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Moving Forwards as a Groundbreaking Company, ARES Shipyard's Delivery of Coast Guard Boats to Qatar Continues Full Speed

Prior to the ceremony, the guests of the event, including Ahmet Arslan, Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, examined the boats to be delivered, while accompanied by Kerim Kalafatoğlu, Chairman and Executive Director of ARES Shipyard.

As part of the project conducted to meet the Qatar Coast Guard's requirements, ARES Shipyard has performed the delivery of the first ARES 150 HERCULES boat and one ARES 110 HERCULES boat with a ceremony held in Antalya on December 8. The ceremony, which was attended by Ahmet Arslan, Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, stood as one of the important milestones for ARES Shipyard and the Turkish military shipyard, especially since it involved the first delivery ever of the 48 metres-long ARES 150 HERCULES.

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The project in question was launched following a tender in which ARES Shipyard outcompeted 18 companies, with the project contract being signed with the Qatar Ministry of Interior on April 14, 2014. The project involves the construction of the following boats, which all have composite hulls:

- Five 24 metres-long ARES 75 HERCULES fast patrol boats.
- Ten 34 metres-long ARES 110 HERCULES fast patrol boats.
- Two 48 metres-long ARES 150 HERCULES offshore patrol vessels (OPVs).

Furthermore, each ARES 110 HERCULES also transports one 7.5 metres ARES 24 HARPOON fast intervention boat, while the ARES 150 HERCULES transports two of such boats. The cost of project is around $300 million.

Deliveries Continue 1.5 Years Ahead of Schedule

As of the date of the ceremony, deliveries for all of the ARES 75 HERCULES have been completed, while seven ARES 110 HERCULES and one ARES 150 HERCULES have been delivered so far. Although the total duration of the project was initially envisaged as 4.5 years, the delivery schedule is moving 1.5 years ahead of the contract schedule.

ARES 150 HERCULES also stands out as the largest composite hulled ship ever to be built in Turkey. Company officials also highlight that, with its speed of 37 nautical miles per hour, the ARES 150 HERCULES is the world's fastest ship in the OPV class. Meanwhile, in 2016, the ARES 110 HERCULES was selected as the Best Patrol Boat by the Australian Work Boat World magazine. The hull of all boats of the HERCULES family are constructed using full vacuum infusion technology and epoxy resin.

Unless otherwise stated, all photographs: © MSI TDR

The ARES 110 HERCULES was selected in 2016 as the Best Patrol Boat by the Australian Work Boat World magazine.

Özgün Utku Alanç

Kerim Kalafatoğlu

Staff Brigadier Ali Ahmad Al-Bedeed

Mustafa Köse

HERCULES Boats Stand Out with High Their Manoeuvrability

The entire HERCULES family uses water jets as its primary system of propulsion. The boats also use water jets to change course and manoeuvre. As a result, the boats lack a conventional propeller or rudder, which means safer navigation in shallow waters, and also for sea life.

Perhaps the most important attribute the water jet system confers to the boats is high manoeuvrability. Thanks to these water jets, boats can, in addition to their standard manoeuvres, also execute movements such as moving sideways without changing the direction of its bow. To have the boats perform these types of manoeuvres, the helmsman (the seaman who holds the helm) would normally have to manage multiple complex controls at the same time; however, with these systems, the only device the helmsman needs to use is a simple joystick. This enables the boats to execute even the most sensitive manoeuvres; and whenever deemed necessary, the boats can even be moved solely by using the joystick. The joystick is only one of the ship control systems. Furthermore, the water jets have various control mechanisms that permit the water entry and exit directions to be adjusted separately. All of these systems can be managed from the bridge as well as the consoles located on the uppermost open deck. In these types of surface platforms, open decks are used in low threat environments to provide a wider angle of view, such as during port manoeuvres. In addition, the water jets in the ARES 75 and ARES 110 can also be controlled via a classical ship's wheel.

During the acceptance tests at sea, the ARES 110s were tested at speeds more than 10 percent above the speed requirements listed in the contract, and these boats can operate in conditions of up to sea state five. Similarly, the ARES 150s were tested at speeds more than 20 percent above the speed requirements listed in the contract, and the boats can operate in conditions of up to sea state six. The shape of the ships' hull is said to also enable operations in the ocean. Furthermore, in addition to their cruising range of 1,600 nautical miles, the ARES 150s have a reverse osmosis system that eliminates the boats' need for water replenishment.

