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Rheinmetall CEO Klaus Eberhardt elected President of the AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe

Klaus Eberhardt, 63, Chairman of the Executive Board of Rheinmetall AG of Düsseldorf, Germany, took over as president of the *AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe* (ASD) on 7 October. Mr Eberhardt succeeds the Spaniard Domingo Ureña-Raso, 53, CEO of Airbus Military in Madrid. The handover took place in Istanbul at the Association's annual conference.

It has been five years since a German has occupied the top post of this European association, whose president is elected annually by the members of the ASD council, which consists of the heads of Europe's fifteen leading aerospace and defence groups.

The ASD has 28 member associations from twenty countries, together representing more than 2,000 companies, many of the small and medium-sized businesses. With annual sales of €163 billion, the industry employs 700,000 Europe-wide, and has a further 80,000 companies in its supplier chain.

As a focal point of his ASD presidency, Klaus Eberhardt intends to press ahead with long-overdue consolidation in the European defence industry, especially in light of shrinking defence budgets in its home markets. In his inaugural speech, he stressed the need for proactive, independent action in this context. "Our industry faces two basic imperatives: first, to address growth markets outside of Europe jointly rather than as competitors, and to push forward with consolidation of the industry in Europe with all our might", declared Eberhardt, insisting that, "It is simpler and more efficient to initiate the process of consolidation ourselves – and above all to actively shape it – than to leave the matter entirely to politicians."

The *AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe* is headquartered in Brussels, where it represents the interests of the European aviation, space, defence and security sector. ASD seeks to foster and augment the competitiveness and future viability of this vital European industry.

In pursuit of the industry's joint goals, the Association cooperates closely with European institutions and its member organizations.

The Association of the German Aerospace Industry (BDLI) and the Association of the German Security and Defence Industry (BDSV), in which Klaus Eberhardt serves as vice president, jointly represent Germany's interests in the ASD.

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