



Norway Enhances Its Artillery: 24 New K9 Thunder Howitzers on the Way

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In an increasingly unstable international context, characterized by rising tensions in the Baltic and Arctic areas, Norway has announced a new and significant investment to strengthen its defense capabilities. The Norwegian government has proposed the purchase of **24 new 155 mm K9 Thunder self-propelled howitzers**, produced by the South Korean company **Hanwha Aerospace**, for a total value of **5.65 billion Norwegian kroner**, equivalent to about **534 million dollars**.

This initiative represents a significant step within a broader national strategy to enhance the armed forces, aimed at strengthening national security, especially in the northern region of the country, bordering Russia and near the Arctic routes, which are increasingly central to international geopolitical balances.

A New Battalion for the Finnmark Brigade

The new howitzers will equip a **new artillery battalion** of the **Finnmark Brigade**, a unit in the process of being established, intended to operate in the **far north of Norway**. This area, traditionally manned by light forces, is assuming an increasingly central role in Oslo's defensive strategy, also in response to the new scenario created by the war in Ukraine and NATO-Russia tensions.

Currently, Norway already has **28 K9 howitzers** and **14 K10 supply vehicles**, all supplied by the same Hanwha. With this new acquisition, the country exercises an option already provided in the original contract with the South Korean company, bringing the total number of K9s in service to **52**.

A 17 Billion Kroner Defense Plan

The purchase of the new howitzers is part of a much broader spending proposal, amounting to **17 billion Norwegian kroner**, which includes targeted investments in various strategic sectors of the Armed Forces. Highlights of this plan include:

- **3.9 billion kroner** allocated to enhancing **marine mine clearance capabilities**, a priority deemed necessary to ensure the security of Norwegian maritime routes.
- **Purchase of new military trucks**, essential for improving troop logistics and mobility.
- **Investments in military infrastructure**, aimed at improving the operational readiness of units deployed in the territory.

Priority to Maritime Security

Particular attention has been given to the **defense of territorial waters**, considered a critical point in case of crisis or conflict. The Norwegian government has emphasized the importance of strengthening **mine countermeasure capabilities** through the adoption of **autonomous and unmanned systems**, capable of operating efficiently even in hostile conditions.

According to Defense Minister **Tore Sandvik**, this expansion will ensure the **freedom of movement of Norwegian and allied ships** in peacetime as well as in emergency situations, in addition to contributing to the **protection of critical underwater infrastructure**, increasingly exposed to potential acts of sabotage.

The Long-Term Strategic Vision

The presented plan is part of a **long-term strategy** for national defense. In 2023, the Norwegian government had already proposed a significant increase in the defense budget, raising it to **110.1 billion kroner** by 2025, with an increase of **19.2 billion** compared to previous years. This choice reflects the growing awareness of the need to adapt the armed forces to new threat scenarios.

According to the government proposal, the acquisition of the new K9 howitzers will bring the total investment in the **155 mm artillery program** to **11.1 billion kroner**.

In Line with Regional Allies

Norway is not alone in this choice. Other countries in the Baltic and Nordic regions have already opted for the K9 Thunder: **Poland, Finland, and Estonia** have integrated these self-propelled howitzers into their respective armies. The standardization of artillery systems in the NATO area is considered a **tactical advantage**, as it facilitates interoperability and logistics with allied forces.

Conclusion

The Norwegian government's initiative represents a clear signal of the commitment to strengthen the country's defense, at a historical moment when European security is challenged by new and complex threats. With the addition of more K9 Thunder to its ranks, Norway equips itself with a **modern, mobile, and powerful fire capability**, ready to operate in hostile environments such as the Arctic.

News link: <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2025/04/04/norway-to-nearly-double-its-k9-howitzer-fleet-for-around-534-million/>