ARES Shipyard: Leaving Its Marks in History

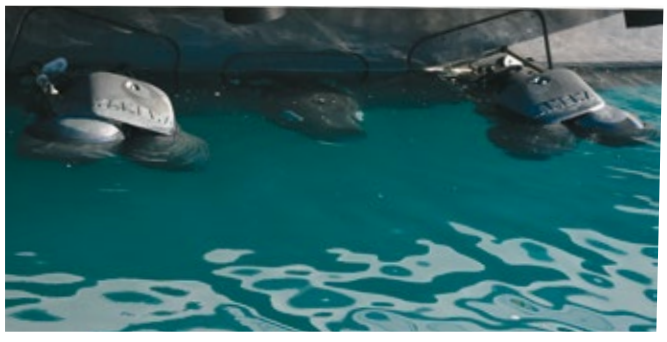
The ceremony began after the tour and inspection of the boats destined for Qatar by the event's attendants, which included Ahmet Arslan, Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications. The first speech of the ceremony was delivered by Özgün Utku Alanç, Deputy General Manager at ARES Shipyard, who shared information both about the project and the HERCULES platforms.

After Alanç's speech, Kerim Kalafatoğlu, Chairman and Executive Director of ARES Shipyard, took the stage, and began his speech by saying: "In every day of the 11 brief years since we established it in 2006 with great ideals in our minds, ARES Shipyard has been a source of both joy and excitement for us." The speech of Kalafatoğlu

© ARES Shipyard

Hulls of the HERCULES series boats are produced in a single step and as a single piece, by utilising full vacuum infusion technology and epoxy resin.

The water jets of the ARES 110 HERCULES. Thanks to their "reverse bucket" system, the water jets on the port and starboard side of the boat not only serve to propel the ship forward, but can also move the ship astern. The reverse bucket can be described as a bucket-like mechanism that turns and covers the exit of the water jet. The water jet in the middle provides forward thrust. The ARES 75 boats are different in that they lack the middle water jet.



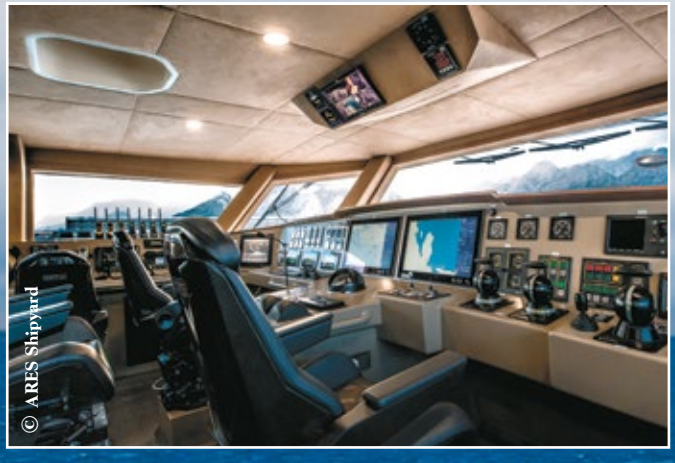
Staff Major General Saad Bin Jassim Al Khulaifi

Münir Karaloğlu

Ahmet Arslan

included many details about ARES Shipyard's accomplishments in between the lines.

- **Export Capabilities of ARES:** "ARES is Turkey's shipyard with the most exports. It is with great pleasure that I must say that, both with the work it assumes internationally and the ships it manufactures, our company is our country's pride. Speaking for 2017, ARES has, as of today, broken the export records for ships, becoming the country's largest ship exporter."
- **Added Value by ARES:** "From the perspective of added value, we can see an even greater achievement [for our company]. While Turkey's exports have an average value of $3 per kilogram, the average value of the ships we are delivering today is $152 per kilogram."
- **ARES Ranking High in Production Numbers:** "ARES' success can be seen even more clearly when we look from the perspective of productivity. For shipyards building this class of ships and yachts, the average annual production in the Netherlands, for example, is 9.14 ships [per year]. In Turkey, however, this average number is unfortunately at 2.6. But with the great dedication of ARES' outstanding team, our shipyard has surpassed Turkey's average by a factor of four, exceeding even above the average for Europe, producing and delivering, for example, 11 ships in 2017. We have now reached the point where we can export technology and know-how on advanced composite and aluminium hulled [ships]."


