

## THE SIXTH MULTIPURPOSE FRIGATE “LUIGI RIZZO” LAUNCHED

### The Italo-French FREMM program continues

***Trieste, 19 December 2015*** – The launching ceremony of the frigate “Luigi Rizzo”, the sixth of a series of 10 FREMM vessels - Multi Mission European Frigates – took place today at the Riva Trigoso shipyard (Genoa). The 10 FREMM vessels have been commissioned to Fincantieri by the Italian Navy within the framework of an Italo-French cooperation program under the coordination of OCCAR (Organisation Conjointe de Cooperation sur l’Armement, the international organization for cooperation on arms).

Godmother of the ceremony was Mrs. Maria Guglielmina Rizzo, daughter of Luigi Rizzo, two Gold Medals of Military Valor.

The ceremony was attended among others by, **Giovanni Toti**, Governor of Liguria, Admiral **Giuseppe De Giorgi**, Chief of Staff of the Italian Navy and the CEO of Fincantieri **Giuseppe Bono**.

After the launching, fitting activities will continue in the Integrated naval shipyard of Muggiano (La Spezia), with delivery scheduled in early 2017. The “Luigi Rizzo” vessel will feature a high degree of flexibility, capable of operating in all tactical situations. 144 metres long with a beam of 19.7 metres, the ship will have a displacement at full load of approximately 6,700 tonnes. The “Luigi Rizzo” will have a maximum speed of over 27 knots and will provide accommodation for a 200-person crew.

The ships of the FREMM program represent the state of the art of the European and Italian defence and will replace the “Lupo” and “Maestrale” class frigates built by Fincantieri in the 1970s. The vessels “Carlo Bergamini” and “Virginio Fasan” have been delivered in 2013, the “Carlo Margottini” in 2014, the “Carabiniere” in 2015, while the delivery of the “Alpino” is scheduled in 2016. With the option exercised last April for the construction of the ninth and tenth vessel, whose delivery is scheduled after 2020, the Italian program has been fully implemented.

Orizzonte Sistemi Navali (51% Fincantieri, 49% Finmeccanica) acts as prime contractor for Italy in the initiative, while Armaris (DCNS + Thales) is prime contractor for France.

This cooperation has applied the positive experience gained in the previous Italo-French program "Orizzonte" that has led to the construction for the Italian Navy of the two frigates "Andrea Doria" and "Caio Duilio".

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### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES LUIGI RIZZO**

*Lieutenant Commander*

#### **Two Gold Medals of Military Valor**

Luigi Rizzo is the officer which best represented the Italian Navy's fearless spirit during WW1, showing really unique qualities of courage, spiritual strength and moral consistency. He was born on October 8, 1887 in Milazzo (Messina). He grew up in a family where the sea and the love for one's homeland were essential elements of the education of children. Grandson, son and brother of sailors, at eight years he immediately started his life at sea, embarking on the ship commanded by his father, proving sea skills and excellent inclination. In 1905, not yet eighteen, he obtained the honor license by the Nautical Institute of Messina, a diploma for aspiring command of merchant ships. He embarked as apprentice on the sailing ship "Speme" on the Genoa-Buenos Aires route, risking shipwreck near Cape Horn. After further adventures on board of the "Sicilian" and the "Livietta", in early 1912 he achieved his long-awaited goals becoming Long Course Captain and on March 17 Sub-Lieutenant of the Navy. In 1912 he worked on the Black Sea for the European Commission of the Danube, getting a medal for his heroism in saving, while commanding a pilot boat, a ship from definite sinking. In summer 1914 he came back to Italy being called up first on the island of La Maddalena then, as instructor, in Venice. The breaking out of events led him to ask to enter into action and that's when he began his history of sinker, the nickname by which he is best known. Since the outbreak of the First World War, in fact, he outstanded first of all for the maritime defense of Grado, being awarded with a silver medal for military valor. After having moved to the new MAS army, he then participated in daring war missions, for which he was awarded with 2 gold medals of military valor, 3 silver ones and being promoted to Lieutenant for war merits. Among the feats to remember, the action of December 1917, for which he was awarded the first gold medal for military valor, the sinking of the battleship "Wien" in the waters of the port of Trieste by torpedoes launched from the MAS under his

command. In February 1918 he became hero in what is known as the “Bakar Mockery”, an operation within the Austrian defense system which, without getting concrete results, uplifted the spirit of the Italian armed forces after the defeat of Caporetto. In this occasion Gabriele D'Annunzio coined the MAS motto: *Memento Audere Semper*. With the action known with the name of Premuda, because it took place in the waters in front of this Dalmatian island, he was awarded the second gold medal for military valor. The night of June 10, Rizzo managed to hit and sink the St. Stephen battleship while directing with the Austrian fleet towards the Strait of Otranto to force the Allie's blockade. The loss of the St. Stephen was a far too heavy blow for the Austro-Hungarian Navy that suspended any action on the sea starting from that moment. In honor of this victory the Navy celebrates its anniversary exactly on 10 June every year. After the war, in 1919 he took part in the seizure of Fiume, where he held the position of Commander of the Kvarner fleet. The year after he retired with the rank of Commander. In 1929 he was appointed Chairman of the Navigation Company Eola of Messina. In 1935, due to war merits, he was awarded the title of Count of Grado and, in 1941, of Premuda. At the outbreak of World War II he got back into the Navy, taking care of the defense of the Sicilian Channel, but he was soon released from his duties to assume, as Admiral, the Chairmanship first of the Lloyd Triestino, then of the Adriatic Cantieri Riuniti. In this position, after September 8, he ordered the sabotage of the ocean liners and of the steamers so they would not fall under German control. Because of this order he was deported to Germany. At the end of the war, he was repatriated to Rome, where he died on June 27, 1951.

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**Fincantieri** is one of the world's largest shipbuilding groups and number one by diversification and presence in all high value-added market sectors, having built more than 7,000 vessels in over 230 years of its maritime history. It is world leader in cruise ship construction and a reference player in other sectors, from naval vessels to cruise ferries, from mega-yachts to special high value-added vessels, from ship repairs and conversions to offshore vessels. Headquartered in Trieste (Italy), the Group has almost 20,900 employees, of whom approximately 7,700 in Italy, and 21 shipyards in 4 continents. In 2013 the Group acquired VARD, a company listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange that builds offshore support vessels for oil & gas exploration and production. Fincantieri has doubled in size to become the West's leading shipbuilder. Fincantieri operates in the United States through its subsidiary Fincantieri Marine Group (FMG). This company, which serves important government customers, including the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, has three shipyards (Marinette Marine, Bay Shipbuilding, Ace Marine), all located in the Great Lakes region. Fincantieri is present in the UAE with Etihad Ship Building, a joint venture set up with Al Fattan Ship Industries and Melara Middle East, to design, produce and sell different types of civilian and military ships as well as perform maintenance and refitting activities.

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