

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Autonomous Systems Community of Interest (ASCI) Conference

*A European Defence Agency event in partnership with the Estonian Ministry of Defence and supported by MILREM Robotics.*

### CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

#### Day 1 – 04 November 2025

08h30 Registrations & Welcome Coffee

09h50 **Opening Address**

**Kaimo Kuusk**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Estonia

10h05 **Welcome Remarks**

**Nathalie Guichard**, Director Research, Technology & Innovation, European Defence Agency

10h20 **Keynote Speech – European strategic outlook on autonomous systems**

**Tobias Vestner**, Director of the Research and Policy Advice Department, GCSP

10h40 **Keynote Speech – European industry perspective on autonomous systems**

**Kuldar Väärsi**, Chief Executive Officer, Milrem Robotics

11h00 **Session 1: Fostering collaboration to streamline development and procurement processes**

*Although the relevance of AS is widely acknowledged, progress remains hindered by fragmented programmes, divergent timelines, and misaligned acquisition processes. Many national initiatives operate in isolation, reducing opportunities for scalability and interoperability. This high-level session will address how to align priorities, streamline procurement, and foster joint development and deployment of AS capabilities.*

**Ignacio Cuartero Lorenzo**, Director Concepts and Capabilities, EU Military Staff

**Nathalie Guichard**, Director Research, Technology & Innovation, European Defence Agency

**Krastio Preslavsky**, Deputy Head of Unit, Defence Industrial Programming Coordination, DG DEFIS, European Commission

**Ronald Rietbergen**, International Project Leader Drones & Counter-Drones, Ministry of Defence of The Netherlands

**Isabelle Desjeux**, Chair of the Military Air Domain Industrial Group (MADIG), ASD Europe

**Moderator: Gert Jervan**, Dean at the Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia

12h30-14h00 Lunch and visit to mini-EXPO

14h00 **Session 2: Experimenting, developing, and training together**

*Effective integration requires not only technology, but also realistic testing, co-development, and joint training. While several Member States run strong national programmes, the multinational opportunities remain underused, and a more structured EU approach could boost efficiency, interoperability, and trust. This session will examine how shared experimentation, and training can be scaled up at EU level, including options such as a “European Unmanned Unit” to support development.*

**Dmytro Tolstoluzhskyi**, Head of Department Central Directorate for Innovations of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

**Mārtiņš Mežulis**, Defence Counsellor (Industry and Innovation), Ministry of Defence, Latvia

**Dario Pedro**, Chief Executive Officer, Beyond Vision

**Marco Lotz**, Business Development Manager, Quantum Systems

**Raul Rikk**, Capability Development Director, MILREM Robotics

**Moderator: Stephen O’Sullivan**, Project Officer UAS Airspace Integration, EDA

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15h30-16h00 Coffee Break

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16h00 **Session 3: Member States’ lessons and perspectives on AS – considerations on Unmanned Units in Armed Forces**

*Member States are experimenting with different approaches to integrating Unmanned Units, from embedding unmanned assets into existing units to creating dedicated structures. This session provides a platform to exchange national experiences on doctrine, force design, interoperability, and operations, while exploring the long-term role of Unmanned Units in European force structures.*

**Magnus Frykvall**, Head of Department of Development, Directorate of Strategic Policy and Plans, Armed Forces HQ, Sweden

**Tiago Gouveia**, RAS Project Officer, Technological Experimentation Group, Portuguese Army

**Ivo Peets**, Incoming Head of Force Transformation Command, Defence Forces, Estonia

**Janusz Jabłoński**, Senior Officer, Unmanned Ground Systems Equipment Department, Unmanned Systems Force, Poland

**Dmytro Chumak**, Acting Head of the Unmanned Aerial Systems Development Section, Unmanned Systems Forces Command of the Armed Forces, Ukraine

**Moderator: Mihai Ionita**, Project Officer Land and Logistics, European Defence Agency

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17h30-19h00 Networking reception

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**Day 2 – 05 November 2025**

08h30 Registrations & Welcome Coffee

09h00 **Session 4: Evolving dynamics of modern warfare – scenario-based wargaming and lessons observed**

*Modern conflicts highlight both the urgency and the challenges of deploying AS effectively. This interactive session, consisting of three parts, will allow participants to examine how to bring systems rapidly to the frontline and ensure they are employed effectively, safely, and in line with operational goals. By building on recent lessons and wargaming insights, participants will identify practical improvement areas across capability development and use.*

09h00 Session context, scenario presentation and methodology  
**João Caetano**, Project Officer UAS Programmes, European Defence Agency

09h15 **PART 1: Scenario-based wargaming – identifying assets and gaps for current and future scenarios**  
**João Caetano**, Project Officer UAS Programmes, European Defence Agency

10h15-10h45 Coffee Break

10h45 **PART 2: From development to deployment: delivering autonomous systems to the frontline – lessons observed, challenges and priorities for acceleration**

**Dmytro Chumak**, Senior officer of Unmanned Systems Development Department, Unmanned Systems Forces Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

**Nataliia Kushnerska**, Chief Operations Officer, Roboneers

**Eugene Yakovlev**, Chief Partnership Development and Investor Relations Officer, Skyeton

**Moderator: Luca Gargiulo**, Project Officer Aviation/Air Superiority, European Defence Agency

11h45 **PART 3: Mobility, survivability, and tactical employment of autonomous systems at the frontline – lessons observed, challenges and priorities for change/improvement**

**Jakob Kirner**, Senior Business Developer, ARX

**Jakub Fojtik**, Vice President of Business Development, Primoco UAV

**Eivind Lyngar**, Business Development Manager, Kongsberg

**Darek Saunders**, Head of Research and Innovation Unit, Frontex

**Moderator: Martin Joesaar**, Programme Officer, EU Defence Innovation Office Kyiv, EEAS

13h00-14h15 Lunch and visit to mini-EXPO

14h15 **Session 5: “Scaling up European defence: bridging funding gaps and enabling growth for strategic assets”**

*To achieve strategic autonomy, Europe must urgently scale up its innovation base by transforming promising start-ups into defence-relevant scale-ups. This session will explore how to bridge critical funding gaps, accelerate investment cycles, and enable the growth of dual-use technologies into strategic assets for European defence.*

**Oliver Cusworth**, Senior Policy Advisor, European Investment Bank

**Kateryna Mykhalko**, Director General, Tech Force in UA, Ukraine

**Christian Martens**, Chief Executive Officer of Integrated Electronic Systems, Rheinmetall

**Alexander Wolf**, Head of Product Management Unmanned Systems, Diehl Defence

**Maurits Korthals Altes**, Chief Executive Officer, Intelic

**Moderator: Robbie Boyd**, Senior Leader, Defence Security and Resilience Bank Development Group

15h45 **Conclusions and way ahead**

**Mario Martinho**, Coordinator of EDA’s Action Plan on Autonomous Systems, European Defence Agency

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16h00 End of conference

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