© ARES Shipyard

A view of the bridge on ARES 150 HERCULES. The bridge consoles of all HERCULES series boats are nearly identical. Similarly, the boats of three different sizes have many subsystems that are similar or identical, which is important in terms of logistics and manageability.

ARES Shipyard Makes Dreams Come True

Taking the stage after Kalafatoğlu, Staff Brigadier Ali Ahmad Al-Bedeed, Director General of Coast and Borders Security, gave a speech in which he emphasised the robustness and competitive prices of the ships built by ARES Shipyard. Mustafa Köse, Parliamentarian from Antalya, described the con-

tributions ARES Shipyard will make to relations between Qatar and Turkey, while Münir Karaloğlu, Governor of Antalya, said the following: "It is my hope that the naval vehicles we have delivered today will reinforce both the friendship between Qatar and Turkey and the formation of the Qatari Coast Guard."

At the ceremony, Staff Major General Saad Bin Jassim Al Khulaifi, Director General of Public Security, also gave a speech in which he described the importance of the HERCULES boats for Qatar through several anecdotes: "It was 2002, when I was serving at the Coast Guard Command. We were considering that we should build a new fleet for our organisation, and we were meeting with many companies to this end. But it was at that time that I was assigned to the headquarters as

Table 1. Platforms to Be Delivered to the Qatari Coast Guard under the Project

	ARES 75 HERCULES	ARES 110 HERCULES	ARES 150 HERCULES
GENERAL INFORMATION			
Type	Fast Patrol Boat	Fast Patrol Boat	Offshore Patrol Vessel
Total Number to Be Delivered	5	10	2
Number of ARES 24 HARPOON Fast Intervention Boats Carried Onboard	-	1	2
DIMENSIONS			
Length (metres)	24.1	34.47	48.09
Width (metres)	5.8	7.56	8.95
Draft (metres)	1.2	1.45	1.78
Displacement (tons)	59	130	275
PERFORMANCE AND SUBSYSTEMS			
Maximum Speed (knots)	40	32	37
Economic Speed (knots)	25	15	15
Cruising Range (nautical miles)	360	800	1,600
Main Engine	2 x MTU 12V 2000 M84 Diesel	3 x MTU 12V 2000 M84 Diesel	3 x MTU 16V 4000 M63L Diesel
Propulsion System	2 x Rolls Royce 50A3 Water Jet	3 x Rolls Royce 50A3 Water Jet	3 x Rolls Royce S71-4 Water Jet
Auxiliary Engine	2 x Caterpillar C4.4 series	2 x Caterpillar C4.4 series	2 x Caterpillar C7.1 series
NUMBER OF PERSONNEL			
Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers	4	7	10
Enlisted	4	16	18
WEAPON SYSTEMS			
12,7 mm ASELSAN STAMP	1	2	2
30 mm ASELSAN SMASH	-	1	1

With its ability to operate in conditions of up to sea state six and cruising range of 1,600 nautical miles, the ARES 150 HERCULES is classified by ARES Shipyard as an offshore patrol vessel (OPV).

© ARES Shipyard

During this speech, Kerim Kalafatoğlu, Chairman and Executive Director of ARES Shipyard, was accompanied at the stage by Yonca Kotiloğlu (far right) and Ersan Kotiloğlu (far left), Members of the Board at company, and by Mert Kalafatoğlu (second left), General Manager of the company.

the Director General of Public Security. However, the dream of building a new coast guard fleet always stayed with me. During those years, I was afraid I would retire before this dream would be realised. But in 2017, at this very moment, our dreams have come true, and these new ships are now patrolling around Doha. The last remaining three or four ships will soon be following them. I would like to thank Turkey and ARES Shipyard for finally making my dreams to come true."

