



Turkey to Mass Produce Altay Tank

OE Watch Commentary: On 9 November 2018 the Presidency of Defense Industries of Turkey (SSB in its Turkish acronym) signed a deal with Turkish defense contractor BMC to mass produce 250 Altay main battle tanks. The Altay tank is believed to be an improved version of South Korea's K2 Black Panther tank. The accompanying passage from the state-owned *Anadolu Ajansı* provides information about the agreement for the production of Altay tanks.

According to the passage, in the initial phase, 250 Altay tanks will be manufactured and the Turkish Land Forces Command will receive the delivery of the first tank within 18 months. The Turkish and Qatari joint venture BMC will manufacture the tank, with additional involvement of Turkish firms Roketsan, Aselsan, MKE and Havelsan. BMC's CEO Ethem Sancak, during the signing ceremony, stated that SSB and the Turkish armed forces requested to manufacture the Altay tanks 100 percent locally. However, despite this request, the Turkish defense industry is still unable to produce a Turkish-made engine. The president of SSB Ismail Demir, stated that the engine will be foreign at this stage while locally made engines are being developed. German MTU engines will probably be used as the prototypes were produced using this engine.

The first 40 tanks are projected to be relatively basic in design and will carry the Akkor active protection system and some additional armor. The other 210 tanks will have a more advanced armor system and the capability to launch laser-guided projectiles from their 120-mm main gun. They will also have electronic command and control systems. Designing an unmanned Altay tank was also in the contract. Turkey's long-awaited Altay tank's mass production will certainly play a significant role in local armored vehicle production and will be an important contribution to the Turkish defense industry. **End OE Watch Commentary (Gunduz)**

“The contract for the mass production of (Turkish) Altay tank was signed in a ceremony at the state Defense Industries Presidency (SSB).”

Source: Necati Keleş, “Altay tankının seri üretim sözleşmesi imzalandı (Contract signed for the mass production of Altay tank),” *Anadolu Ajansı*, 9 November 2018. <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gunun-basliklari/altay-tankinin-seri-uretim-sozlesmesi-imzalandi/1306982>

The contract for the mass production of Altay tank was signed in a ceremony at the state Defense Industries Presidency (SSB)...

...The state Defense Industries President [Ismail] Demir, ... armored vehicle maker BMC's Chairman Ethem Sancak, Chairman of Aselsan Haluk Görgün, and General Manager of Roketsan Selçuk Yasar were present at the signing ceremony for the Altay [tank] mass production contract.

The project includes mass production of 250 Altay main battle tanks. The contract includes life-cycle logistical support and the establishment and operation of the Tank Systems Technology Center. The first Altay tank is projected to be delivered to Land Forces Command in 18 months. As part of the contract one unmanned Altay tank will also be designed, developed, and manufactured. Altay tanks have a 120-mm gun, electronic command and control systems, and armor...

Demir in a speech during the ceremony said the Altay tank is a mile stone in the development of the Turkish defense industry.

Demir said foreign engines will be used in the first Altay tanks and in the future locally [made] engines will be used...

Regarding the engine of the tank, Demir said Turkey's main aim was to maximize the local production rate in such defense projects.

“We need to overcome obstacles that obstruct Turkey's ability to move independently. We are, of course, not closing the doors to foreign partners. Our doors remain open to any firms which want to cooperate with us...”



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