

Building a Legacy: Shefshet Demirovski on ATS Group's Growth, Global Vision, and Commitment to Innovation

An interview with Shefshet Demirovski, CEO of ATS Group

UNITED KINGDOM, February 5, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Earlier this month, Shefshet Demirovski - Founder and Chief Executive Officer of ATS Group - reflected on the progress the company has made both domestically and internationally and looked ahead to the many opportunities ATS Group has awaiting it. Mr Demirovski also shared his perspectives on the company's support to the war effort in Ukraine, the importance of NATO membership to North Macedonia, and ATS Group's vision for 2025 and beyond.

Established over forty years ago, ATS Group is a North Macedonian technology and materials company building and developing a range of products for the defence, law enforcement and civilian markets. Specialists in producing high quality personal protective materials, ammunition, and defence manufacturing capabilities, ATS Group operates across 56 countries and five continents - Mr Demirovski smiled as he wryly suggested that the company is 'present in countries that have never heard of North Macedonia'.

When asked about the structure of the organisation, Mr Demirovski explained that ATS Group itself is now the 'mother company' of four large factories. Broken into different specialised products, all the factories are currently based in North Macedonia. Three factories are in and around Skopje - the country's capital - and a fourth is in Samorov - a village in the central Macedonian region of Makedonski Brod. Divided into ATS Engineering, ATS Ammunition, ATS Ballistics, and ATS Textiles, the wider company is focused predominantly on the defence market, however both domestic and international law enforcement and civilian markets provide significant revenue too.



Shefshet Demirovski, CEO of ATS Group

With over five hundred workers employed within North Macedonia, ATS Group prides itself on a positive workplace culture and ensuring high employee well-being. ATS Group openly publish details of the incentives and opportunities offered to their employees on their website. These include travel allowances, pension contributions and support with accommodation for those who live too far from the factories to commute daily. Additionally, ATS Group provide health insurance and competitive wages, all of which contribute to its thriving productivity and the significant growth it has seen over the last decade. Despite the North Macedonian government's concerns about local workers heading abroad for higher salaries, ATS Group remains unscathed. Its successful recruitment, and indeed retention, is down to the positive working environment it fosters; competitive wages and perks such as health insurance have also contributed to its productivity and the significant growth it has seen over the last decade.

At the ATS Ammunition factory just outside Skopje, the factory is currently working to double its ammunition production over the next 12 months - from producing 800 rounds per minute to 1600. This increase in output is likely to lead to a growth of workforce too, and gender equality is high on the agenda for the company. At ATS Ammunition, a staggering 80% of the workforce are women¹ - this is doubly impressive given, according to the World Bank Gender Data Portal, the labour force participation rate among females is 42.6% in North Macedonia as a whole. At the ATS Ammunition factory the exceedingly high-quality standards and requirement for exceptional attention to detail - necessary to ensure compliance with ISO, NATO and CIP standards - are key areas the female workers excel in.

At ATS Group the focus on social mobility more widely has led to the company investing 'in the next generation through partnerships with Skopje-based schools and technical colleges, sponsoring and training 20 students annually'.² This effort not only ensures ATS Group employees are technically excellent, but transforms the prospects for the local population within the region. It is clear that Mr Demirovski is proud of the commitment to innovation and technical excellence which sits at the heart of the ATS Group's ethos. He spoke in detail of the considerable investment they have recently made in their factory in Samokov: 'every day we are moving forward with new technology.' The motivation is a delicate balance between increased automation with 'automatic machines [and] automatic product control,' as well as continuous investment in employee training. ATS Group is conscious of the risks posed by a limited availability of skilled labour; they are consequently focusing on building a pipeline of skilled future employees, upskilling and supporting their existing employees, and also ensuring that automation - where appropriate - is optimised. The five hundred personnel working for ATS Group within North Macedonia, represent a significant share of the country's population which was placed at around 1.8 million in the 2023 census. ATS Group's exponential growth and proportionately large size highlights its position as a significant and exciting beacon of innovation within the country.

