# European Defence Innovations: Integrating Small Arms and Advanced Cannons Against Modern Threats



### European Defense Innovations: Small Arms vs. Drones and Advanced Cannons

**PARIS** – European military strategies are integrating small arms and advanced cannons to counter modern threats, particularly small drones.

**Counter-Drone Shotguns:**
Italian gun manufacturer Benelli Armi, owned by Beretta Holding, is responding to increasing demand for shotgun-based counter-drone systems within NATO countries. This demand surge is influenced by tactics observed in eastern Ukraine, where both Russian and Ukrainian forces have utilized small arms against small drones.

Benelli’s counter-drone shotguns utilize a specialized projectile known as ALDA (anti-light drone ammunition). These shotguns are effective against drones weighing less than 25 kilograms at distances between 80 and 120 meters. Existing users include the French and Italian armed forces. They offer a cost-effective solution, with a shotgun and 1,000 rounds costing up to 3,000 euros, making them an attractive alternative to more complex counter-drone measures.

FN Herstal, a Belgian firearms manufacturer, is also involved in counter-drone efforts. They participated in a NATO-led exercise in Italy in 2022, demonstrating a perimeter defense system that incorporates various sensors and effectors, including medium and heavy machine guns and automatic grenade launchers.

**British Army’s Ajax Vehicles and CT40 Cannons:**
The British Army is set to bolster its capabilities with 589 Ajax armored vehicles equipped with the innovative 40-millimeter case-telescoped (CT) cannon by the end of the decade. The CT cannon, produced at Bourges, France, and integrated into British Ajax vehicles, features a unique ammunition feed mechanism, allowing for stability and reliability even when firing on the move.

The CT40 cannon uses telescoped ammunition, reducing size and maximizing firepower – four times more powerful than the 30mm rounds used on the Warrior vehicle. The design allows the projectiles to be encased within the propellant powder, providing efficiency and ease of handling for the crew. These cannons can quickly engage various targets, from enemy armor to drones, with multi-target capabilities through a versatile ammunition selection.

Produced by CTA International, a joint venture between BAE Systems and Nexter, the CT40 cannons and their ammunition have received positive feedback, signaling potential widespread adoption by NATO forces. The British Army anticipates significant tactical advancements from this technology.

### Conclusion:

European defense manufacturers are making strides with innovative technologies to address emerging battlefield threats. Whether through shotguns designed to counter small drones or advanced cannons like the CT40, these developments reflect evolving military strategies and procurement to enhance defense capabilities.