

27 May 2015

The 35mm Rheinmetall Oerlikon Millennium Gun: the comprehensive answer to contemporary maritime threats

Naval forces today face new challenges worldwide, in blue water operations and littoral scenarios alike. As main armament navies still rely on 40/57/76mm gun systems. But to cope with the wide range of new asymmetrical threats – small rigid inflatable boats, jet-skis, high-speed surface craft used in piracy and trafficking, swarms of fast intruder attack crafts on suicide missions packed with explosives or armed with weapons such as heavy machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades or anti-tank missiles – naval forces are now investing in small- to medium-calibre guns to protect their platforms.

And to cope with typical symmetrical air threats such as helicopters, aircrafts and anti-ship missiles as well as asymmetrical air threats such as low and slow flying air vehicles or unmanned aerial vehicles, navies also need smaller-calibre guns and/or missile systems.

The Oerlikon Millennium Gun enables commanders to counter all these threats with one product.

It is an outstanding weapon for use against all types of incoming surface threats, while simultaneously offering unsurpassed performance against aerial targets.

Following exhaustive technical, tactical and sea trials, the Royal Danish Navy selected the Oerlikon Millennium Gun to arm its most advanced surface combatants – *Absalon*-class Combat/Flexible Support Ships – both fore and aft. The system has proven highly effective in active service.

A number of South American and eastern European navies have also discovered the advantages of the Oerlikon Millennium Gun, and are using it to replace their 40mm and 57mm naval guns.

A state-of-the-art 35mm automatic cannon, Rheinmetall's Oerlikon Millennium Gun is also in service with the German C-RAM system MANTIS (Modular, Automatic and Network-capable Targeting and Interception System). Specifically designed to fire Rheinmetall's pioneering AHEAD ammunition, it features a very high rate of fire (1,000 rounds per minute) as well as extreme precision. Each round of AHEAD contains 152 tungsten sub-projectiles capable of neutralizing small and even very small targets, much the way a shotgun shell destroys a clay pigeon. The combination of firepower and precision ensures a high degree of lethality, even when dealing with multiple targets at long ranges of engagement. This enables the weapon system to perform a multitude of different tasks:

- countering aerial threats, including incoming surface-to-surface guided missiles at ranges three or four times greater than conventional close-in weapon systems;
- engaging small surface combatants, meeting the US Navy's performance criteria for neutralizing fast incoming attack craft (FIAC);
- naval fire support: AHEAD technology or other standard types of 35mm ammunition can be used for suppressing enemy infantry, light armoured vehicles and onshore installations, thus enabling the safe evacuation of friendly forces, for example.

Moreover, the Oerlikon Millennium Gun can be connected with advanced sensors of all types or integrated into a command and control system, further enhancing the effectiveness of this cutting edge weapon system; or it can be used with additional radar and optronic sensors as an independent CIWS.

The Oerlikon Millennium Gun can be installed without below-deck equipment, using various mounts. The ISO mount enables utilization of the gun onshore as a ground-based air defence system, while the octagonal-mount permits rapid, 'plug 'n' shoot' replacement of 40mm gun mounts.

Quick availability due to ongoing series production of this proven Rheinmetall product is another major plus: in an era when new threats to global and national security can arise virtually overnight, this factor provides planners and policymakers with an extra measure of flexibility.

For more information, please contact:

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