

**** Announcement of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus on the conclusion of the International Defence and Security Conference “Cyprus National Guard Digital Transformation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence War” ****

The Ministry of Defence announces the successful conclusion of the International Defence and Security Conference titled “Cyprus National Guard Digital Transformation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence War”, which took place on 11–12 November 2025 at Pavilion Hall in Nicosia.

The conference was organized by DBDC International Events and Special Publications Ltd, under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence, and brought together leading representatives of the defence industry, academics, and experts from Cyprus and abroad. Throughout the conference, innovative solutions and cutting-edge technologies were presented in the fields of defence, security, and artificial intelligence.

Topics discussed included:

- Digital transformation and rapidly evolving threats
- C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) in the modern era and network-centric operational architecture
- Countering modern threats through advanced air-defence systems and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)
- Artificial intelligence and its impact on defence capabilities
- Armored vehicles and unmanned aerial and ground systems
- Anti-drone systems, electronic warfare, and cyber defence
- Satellite communications, night-vision technologies, and situational awareness
- National security applications and the integration of advanced systems into military operations

The Ministry of Defence extends its warmest thanks to the organizers and all participants for their contribution to the excellent execution of the conference and looks forward to future initiatives that will further strengthen Cyprus’ role in the field of defence and security.

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The event brought together a distinguished audience of senior government, military, and industry representatives, underscoring its importance for Cyprus' national defence and security ecosystem. Among the attendees were the Acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, Dr. Elikkos Elia, and Dr. Panagiotis Hatzipavlis, Director of the Directorate for General Procurement, Defence Capability Development and Armaments, high-ranking officers from the Ministry of Defence and the National Guard, the Cyprus Police, and the Cyprus Fire Service were also present, along with members of foreign military delegations, Defence Attachés, and senior representatives of both international and domestic defence-industry organizations. Their participation highlighted the event's significance as a platform for strategic dialogue, capability development, and interagency cooperation. In his opening address, Acting Permanent Secretary Dr. Elikkos Elia emphasized the Defence Ministry's commitment to strengthening Cyprus' defence posture through modernization, digital transformation, and collaborative partnerships.

"Dear members of the Parliament, your excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great honour to address you today at the opening of the International Conference with the name Cyprus National Guard Digital Transformation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence War.

This two-day conference is an opportunity to address issues stemming from the ever-changing and complex modern warfare and to discuss the critical role of the defence industry in shaping the future security, stability and prosperity of our country, our region and Europe as a whole. I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the organizer DBDC International Events and Special Publications for its dedication and hard work in bringing together such an important event which promotes the Republic of Cyprus as an integral part not only of the European defence industry but also the defence-related research and innovation. A special thank you to all the speakers, panelists and representatives from the defence industry who have travelled here to contribute with their indisputable expertise.

This conference comes at a crucial time as we navigate a work characterized by instability and significant geopolitical changes. It presents also a unique opportunity to explore and discuss collaborative defence initiatives, innovation and the evolving landscape of security in Europe and beyond. The recent global security climate has prompted us all to rethink our approach to defence.

In Europe, you are witnessing a strategic shift with new policies, agreements and initiatives aimed at strengthening our collective defence capabilities. Notable steps such as the adoption of strategic frameworks, the establishment of defence funds and joint procurement processes are all testament to the direction in which Europe is heading. In light of ongoing global uncertainties, it is more than ever important to invest in enhancing our military and technological capabilities.

Strengthening defence with the EU is vital to safeguard our long-term security as well as ensuring strategic autonomy in an increasingly complex world. Here in Cyprus, we have recognized the importance of bolstering our national defence. Over the past few years, we have made significant strides in increasing our defence budget and investing in advanced capabilities. We remain resolute in defending our national

interests and maintaining a strong national guard, willing and able to defend our homeland and our borders.



© Acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, Dr. Elikkos Elia

Dr. Panagiotis Hatzipavlis, Director of the Directorate for General Procurement, Defence Capability Development and Armaments, delivered a presentation offering a comprehensive overview of the evolving European defence landscape and the central role of the SAFE Regulation in strengthening Europe's industrial resilience, strategic autonomy, and operational capabilities. He began by outlining the geopolitical context that reshaped European security dynamics following the Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2022. This watershed event exposed fragmented defence supply chains, Europe's dependence on non-EU suppliers, and mounting instability in regions surrounding the continent, including the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and North Africa. These challenges highlighted the urgent need for a coordinated European response, which ultimately led to the creation of the SAFE initiative aimed at reinforcing defence industrial capacity and enabling greater strategic autonomy.

Dr. Hatzipavlis detailed how the SAFE Regulation introduces mechanisms to enhance defence readiness across EU Member States. These include joint procurement frameworks, industrial incentives to expand European production capacity, and deeper cross-border supply-chain integration—particularly benefiting SMEs and smaller states.

The presentation further explained how Cyprus is aligning its National Armaments Plan with SAFE. Key pillars include capability modernization and joint procurement of priority systems such as ammunition, precision-guidance technologies, drones, armoured vehicles, secure communications, and electronic-warfare systems. Cyprus also seeks to better integrate its SMEs into EU consortia, strengthen research and innovation partnerships with universities, and promote dual-use technologies that support both defence and civilian applications.

Dr. Hatzipavlis concluded by outlining the strategic benefits for Cyprus: enhanced access to EU funding, increased industrial know-how, the creation of high-value jobs, reduced external dependency, and a stronger national role within EU defence and security policy. Through active participation in SAFE and related EU frameworks, Cyprus positions itself as a committed contributor to European defence capability, cooperation, and confidence.

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“Cyprus National Guard Digital Transformation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence War”
2025 C4ISR International Conference
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Organized by **DBDC** International Clients & Social Partners

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