

Press Release

MS&D 2025: Focus on speed, efficiency and collaboration in defence procurement

During the international Maritime Security & Defence Conference (MS&D) on Tuesday, a clear signal was sent to policymakers, defence forces and industry: military procurement in the current security environment requires more speed, greater efficiency and true collaboration. The pressure to act has never been greater. Held at Hamburg's International Maritime Museum, the event set new standards for cooperation between military and political decision-makers and the industry.

Hamburg, 27 November 2025 – The international Maritime Security & Defence Conference concluded successfully on Tuesday. Counting nearly 200 participants from all over Europe, the event at the Hamburg International Maritime Museum was fully booked. Its main focus was on strengthening collaboration between the industry and the military in procuring military assets. "The enormous interest in MS&D is proof of the great importance being assigned to the topic, especially in the naval sector. This clearly underlines the current critical security situation," said **Retired Rear Admiral Karsten Schneider**, President of the German Maritime Institute (DMI), which had put together the conference programme.

Military resilience

The general security situation in Europe, especially against the backdrop of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, was the subject of a keynote address delivered by **Retired Admiral Joachim Rühle**. The immediate threat is evident in numerous hybrid attacks in regions such as the Baltic, he said, a fact that calls for targeted military responses.

Rühle, until recently Chief of Staff at SHAPE, the Allied headquarters, and one of NATO's top officers, continued: "We can no longer rely on economic strength alone. Europe must regain its capability to act on security by ensuring deployment-ready defence forces, a resilient infrastructure, and an industry ready to deliver on short notice. Transforming our defence forces' material assets rapidly while accelerating procurement processes radically is of critical importance. To achieve defence-readiness by 2029, our troops, policymakers and economy must jointly pick up speed."

Massive expertise

This led over to the topic of defence capabilities, which, the assembly of experts agreed, can only be ensured by investing huge resources not only in sufficient personnel but also in military equipment. Germany and its European allies have expanded their defence budgets substantially and sustainably. But how can equipment be put on the road quickly?

Keynote speaker **Norbert Blumenthal**, Head of Armament Subdivision III at the Federal Ministry of Defence, was able to provide some valuable insights. There is hardly anyone who can deliver a more detailed analysis of the complexities of procurement management, especially in the naval realm. Before joining the Federal Ministry of Defence, Mr. Blumenthal was Assistant Department Head – Navy at the Federal Bureau for Equipment, Information Technology and the Bundeswehr based in Lahnstein, a key interface for military procurement. “The threat situation is obvious – and our answer must be a navy that is ready to deploy at any time, technologically superior, and capable of adapting rapidly to changing requirements,” Blumenthal emphasised. “To achieve this, we must strengthen international cooperation, not only by ensuring interoperability between ourselves and our partners, but also by implementing and jointly using identical systems wherever possible so as to create synergies in the areas of logistics, training and continued development. To tackle the current security challenges, it is imperative that our industrial partners deliver orders within the agreed time frame and at the required cost and quality.”

Enthusiastic feedback

First-rate speakers presenting exclusive insights – the organisers were more than pleased with the outcome of the event: “There is probably no other event in Europe that can provide this depth of information from the ‘machine room’ of military procurement. The two-day MS&D Conference in September 2026 will take a closer look at global procurement,” said **Claus Ulrich Selbach**, Vice President Exhibitions at Hamburg Messe und Congress.

Many participants shared the positive assessment. “For SINN Power, the MS&D Conference was clearly a worthwhile experience. We were able to engage in conversations with decision-makers from the Bundeswehr, the EU and the industry, gaining crucial insights into current requirements. The conference provides us with clear guidance and concrete springboards for future cooperation partnerships,” said CEO **Dr.-Ing. Philipp Sinn**.

Ole Johannsen, CEO of Develogic, added: “MS&D is not only a special conference dedicated to maritime security but also a networking opportunity for the maritime community in Hamburg and beyond. Face-to-face interaction with regional and international partners is essential for us to become acquainted with new views, and to discuss solutions for the challenges of the future jointly with others. As a maritime hub, Hamburg provides a perfect backdrop for doing so – this is where new ideas are born that move the industry forward.”

The discussion on the podium also addressed ways to simplify and accelerate processes. Improving efficiency at the crucial interfaces between politics, the military, the industry and service providers is considered as a crucial prerequisite for an effective use of funds and rapid project execution. The Bundeswehr has begun to restructure its procurement practices, banking on rapid solutions to meet the current challenges in working with the start-up ecosystem as well as innovators from within the military. **Sven Weizenegger**, Head of the Bundeswehr's Cyber Innovation Hub, and **Commodore Dirk Gärtner**, Head of the Planning and Concept Development Department at the German naval command, provided some instructive practical examples while describing many areas where improvements are still needed to achieve the ambitions.

Successful networking

"This was truly the right event at the right time," concluded co-organisier **Retired Rear Admiral Karsten Schneider**. "Our focus on the need to accelerate and modernise procurement processes brought together exactly the right audience."

The panels and networking formats offered valuable opportunities to link up representatives of the military with companies interested in the defence market.

Now the sector is looking ahead to the next, regular MS&D which will once again take place during SMM, the world's leading maritime trade fair next September. "I am sure that we will have made some progress by then," said **Karsten Schneider**.

About MS&D

MS&D – the Maritime Security & Defence Conference is Germany's only international special-interest conference dedicated to maritime security and defence. It lines up top-flight speakers from the military, politics, business and science communities to explore current security challenges, European procurement strategies and advanced technologies, from unmanned systems through to dual-use innovations. As a conference format, MS&D is a permanent part of SMM, the leading trade fair of the global maritime industry, which will take place in Hamburg again from 1 to 4 September 2026. The MS&D Special 2025 was the first time the conference took place as a focused, compact, stand-alone event outside the trade fair context, dedicated specifically to military procurement in Europe.

www.smm-hamburg.com/msd-conference

Press contact

Nele Bruns
Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH
Tel: +49 40 3569-2445
E-Mail: Nele.Bruns@hamburg-messe.de