Sako Ltd and Finnish Defence Forces sign a contract for the procurement of a new rifle system

The Finnish Defence Forces Logistics Command and Sako Ltd signed a contract for the procurement of the new Rifle System M23 on 12 January 2022. The procurement was preceded by collaboration on the development of the rifle system between Sako Ltd and the Finnish Defence Forces in 2020–2021 in accordance with the letter of intent between the Finnish Defence Forces and Sako Ltd.

The total value of the procurement including the value added tax is approximately EUR 10 million. The contract also includes an additional procurement option for possible subsequent procurements.

*“Sako Ltd’s roots are deeply set in the Finnish Defence Industry. Last year Sako celebrated its hundredth anniversary, and we have collaborated closely with the Finnish Defence Forces for decades. We value greatly the trust that the Defence Forces has shown us, and this procurement contract deepens our collaboration, creates new jobs in Finland, and also improves Finland’s security of supply,”* states Sako’s General Manager, Mr. Raimo Karjalainen.

The new Rifle System M23 includes two separate rifle configurations: the Sniper Rifle 23 for sniper use and the Designated Marksman Rifle 23 for use as an infantry section support weapon by designated marksmen. In addition, the contract includes accessories, spare parts, maintenance equipment, as well as user and maintenance training provided by Sako. Sako has designed the rifles, which are based on the widely used AR10 construction. The rifles are semi-automatic and their calibre is 7.62 NATO.

*“The contract represents an initiative of utmost commercial and strategic significance for Sako’s Defence and Law Enforcement business. During the development of the rifle system, we have conducted multiple extensive tests in different conditions together with the Finnish Defence Forces. We believe that the Rifle System M23 provides a solution that caters extremely well for the operational needs of the Finnish Defence Forces,”* says Mr. Arto Kaikkola, Business Unit Director at Sako’s Defence and Law Enforcement Business Unit.

*“The contract announced today is the first supply contract in relation to Sako’s new product family of self-loading rifles, and the first rifles will be delivered to the Finnish Defence Forces later this year. As a whole, this new product family is a momentous business opportunity for Sako in Finland and the Nordic countries as well as globally. We are very happy that this contract also enables the implementation of joint rifle procurements between Finland and Sweden,”* Kaikkola continues.

One of the guiding principles in the development of the Rifle System M23 was the ability to produce the weapons in Finland. The rifles will be manufactured in Sako’s factory in Riihimäki – thus, the project improves Finland’s security of supply and promotes retaining skills and technology as well as the ability to manufacture and repair weapon systems in Finland.

*“In recent years, we have made significant investments in our production and product development, and we will continue investing in the rifle and cartridge business in the coming years as well. We are committed to the continuous development of our expertise in Finland. The procurement contract deepens the collaboration between Sako and the Finnish Defence Forces, creates new jobs in Finland, and also improves Finland’s security of supply,”* notes General Manager Karjalainen.

The signing of the procurement contract took place at the Finnish Defence Forces Logistics Command Headquarters in Tampere on 12 January 2022.

**For more information:**
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**About Sako**

Established in 1921, Sako has an eventful history. Sako was first created to refurbish and service firearms for the Civil Guard in Finland. The workshop was initially called Suojeluskuntain Ase- ja Konepaja Osakeyhtiö (Civil Guard Firearm and Engineering Co Ltd) and in 1927 became a limited company with its name abbreviated to the acronym, Sako. The company has played a key role in Finland’s defence and has been a trusted supplier to dozens of defence departments around the world.

For 100 years Sako has developed world-class military, target, and hunting rifles, as well as cartridges. Our reputation, high-quality products, and credibility are rooted in the unique skills of our employees and in their professional pride. Over a period of 100 years, the company has grown by focusing on internationalisation, the excellence of its products, honoring its dedicated craftsmen and personnel, and providing innovative solutions for the needs of its customers.

In 2000, Sako joined Beretta Group, a company with unique firearms traditions reaching all the way back to 1526. This cooperation provides Sako with the unique capability to offer comprehensive, all-encompassing solutions and systems for our customers.

Now Sako looks ahead more confidently than ever. We proudly carry on the rifle manufacturing knowledge and skills, with the utmost respect towards the surrounding nature.

**About Beretta** **Defense Technologies**

Beretta Defense Technologies is an alliance of four market leading companies: Beretta, Benelli, Sako and Steiner. These founding companies of Beretta Defense Technologies have been globally well known through decades of leadership, innovation and investment and now form a single source contact for the high tech military & law enforcement hardware the are renowned for.

Beretta Defense Technologies is a concept that has grown from the needs of governments and agencies to cover a wide range of complicated scenarios, by providing with the unique combination of services, weaponry and equipment – from firearms, ammunition, optronics to tactical clothing – in order to match every operational needs.