Mr Demirovski also stressed the importance of his company's support to and relationship with Ukraine. Since the invasion took place on 24 February 2022, ATS Group has worked tirelessly to ensure that Ukrainian Forces receive a constant flow of ammunition and other military

equipment. Mr Demirovski stated that 'from the beginning of the war, from the first days of the war till today, we have been producing ballistic equipment and ammunition for Ukraine non-stop.' North Macedonia's geographical proximity to Ukraine - and indeed proximity to Russia - means that, along with other bordering countries, they have suffered hybrid and cyber-attacks launched by Russia; yet North Macedonia remains unwavering in its support. Since ATS Group's four factories are the only factories in North Macedonia which produce defence equipment, Mr Demirovski's team have shouldered a significant responsibility. Impressively, during the first few months of the war, ATS Group focused its production solely on the support of Ukraine. As they look forward to 2025, their support and dedication to the war effort continue with the company resolute as it prepares to apply for new tenders to provide equipment, ammunition and other materials for the Ukrainian Army.

Given its physical closeness to the invasion, North Macedonia is all too aware of the importance of sovereignty and its own security. As a NATO member state, the country fully embraces democratic values - particularly the importance of human rights and international law - as they continue to support the defence of Ukraine. Speaking to Mr Demirovski it was clear that he and ATS Group are extremely proud of their country's NATO membership: 'Macedonia is a small country in NATO, a new country in NATO.' He reflected on the recent celebration of North Macedonia's five-year anniversary of becoming a NATO member and stated that 'being a member of NATO is very important.' He also warmly congratulated Radmila Šekerinska, the former North Macedonian Minister of Defence with whom ATS Group worked closely and positively during her previous tenure, on her appointment as Deputy Secretary General of NATO in November 2024: 'Not only myself, but all of the citizens of Macedonia are happy with the election.' Ms Šekerinska has previously served in roles supporting European Integration and was a key voice during North Macedonia's ascension to NATO membership. Her new position is therefore a momentous opportunity for the country.

The value of NATO membership in support of North Macedonia's national security is clear, but what is also evident is the substantial commercial opportunity which membership offers the country - and ATS Group in particular. As an approved NATO supplier, ATS Group is able to provide equipment and materials, not only to NATO's efforts in Ukraine, but across NATO more widely. This access has significantly improved the company's position. As well as an increased customer base, NATO membership enhances ATS Group's compliance. The NATO market opportunities have allowed ATS Group to continue to strive for excellence and not only dominate the market domestically but also compete for premium contracts across Europe. A more recent addition to the ATS Group family - ATS Textiles - produces the specific unidirectional materials necessary for automotive and ballistic equipment, for both the defence and civilian market. There is only one other factory in the whole of Europe producing similar materials, therefore ATS Textiles has demonstrated significant success and continues to dominate the market.

In addition to its domestic importance and its increasing prominence within NATO, ATS Group is also 'one of the 10 largest export companies in Macedonia'. According to Mr Demirovski, almost 99% of the products produced by ATS Group are exported outside of North Macedonia. As it

continues to play a critical role in the North Macedonian export market, it is clear that ATS Group's ambitions are increasingly global. With over 50 personnel employed internationally already, the company recently announced significant expansions, including a one hundred million US dollar investment in the construction of an ammunition factory in Texas. 'The 50,000 Sqm2 factory will have the capacity to produce 200 million pieces of small-caliber ammunition per year, primarily intended for the American market'3 and is expected to begin production by the end of 2025. On top of their US expansion, Mr Demirovski has recently confirmed that ATS Group are planning to open an office in London, as well as perhaps further cities across Europe. When pressed on these proposals, he explained that whilst the plan for 2025 is already in flight, there is scope for further expansion as ATS Group begin their planning for 2026 and beyond.

The strategy for ATS Group is twofold. Firstly, to continue to bolster and build on the market leading reputation and successes achieved within North Macedonia. To remain a beacon of community impact and product excellence domestically and continue to train and upskill the local community. And second, to build relationships and opportunities internationally, to be able to produce equipment and materials more quickly. Given the current geopolitical situation in Eastern Europe, the Levant, and Middle East, it is unlikely that demand for ATS Group's products will wane in the near future. As they continue to expand, ATS Group and Mr Demirovski are dedicated to continuing to uphold the high standards of product and employment they have become synonymous with.

Watch the interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkW7jWjCy5s>

About Us

ATS Group corporation based in North Macedonia, with 500+ employees. We bring together technology, a wide range of high-quality composite ballistic products, and the production of small-caliber ammunition.

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