

## **Opening Speech**

By

**Gen. Isp. Pietro FINOCCHIO, President of the AFCEA Rome Chapter**

On

*"AFCEA International Symposium on Aerospace Technologies and Applications for Dual Use"*

*Organized by*

*AFCEA – Rome Chapter*

*Hotel Parco dei Principi, Rome*

*September 12-14 2007*

**Excellency the Italian Minister of Defence;**

**Excellencies;**

**Honorary President Professor;**

**Honorary Chairman;**

**Honorary Director;**

**Honorary Professors;**

**Distinguished Colleagues;**

**Distinguished Guests;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen!**

I am General Pietro FINOCCHIO, and I am addressing you now as the President of the AFCEA Chapter of Rome. At the same time, as many of you know very well, I am the General Director of TELEDIFE, the Italian General Directorate for Telecommunications, Information Technology and Advanced Technologies. Due to these two roles I embody, I need to state clearly that in this forum I will not express any formal position on behalf of the Italian Ministry of Defence, so that all statements, comments and remarks shall be retained as my own personal, in my capacity as the President of the AFCEA Chapter of Rome, with no commitment from the Italian Defence.

So far I have been the President of the AFCEA Rome Chapter over the past three years, and in this timeframe “my” Chapter has been growing steadily in the national framework, with the number of members increasing from 150 to 750, out of which 50 are individual members, and 700 belong to 75 different companies: I wish to thank all the institutions, universities and industries that provided their active contribution and generous support. Considering this growth and maturation process, and the “Best AFCEA World Chapter”, that is the “Ingles Prize”, awarded in 2006 to the Rome Chapter, the Board of Directors and myself considered the challenge to enter the international arena and organize this symposium. Today, it is a great honour and pleasure for me to be here, as this symposium marks a turning point in the evolution of the AFCEA Chapter of Rome: for its members, and for me in particular, this is both an achievement and a new beginning. As this new beginning is about 50 years after the launch of Sputnik 1 (October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1957), which marked the

beginning of a new era, I hope the coincidence of these dates can be of good omen for a new success story.

On this occasion, I am also grateful to the Ministry of Defence, the Directorate of National Armaments, and the Italian Air Force for sponsoring this event, and to the universities, institutes, and all international organizations, in particular IEEE, for providing their support. I want also to express my warmest thanks to CISCO and all the Thales / Finmeccanica Group Industries for their sponsorship and generous contribution as main sponsors and inspirers of this event, and say thank you to all the sponsors I cannot list here for obvious reasons, but whose contribution has been much appreciated as well.

Finally, of course, a heartfelt thank you and a friendly encouragement to all lecturers for their participation and the hard work already performed to produce papers and presentations. May I kindly remind that, by the end of November, the organizing secretariat of the ACFEA Rome Chapter will collect your articles, and all the material you wish to submit, to publish the book coming out March 2008 in Bombay.

On my personal side, I am also particularly thankful to General BOTONDI (the Secretary General and Director of National Armaments), [*Professor BIGNAMI (the President of the Italian Space Agency)*] and Doctor Engineer PERTICA (acting on behalf of the President of Finmeccanica) for their kind participation and the speeches they will give us shortly. Last but not least, I wish to express my special thanks to Honourable VERZASCHI, deputy-minister for Defence, who will open officially this symposium.

Over these days we will go through the current and future developments of aerospace technologies and applications for dual use, that is a set of applications and technologies that can be exploited for both civilian and military purposes within the aerospace environment. As a matter of fact, this subject is key to the modern world, especially in a net-centric perspective, due to the general trend of globalization and the rapid development of technology. During coffee breaks you will also have the opportunity to visit the stands of our sponsors, where you will get in touch with state-of-the-art technology. By contrast, you will also find a stand devoted to some antique transmitters and receivers designed by Guglielmo Marconi and built in the early years of the past century, which are part of a private collection and that are here exceptionally on display by courtesy of General Francesco CREMONA, to whom I offer my sincerest and warmest thanks. I hope that Honourable VERZASCHI and General BOTONDI can stay with us during the coffee break, to open and visit the exhibition.

Back to our days, where everything seems to happen through the Internet and on Web Pages, there is an increasing need for single specialists to meet and exchange their knowledge and competences, as multiple skills are required to address complex issues. This is why meetings like this one are more and more important, offering the occasion to meet in person, know each other and exchange professional experiences and views, together with giving the possibility to visit countries, cities, industries and universities. In view of this, I am confident this workshop will give us the opportunity to discuss important topics concerning our future, encourage personal contacts and foster co-operation.

Certain enough, a unique city like Rome is also an ideal location to meet and relax while discussing of modern technology, while having the chance of linking the past with our future, meeting art and science while getting a glance at some of the most famous treasures of ancient history. May you make the most of your stay in Rome! I guess many of you will stay over the weekend, and may I wish you all to be able to be back again in Rome, for a longer stay, in a very near future.

To offer you a glance of one of the most fascinating places in Rome, our gala dinner will be hosted in the gardens of the museum of Villa Borghese, which we will also appreciate, just before dinner, on the occasion of a private visit kindly sponsored and offered us - free of charge - by the Mayor of Rome, Honourable Walter VELTRONI, who I really thank for this unique gift.

As I am quite sure that the outstanding lecturers I just introduced (General BOTONDI, Doctor Engineer PERTICA, Honourable VERZASCHI) will deliver their speeches being fully exhaustive with respect to the political and institutional issues, as well as dealing with the novelties brought in by the COSMO-SkyMed programme, I prefer not to address these subjects and close my speech spending a few words about the mementos we will donate: all chairmen and lecturers will receive the AFCEA coat of arms in the unique version “customized” by the Chapter of Rome, and welcome and keynote speakers will have a bronze statuette of Saint Gabriel archangel. Saint Gabriel is the patron saint of Telecommunications, as decreed by Pope Pius XII (in his Papal bulla of 1956) in deep consideration of the role this celestial spirit has - as a messenger - in the Holy Scriptures. As a matter of fact, “archangel” means “first messenger” and “Gabriel” stands for “strength of God”.

Thank you for your attention. I now leave the floor to General BOTONDI.