

BlackBelt Technologies CEO Rafael Zard Makes Landmark Debut at Plovdiv Defence Exhibition, Engages Industry Giant TEUSAN

Bulgarian defence-AI startup makes public debut at IDEES Plovdiv, initiating exploratory technical dialogue with TEUSAN.

PLOVDIV, BULGARIA, June 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [BlackBelt Technologies](#), a European defence-AI startup headquartered in Bulgaria, has made its first public appearance at the International Defence Equipment and Services Exhibition (IDEES) in Plovdiv, marking the company's formal emergence from stealth mode into the European defence-technology landscape.



Autonomy without sovereignty is just outsourcing your national security. We exist to ensure Europe never has to make that trade."

Rafael Zard, Co-Founder & CEO, BlackBelt Technologies

Founded in 2025, BlackBelt Technologies develops [Forge-OS](#), a modular [autonomous guidance](#) and mission-planning operating system designed for unmanned aerial systems. The platform integrates GPS-denied navigation, fused sensor intelligence, real-time terrain-matching


algorithms, and adaptive mission logic — capabilities that position it as a sovereign European alternative in a market long dominated by non-EU suppliers.

The Plovdiv exhibition, held against the backdrop of Bulgaria's Thracian Plain and attended by delegations from across NATO's southeastern flank, provided the setting for BlackBelt Technologies to introduce its technology stack to the wider defence-industrial community. Among the conversations that took place on the exhibition floor, the company engaged in preliminary technical dialogue with representatives of TEUSAN, the Turkish aerospace and UAV systems manufacturer known for its work in autonomous flight technologies and space-industry applications.

The exchange, described as exploratory in nature, centred on potential areas of technical complementarity — specifically how Forge-OS might integrate with or enhance existing airframe platforms. No formal agreements were announced, and both parties characterised the discussion as an early-stage introduction consistent with standard industry networking at such events.

BlackBelt Technologies occupies a deliberate position within the European defence ecosystem: that of a software-layer enabler rather than a platform competitor. The company's thesis is that European autonomous capability need not depend on foreign guidance stacks, and that a modular, integration-ready operating system can accelerate the continent's path to sovereign tactical autonomy.

The firm is led by a founding team with backgrounds spanning aerospace engineering, artificial intelligence, and defence-sector strategy. The company has indicated that further announcements regarding technical partnerships, demonstration milestones, and funding developments will follow in the coming quarters.

The logo consists of the letters 'BB' in a bold, white, stylized font with a thick outline, set against a solid black background. The letters are closely spaced and have a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance.

For an industry watching the rapid evolution of unmanned systems doctrine — from the Black Sea to the Sahel — BlackBelt Technologies represents a new entrant with both the technical ambition and the geopolitical positioning to warrant attention. Its emergence at Plovdiv signals not merely a product launch, but the arrival of a purpose-built European answer to the autonomy challenge, emerging from one of NATO's newest member states with both the technical depth and the strategic positioning to matter.

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