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ready for acquisitions - CEO

By Massimo Gaia
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(Reuters) - Italian computer company Eurotech <E5T.MI> is ready to look at acquisition opportunities and aims to boost its sales in the defence and healthcare sectors, founder and Chief Executive Roberto Siagri said.

Siagri, who holds a 6.8 percent stake in the company, was speaking after Monday's announcement that the company had trimmed its adjusted net loss to 0.38 million euros for 2008 from 2.6 million euros in 2007.

Sales rose 20 percent to 91.73 million euros.

"Notwithstanding what has happened in the second part of the year, we have succeeded to close (the year) well," he told Reuters late on Monday.

Eurotech expects a phase of consolidation in the nano -- or miniature -- computer sector in which it operates.

Eurotech intends "to examine attentively (acquisition) opportunities if they present themselves", he said, adding "the more important players will have an easier game".

The company recently signed a partnership with U.S. chip maker Intel <INTC.O> to enter the supercomputer sector, and Siagri said he expected the first machines from the alliance to be ready in the second half of the year.

In so-called anti-cyclical sectors, which are less affected by the ups and downs of the economic cycle, Eurotech intends to increase the share of its sales in the defence sector from 15 percent and in the medical sector from only 5 percent, he said.

In 2008, Italian defence and aerospace company Finmeccanica SpA <SIFI.MI> took an 11.1 percent stake in Eurotech.

"Since last November, we are proceeding at a good pace. We are working on more opportunities, above all in aerospace and defence," Siagri said with reference to its Finmeccanica ties.

At 1344 GMT, Eurotech shares were up 4.71 percent at 2.11 euros.

(Reporting by Massimo Gaia,
writing by Nigel Tutt, editing by Will Waterman) ((nigel.
tutt@thomsonreuters.com; +39 02 66129723; Reuters Messaging:
nigel.tutt.

reuters.com@reuters.net)

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