Minister Arslan Describes the HERCULES' Features

Delivering the last speech of the ceremony, Ahmet Arslan, Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, highlighted the ARES 150 HERCULES' manoeuvrability: "I asked earlier about the ship's turning radius, which is one of the most important criteria for determining a ship's manoeuvrability. When a ship wants to make a turn, the tighter it turns the better. Now, this 48-metre long boat can turn with a radius of 74 metres, which is a very good performance. And the esteemed [Qatari] director general also asked, 'Where is the ship's wheel?' concerning this ship. But it has no wheel; there is just a joystick... You command the ship through a joystick that provides very high manoeuvrability. You can literally move the ship around with the touch of a finger. This is an important feature. The boats also have a type of bow propeller we call the bow thruster, which is usually seen in the very luxurious and high technology ships known as cruise ships."

ARES' Groundbreaking Production Numbers

Minister Arslan also highlighted the advanced technology of the boats, as well as ARES Shipyard's delivery schedule that is significantly ahead of initial plans: "Every type of technology that you can think about finding on a ship, as well as the most advanced tools, instruments, equipment, machines and electronic devices, have been used [on these boats]... You have clearly striven to do the best, and have become an excellent example in the process. This is something that we also emphasise: Instead of describing your capabilities by saying 'I do this or that', it is far better to demonstrate them through your products... It is also good to see the number of boats you are able to produce in one year. It is of course always possible and rather straightforward to produce more than one ship of the same type. However, producing different types of ships at the same time, while also reaching the annual production numbers you mentioned earlier, is certainly a great feat... Besides, 17 boats is not a small number. We are also extremely pleased to see the production being done in such a short period, and the delivery being performed ahead of the envisaged time frame."

Warships with Mega-Yacht Standards

Minister Arslan also touched on the quality of the ships and the level of comfort in the personnel's living quarters: "We are of course speaking about warships – ships used for military purposes. And ARES precisely makes these types of ships. Globally, [Turkey] ranks third in terms of mega yacht production. I want to congratulate you for your boats that have the quality and standards of

ARES 150 HERCULES is described as the world's fastest offshore patrol vessel (OPV).

mega yachts, which we discussed while touring one of the boats. No one will ever reproach you by saying 'Why have you something very good, why have you done the best?' And those who keep saying 'Did these boats have to be this luxurious or high-quality?', just ignore them, don't listen to them. You have to be different from others in a positive way, so that others will follow your example. The things you have done should not be limited to Qatar; you should utilise your capabilities and means for other countries as well."

ARES Shipyard Opens a New Page in Maintainability

Each one of the ships constructed by ARES Shipyard certainly have their own distinguishing features. However, there is also a notable detail in their design: Some of the subsystems used in these three boats of different size and class are actually identical, which is particularly important from the standpoint of the ships' maintenance and sustainment. Furthermore, this feature affects the operational capability of the ships in a positive way.

This can be explained with a simple example: In case a ARES 110 HERCULES boat becomes inactive due to a malfunction in a critical subsystem, a functional copy of the same subsystem can be taken from an ARES 75 HERCULES that is currently under maintenance, and be fitted into the ARES 110 HERCULES to render it active and operational once again. Furthermore, the use of common subsystems is also important from the Qatari Coast Guard's standpoint, in terms of reducing purchasing costs when procuring the spare parts it will need in the future.

Some of the common subsystems used in these platforms of different types are as follows:

- **Main Engines:** ARES 75 and ARES 110 both use MTU's 12V 2000 M84 diesel engines. The only difference between them is that the smaller of these boats has two of these engines, while the other has three. ARES 150s also an MTU engine belonging to the same family, namely the MTU 16V 4000 M63L.
- **Water Jets:** The situation with the boats' water jets is similar to the one with the main engines: The ARES 75 has two of the Rolls-Royce 50A3 water jets, while ARES 110 has three. On the other hand, the ARES 150 has three Rolls-Royce S71-4 water jets.

- **Weapon Systems:** The weapon systems to be used on the ships include ASELSAN's 30 mm SMASH and 12.7 mm STAMP systems.
- **Auxiliary Engines (Generators):** ARES 75 and ARES 110 use Caterpillar C4.4 series generators. The generators of these two boats of different sizes have the same diesel machines. The only differences between them are the alternators being used and their power output. ARES 150's auxiliary machines use the C7.1 model of the same manufacturer.
- **Bridge Consoles:** The bridge consoles of the HERCULES series boats and ships are nearly identical. Only the ARES 150's manoeuvre controls are slightly different than the other boat's, due to the bow thruster on its bow.

