



Ressort: Mixed News

## Second F-35B STOVL makes final acceptance flights

F-35B BL-2 Italian Navy, 05.06.2019 [ENA]

The second STOVL (Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing) Lockheed Martin F-35B Lightning II assigned to Italian Navy assembled outside US at the Italian F.A.C.O. plant (Final Assembly & Check-Out) in Cameri made acceptance flight during the past and current week.

Chased by an Italian Air Force Eurofighter F-2000A Typhoon of the “Reparto Sperimentale Volo” (Experimental Flight Group) the aircraft, piloted vby an Italian Navy test pilot and serialled MM7452 and production BL-2, conducted several missions including air refueling, radar checks and vertical hovering. The maiden flight was made in the mid of October 2018 but due to the decisions of the Italian government and payment delays, the Joint Strike Fighter program had a stop and only in these weeks everyting is going to the goal of 28 aircrafts delivered within 2022, 11 F-35A and 2 F-35B already delivered.

Italy commissioned 60 F-35A conventional aircrafts and 30 F-35B Jump Jet versions, but no definitive orders after the above first batch are currently placed and it seems that it is going slow in the buying program.

The italian plant, one of the three where the Joint Strike Fighter is produced, is assembling 29 F-35A for the Royal Netherlands Air Force, of which the first is still waiting for its maiden flight.

In these days, Italian Air Force 6 F-35A and 12 US Air Force F-35A participated to the Astral Knight training exercises alongwith air forces of Croatia and Slovenja, in addition to the F-16 of Aviano Air Base and a couple of strategic B-52H bombers.

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