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Press Release · Pressemitteilung

MS&D to address geopolitical challenges

Just three months ahead of its start, SMM gave a foretaste of the international conference for maritime security and defence. The agenda at MS&D on 5 and 6 September will not only cover the latest trends in naval shipbuilding but also geostrategic issues. Panel members will include public figures such as former Ukrainian deputy minister of defence, Igor Kabanenko, and Dr Jyh-Shyang Sheu from the Taiwanese Institute for National Defence and Security Research.

Hamburg, 18-06-2024 – Attacks on merchant ships by Huthi rebels in the Red Sea; geopolitical tensions in the Taiwan Strait; armed pirate attacks off the Horn of Africa: “A large number of critical security threats are confronting the global community with enormous challenges. Navies are the main guarantors of security on the world’s oceans and we support them specifically in modernising their fleets. Exhibitors at SMM will highlight the most innovative security technologies“, said **Claus Ulrich Selbach**, Business Unit Director – Maritime and Technology Fairs & Exhibitions at Hamburg Messe und Congress (HMC). The international conference on maritime security and defence (MS&D) is all about transferring know-how. Four discussion panels and one wildcard session held in Hall B6 will focus on maritime security. As a novelty, MS&D will be freely accessible to all participants of SMM 2024. The agenda will address current challenges for navies, multi-domain strategies, asymmetric naval tactics, and new trends in naval shipbuilding. Reinhard Lüken believes this combination of topics is exemplary for what sets MS&D apart: “MS&D is not a typical naval forces event; rather, it is a technology show that puts the spotlight on innovation. This is a meeting place for stakeholders to explore maritime security from a variety of perspectives,” said Lüken, General Manager of the German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association (VSM).

Holistic naval deployments

The security conference will be opened by retired Vice Admiral **Karsten Schneider**, President of the German Maritime Institute (DMI). This year the DMI is in charge of drawing up the MS&D programme for the first time. Schneider will also moderate the discussion panel on “Maritime Domain Awareness & Multi Domain Ops – above and under Water”. He considers dual-use technologies as key innovation drivers: „Civil and military shipping are facing completely new and unexpected challenges. Unconventional times require unconventional solutions. Dual use is the order of the day. And this is where SMM's full strength comes into play: civil and military technology are exhibited side by side. MS&D is the forum to bring them both together,” said **Schneider** during the press conference. He is looking forward to an enlightening conversation with the renowned

speakers on his panel, including ret. Major General **Mick Ryan** from the Australian Center for Strategic and International Studies. Ryan will analyse the role of navies in multi-domain strategies.

Volatile security situation

Maritime security and the resilience of maritime infrastructure at the present turning point in history will be the subject of **Dr Moritz Brake**'s speech. About one year ago the Reserve Corvette Captain established the consultancy Nexmaris. "What is needed is not only good ideas and networking but also the right products and technical solutions. In this respect I see myself as a wanderer between worlds," Brake said at the press conference. At MS&D he will be contributing his expertise to the wildcard session "Maritime Innovation Challenge".

Dr Sarah Kirchberger, Director of the Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University, will warn about the critical security situation in the South China Sea. A sinologist, she will chair the discussion panel "Asymmetric Naval Responses – The Illusion of Low-Intensity Warfare at Sea". Among the panel members will be **Dr Jyh-Shyang Sheu** from the Taiwanese Institute for National Defence and Security Research, and former Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Defence, **Igor Kabanenko**. Drawing from their significant personal experience, both will provide their assessments of key security aspects of two crisis or war situations.

Trends in naval shipbuilding

Against the background of increasing geopolitical challenges, many nations, including Germany, are investing in their naval forces. Federal Minister of Defence **Boris Pistorius** recently stressed the importance of ordering two additional Type F126 frigates. "When we speak about a turning point in history, we mean that we must invest in the fleet of the future today, not tomorrow or the day after tomorrow," said Pistorius. "We are well-prepared and ready to ramp up our production," says **Tim Wagner**, Chairman of the Board of NVL Group, a member of the consortium of companies that builds the F126 frigates. On the discussion panel "Trends in Naval Shipbuilding", Wagner will give some insights into the latest engineering and design trends as well as the challenges and opportunities facing the industry.

High-level navy and coast guard delegations from around the world are expected to attend MS&D. To review the entire programme go [here](#).

Additional statements from the press conference on 18 June:

Karsten Schneider, DMI: I don't have to explain to anyone how dramatically the security situation has changed in the last two or three years. We are in a time of upheaval, and that requires new



solutions. At MS&D, we want to look at the new trends, including disruptive technologies that seemed like utopias to us just a short time ago.

Dr Reinhard Lüken, VSM: To rule the waves means to rule the world. This wisdom isn't equally reflected worldwide. China, for example, has prioritized the maritime domain. By 2005, China aimed to become the world's leading shipbuilder, and today, it holds a 60% market share, serving many Western customers. In contrast, the Western world has somewhat lost sight of its maritime industry, raising concerns about growing dependence and security threats. MS&D will undoubtedly shed light on these new risks that every company in the maritime domain must consider.

Dr. Moritz Brake, Nexmaris: Without shipping and other maritime infrastructures, our economy cannot survive. It has long been recognized in the industry that geopolitical rivalry and the focus on maritime security and defense are becoming significantly more important. Without an adapted security concept and resilient design, no business model in the maritime sector will be able to remain competitive.

About SMM

The leading international maritime trade fair takes place in Hamburg from 3 to 6 September 2024. More than 2,000 exhibiting companies and around 40,000 visitors from over 120 countries are expected to attend. Covering the entire value chain of the maritime industry on 90,000 m² in twelve exhibition halls, SMM is the world's foremost platform for innovation and the latest technologies in the maritime sector that brings together business leaders from around the world. Themed "SMM – driving the maritime transition", the 31st SMM will focus on the maritime energy transition and digital transformation. An attractive conference programme and a wide range of networking opportunities will supplement the exhibition. For the first time, the conferences will take place on open stages inside the exhibition halls – free of charge, and accessible to all fair visitors.

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