Press Release

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Strategic Partnership Between Shield AI and GEK TERNA for the Development of X-BAT in Greece

GEK TERNA Group and the American aerospace and defense technology company Shield AI have signed a strategic agreement for the joint development of subsystems, integration, and lifecycle support of the autonomous X-BAT combat aircraft in Greece.

As a member of NATO and a long-standing ally of the United States, Greece safeguards hundreds of islands and an extensive coastline across the Aegean Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. Airstrips on the islands are limited and, as likely first targets in the event of a threat, highly exposed.

The X-BAT, a long-range, highly survivable strike aircraft featuring AI-enabled autonomous navigation and vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) capabilities, can operate from ships, islands, and remote locations without the need for conventional runways. It will be capable of carrying weapons weighing up to 2,000 pounds in internal weapons bays comparable in size to those of the F-35, while offering a combat radius of 1,000 nautical miles.

In addition, the aircraft will be able to support electronic warfare and ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) missions. Flight testing is scheduled to begin later this year.

“Our aircraft are already flying over the Aegean, and Greek engineers are already developing solutions tailored to our software. Therefore, the X-BAT represents the next step in our relationship with Greece,” said **James Lythgoe, Regional Director, Eastern & Southeast Europe at Shield AI**.

“An aircraft that does not require a runway for takeoff or landing is ideally suited to the needs of a country tasked with defending hundreds of inhabited islands. **GEK TERNA** develops and operates critical infrastructure. We seek to establish the same capability for the implementation and end-to-end operation of technologically complex projects by developing the necessary facilities, training centers, maintenance and overhaul sites, support hubs, and the industrial base required to ensure the operational readiness of the **X-BAT** in Greece and across the wider Eastern Mediterranean region.”

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Shield AI will lead the X-BAT program, providing the aircraft’s autonomous navigation software and mission systems. GEK TERNA, as Shield AI’s strategic partner in Greece, will manage and further develop the Greek supplier network, which will include small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It will also operate the local office supporting the X-BAT program.

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The contribution of the domestic industry will include the manufacturing and assembly of components, ground support equipment, operational bases and launch facilities, training centers, and maintenance and repair facilities. The agreement also envisages research collaboration with Greek universities, with the prospect of supporting requirements not only in Greece but also across the wider region.

“For more than fifty years, GEK TERNA has been developing, constructing, and operating reliable critical infrastructure that Greeks use every day, from national highways, power generation facilities, and airports to water infrastructure and digital networks,” said George Kouladis, Head of Investments Monitoring at GEK TERNA Group.

“Dual-use infrastructure has always been part of our activities, but today it has become a top priority. Together with Shield AI, we want Greek companies to undertake the assembly, integration, and support of the X-BAT in Greece, with the goal of establishing our country as a regional center of excellence for training and maintenance of the system for operators across the broader region. This means creating high-quality, highly skilled jobs, building a strong Greek supplier base, and providing an aircraft that the Hellenic Armed Forces can support domestically, thereby enhancing their operational resilience.”

The two companies will explore the potential of establishing Greece as a regional hub for X-BAT training, logistics, and maintenance, with the capability to support Cyprus, the Balkans, and Southeastern Europe. The specific roles, workshare allocation, and required facilities will be defined in forthcoming agreements, which are already under negotiation between the two companies.

Shield AI’s presence in Greece has expanded significantly over the course of the year across the fields of aviation systems, software, and industry.

In June, the Hellenic Army signed an agreement to expand its V-BAT fleet for maritime surveillance missions in the Aegean, while Shield AIannounced the establishment of a new office in Athens.

In July, the V-BAT conducted a live demonstration during the inauguration of the Joint Unmanned Aerial Systems Training Center at the Tripoli Air Detachment.

For further information:

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