Press Release

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MBDA GERMANY PREPARES THE WAY FOR C- RAM LASER WEAPON SYSTEM

The ability to direct 10 kW laser power over a long distance and reach a target with a high quality beam is a decisive forward step. MBDA Germany has conducted several successful tests with its laser demonstrator. This is evidence of major progress in terms of achieving a C-RAM (Counter Rocket, Artillery, Mortar) laser weapon system. The results also confirm MBDA Germany's leading position in Europe in this domain.

For the first time, 10 kW laser power reached a moving target located more than two kilometres away while retaining a high quality beam. The tracking of dynamic objects and the effects on the object were demonstrated over a distance of more than 2,300 m and an altitude differential of 1,000 m under real-life environmental conditions.

These results are of major significance. The successful combating of RAM munitions is of major importance for the protection of soldiers in the field. However, this also represents several technical challenges. Defence against RAM munitions is only possible to a limited extent with current cannon systems or missiles. These difficulties arise from the high speed of artillery munitions, the small signatures of mortar munitions, the required combat distance in excess of 1,000 m and the necessary combat velocity. In this respect, laser weapons are exceptionally well suited for use against RAM munitions.

However, since countermeasures against RAM must be carried out within a few seconds, it is necessary to achieve high laser power and a high quality laser beam against a fast moving target at distances of between 1,000 m and 3,000 m. This is the only way to guarantee the protection of a field camp using such a laser weapon.

The experts at MBDA Germany have now proven that their laser demonstrator is already able to deliver high laser power and a high quality laser beam at a moving target over long distances. Currently, it is only possible with the geometric coupling principle that has been patented by MBDA Germany. This therefore lays the groundwork for the development of a C- RAM laser weapon system.

A European consortium led by MBDA Germany has been developing the major aspects of the system in a study being conducted on behalf of the European Defence Agency (EDA) since 2009. Integration investigations with appropriate hardware have also been carried out. The final selection of a platform for the laser weapon system will be made once all the relevant conditions have been established. This process is currently underway in close consultation with users and suppliers.

The successful tests by MBDA Germany have been conducted on behalf of the German Federal Office for Defence Technology and Procurement (BWB) at the latter's WTD 52 testing site.

Notes to editors

MBDA Germany comprises LFK-Lenkflugkörpersysteme GmbH together with its subsidiaries (TDW and Bayern-Chemie). As a part of Europe's MBDA Group, MBDA Germany employs around 1,300 persons at its sites in Schrobenhausen, Unterschleissheim, Ulm and Aschau am Inn.

With industrial facilities in four European countries and within the USA, in 2010 MBDA achieved a turnover of 2.8 billion euros with an order book of 10.8 billion euros. With more than 90 armed forces customers in the world, MBDA is a world leader in missiles and missile systems. MBDA is the only group capable of designing and producing missiles and missile systems that correspond to the full range of current and future operational needs of the three armed forces (land, sea and air). In total, the group offers a range of 45 missile systems and countermeasures products already in operational service and more than 15 others currently in development.

MBDA is jointly held by BAE SYSTEMS (37.5%), EADS (37.5%) and FINMECCANICA (25%).

Press contacts

Germany
Wolfram Lautner
Tel: + 49 (0) 8252 99 2549
wolfram.lautner@mbda-systems.de
Mobile: +49 (0) 170 560 2350

Germany
Günter Abel
Tel: + 49 (0) 8252 99 3827
guenter.abel@mbda-systems.de
Mobile: +49 (0) 160 369 3037

Internet: **www.mbda-systems.com**