

Joint Statement



ASD and ADS welcome EU-UK Security and Defence Partnership, urge swift implementation

Brussels, 19 May 2025 –Today, the first EU-UK summit since the UK's withdrawal from the EU took place in London. At the meeting, EU and UK leaders agreed on a Security and Defence Partnership as a commitment to strengthen cooperation in that area.

ASD Secretary General Jan Pie and **ADS CEO Kevin Craven** commented as follows:

"ASD and ADS welcome today's Security and Defence Partnership agreement, signed at the EU-UK Leaders Summit in London.

So far, the absence of a formal EU-UK agreement on foreign, security and defence policy since Brexit has curtailed opportunities for synergies and scale, weakening Europe's collective defence potential. While the agreement is an important step forward, further detail and ambition are now needed, particularly on industrial collaboration, to fully realise its potential. Therefore, the agreement should now be followed by concrete policy and legislative steps that provide the clarity and predictability needed for joint projects, enabling businesses on both sides to pool funding, knowledge and capabilities. This would enable the UK's and EU's innovative and dynamic defence sectors to act as force multipliers within a genuine European endeavour.

The European security environment has dramatically changed in recent years, laying bare Europe's vulnerabilities and dependencies. Against this background, all Europe has to take more responsibility and work together for its own defence and ramp up necessary military capabilities. Effective European defence requires close collaboration between the EU and the United Kingdom, including in the framework of EU defence programmes. It is therefore a positive signal that in today's Security and Defence partnership, both parties agreed that they will conduct regular exchanges on the development of respective security and defence initiatives, including on defence readiness and defence industry, and will explore possible mutual involvement in respective defence initiatives.

Although no longer part of the European Union, the UK remains deeply embedded within and an integral part of Europe's defence industrial ecosystem. Decades of collaborative defence projects, shared values, common interests and similar strategic challenges continue to bind the UK and EU closely together.

Ensuring that future cooperation is structured to enhance Europe’s resilience, industrial scale and strategic autonomy will benefit both sides, which should be underpinned by clear, shared commitments to maximise joint impact.”

About ASD and ADS

ASD is the Aerospace, Security and Defence Industries Association of Europe. Its overall representation adds up to more than 4,000 companies, accounting for 98% of industry’s total turnover and 93% of its total employment in Europe. More info: www.asd-europe.org

ADS is the UK trade association for the aerospace, defence, security and space sectors, representing almost 1,500 businesses. It enables prosperity, clean growth, and aims to secure advanced manufacturing’s collective advantage. ADS is a member of ASD. More info: <https://www.adsgroup.org.uk/>

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