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HYDEF Kick-off Meeting

After the signature of the contract between OCCAR (Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation), and *Sistemas de Misiles de España* (SMS) for the **HYDEF (HYpersonic DEFence)** Interceptor Concept Study Programme last Wednesday, November 29, the HYDEF Programme Kick-Off Meeting took place in *Escuela Politécnica Superior del Ejército de Tierra (ESPOL)*, in Madrid. This milestone marks the start of European collaboration to develop an interceptor as part of an Integrated Air and Missile Defence system architecture capable of neutralizing emerging and most demanding hypersonic threats for the coming decades.

OCCAR, on behalf of the Participating States and the European Commission, will manage the programme the HYDEF Programme, which aims to research and define the concept of a European interceptor that incorporates the latest technologies in propulsion, aerodynamics, advanced guidance, cutting-edge sensors and actuator systems. These technologies will allow the interceptor to achieve maximum manoeuvrability and the capability to neutralize hypersonic threats.

The event, hosted by SMS as programme coordinator, and chaired by OCCAR, was attended by 80 people, including the OCCAR-EA, representatives of the Participating States (Belgium, Germany, Norway, Poland and Spain) and the industrial partners of the HYDEF consortium: SMS (Project Coordinator), Diehl (Technical Coordinator), Beyond Gravity, EM&E, GMV, ILOT, Instalaza, INTA, ITWL, LKE, Nammo, Navantia, Sener, and Sonaca.

During the event, SMS and Diehl Defence presented an overview of the project, including its objectives, scope and duration, highlighting the work breakdown structure and project schedule. Furthermore, details of the project organization chart and the responsibilities of each participant, including the roles and responsibilities of the HYDEF Consortium partners were revealed and information on the project management process and the exchange with OCCAR were provided. The event ended with conclusions and the next steps for the project, like the Core Stakeholder Workshop, which took places on November 29th and 30th. This workshop aims at improving the collaboration between the key stakeholders from the HYDEF Programme, first iteration for capturing Stakeholders Needs and setting the strategy for the successful execution of the project.

HYDEF marks the start of a unique opportunity for Europe to develop a cutting-edge hypersonic defence capability.

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WP No.	Document Reference	Title	Version	Date	Page
N/A	N/A	HYDEF Kick-off Meeting	1.0	30/11/2023	1