October 2018 – With sincere regret Airbus Defence and Space has taken note of the decision by the government of Belgium to select the F-35 to replace its existing fleet of F-16 fighter aircraft.

Airbus Defence and Space accepts this decision by Belgium and is aware of the strong links between Belgium and the United States on defence industrial matters. Therefore, yesterday's decision does not come as a complete surprise.

However, Airbus Defence and Space remains firmly convinced that the offer submitted by Team Eurofighter, consisting of the industrial partners of United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Spain, would have represented a superior choice for the country both in terms of operational capability and industrial opportunities. The Eurofighter solution would have resulted in more than € 19 billion direct contribution to the Belgian economy.

This partnership could have also laid the path for Belgium to join the Franco-German Future Combat Air System programme, which Airbus is currently defining with its strong industrial partner Dassault Aviation.

Yesterday's announcement by the government is a sovereign decision which all contenders have to respect. Yet, it is a lost opportunity to strengthen European industrial cooperation in times when the EU is called upon to increase its joint defence efforts.

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#### About Airbus

Airbus is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2017 it generated revenues of € 59 billion restated for IFRS 15 and employed a workforce of around 129,000. Airbus offers the most comprehensive range of passenger airliners from 100 to more than 600 seats. Airbus is also a European leader providing tanker, combat, transport and mission aircraft, as well as one of the world's leading space companies. In helicopters, Airbus provides the most efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions worldwide.

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