

PRESS RELEASE

KNDS France and METLEN Partner for the Production of the VBCI PHILOCTETES® in Greece

Athens, Greece – 7 April 2025 – [METLEN](#) has entered into an exclusive partnership with KNDS France for the production of the French latest generation of 8x8 Infantry Fighting armoured Vehicle, **VBCI PHILOCTETES®** marking a significant milestone in European defence industrial cooperation.

This is the first time that the French leader in land defence has signed such an ambitious agreement for 8x8 armoured vehicles. This exclusive alliance will involve the transfer of know-how concerning aluminium armour and the local production of the VBCI Mk2 welded structure. This strategic industrial agreement is designed to meet the Hellenic Army's operational requirement for a large number of 8x8 infantry fighting vehicles as well as that of other European armies. By locating key manufacturing and maintenance operations within Greece, the partnership enhances equipment availability. This dynamic also reflects the beneficial trickle-down effect to the Greek industry and strengthens the Franco-Greek defence relationship.

PHILOCTETES®: A powerful, standalone and complete combat system

PHILOCTETES® refers to the Trojan War hero and keeper of the arrows of Heracles, essential to the Achaeans to bring down the city. The VBCI PHILOCTETES® is an improved version of the 8x8 infantry fighting vehicle already in service with the French army. PHILOCTETES® integrates a 40mm remotely operated turret similar to that of the JAGUAR, and an MMP anti-tank missile pod. It covers a wide range of threats, from UAVs to aircraft, from light vehicles to main battle tanks. The VBCI can carry a full infantry combat group and is available in several variants: command post, ambulance, or recovery vehicle. The VBCI has been used by the French army for more than 10 years in external operations, and it is being continuously developed ever since.

METLEN has a proven track record in the defence sector, having been a trusted industrial partner for KNDS Deutschland for the last 23 years. Its Volos-based production facility is already responsible for shielding welding of the LEOPARD 2 MBT. With this latest collaboration, METLEN is further strengthening its footprint in the European defence initiatives.

The geopolitical landscape and the need for increased European defence autonomy necessitates a rapid reinforcement of the continent's defence capabilities. The European rearmament drive (ReArm) underlines the importance of localized defence production and industrial self-sufficiency. The Greek industry, through initiatives like this, plays a pivotal role in contributing to Europe's strategic independence, while also creating highly skilled jobs and fostering technological advancements. With this agreement, METLEN is making a substantial commitment to Greece's and Europe's industrial base.

METLEN has long been a key player in heavy and complex metal constructions, with its Volos industrial facility recognized for its international defence manufacturing. The Volos plant,



established in 1963, has evolved into a highly specialized unit with 100% of its production being export-oriented over the past two decades.

To further support its expanding role in defence manufacturing, METLEN announced at the beginning of 2024 the creation of a new advanced metal structures production unit, scheduled to be operational by 2026. Additionally, the company has acquired two additional facilities in the Volos Industrial Zone, currently undergoing transformation to integrate into METLEN's broader industrial ecosystem.

With METLEN's extensive manufacturing capabilities and KNDS France's expertise and know how in land defence systems, this collaboration represents a critical step in bolstering Greece's and Europe's defence readiness while reinforcing industrial capabilities that will support the region's strategic autonomy for years to come.