In addition to its cruising range of 1,600 nautical miles, the ARES 150 HERCULES is also capable of producing its own drinking water, thanks to its reverse osmosis system.

- **Electronic Systems:** All of the navigation, electronic, communication and electro-optic systems used in the HERCULES series are almost entirely the same. The only difference in this regard is in the radar systems. The ARES 75 features two Kelvin Hughes X-Band radars, while the ARES 110 and ARES 150 both use one X-Band and one S Band radars, also made by Kelvin Hughes.
- **Air Conditioning Systems:** All of the boats are equipped with İKS Coolmar brand air conditioning systems, which only differ with respect to their heating and cooling capacities.
- **Hydro-Mechanic Systems:** The hydro-mechanic systems used in the boats, such as the pumps and valves, are largely the same.

The fact that the boats have so many common systems also affects the training requirements of the personnel. Any personnel trained to serve on the smallest member of the HERCULES family can quickly adapt to the family's largest vessel within a very short period. That is why it would not inaccurate to say that, rather than purchasing three different types of platforms for its inventory, the Qatari Coast Guard has actually purchased different-sized versions of the same platform. ◆

During the ceremony, Minister Arslan emphasised the 48-metre long ARES 150 HERCULES' manoeuvrability by noting that it has a turning radius of 74 metres.

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Left to right: Ahmet Arslan, Staff Major General Saad Bin Jassim Al Khulaifi and Kerim Kalafatoğlu

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU, Chairman and Executive Director of ARES Shipyard:

"As ARES, we have signed the world's largest single-contract composite hulled military ship export project in terms of the number of vessels and project costs involved."

We met with Kerim Kalafatoğlu, Chairman and Executive Director of ARES Shipyard, to learn more about the project's position in the Turkish military shipbuilding industry, as well as ARES Shipyard's goals for the future and the tenders in Turkey to which it is planning to submit bids.

MSI TDR: Mr. Kalafatoğlu, if we go back to the very beginning, you won this tender that covers the construction of three different types of surface platforms by pulling ahead of 18 other companies, competing in this process against the world's leaders in the field. Can you tell us the story behind this success?

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: I would first like to point out that it is a great source of pride for us to have won this tender on the basis of technical superiority and price, competing against the world's largest shipyards, at a time when our relations with Qatar were not at their current level and were just beginning to gain strength. Actually, the story of how we won the tender is quite simple. First, we made a good analysis of the needs of the Qatari Coast Guard, and offered the best technical solution that achieved of the highest technical score. Second, we knew quite well that technical superiority alone would not be enough to give us the tender, and so we also offered a reasonable price, and then gave a five-year hull guarantee for our boats, illustrating our confidence in both ourselves and the boats we will produce. Given that you have manufacturers [in the industry] who consider even two-year guarantees excessive, I think you can very well imagine what this move signified.

MSI TDR: So what is this project's position within the military shipbuilding industry in Turkey?

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: This project, involving the construction of 17 ships with composite hulls, has a budget of around $300 million, which means that ARES has signed the largest single-contract composite hulled military ship export project in the world to date, in terms of the number of vessels and project costs involved. The epoxy resin full-vacuum infusion method used in the construction of the vessels in this project is generally used in the manufacture of aircraft; and until now, this technique has not been adopted by any shipyard in Turkey for military shipbuilding. The ARES 150 HERCULES that will be constructed within the scope of the project also holds the title of the world's fastest patrol boat. Furthermore, as a rare example for the military shipbuilding industry in Turkey, the project will be completed one-and-a-half years ahead of schedule. For an industry that is used to late deliveries and the associated penalties, this is a target that many would find unachievable.

ARES Shipyard to Expand with New Facilities

MSI TDR: With this project, you have raised the bar quite high. What is your next goal? After this project, what is waiting for ARES Shipyard and the industry?

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Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: Just as our successes and targets keep growing, so does our customer portfolio and the expectations placed on us. Presently, ARES is the only Turkish company that is shortlisted in different projects in a number of different countries. The three different production facilities we currently have in the Antalya Free Zone, with a total indoor area of 15,000 m2, have started to become insufficient [for our needs]. In the first quarter of 2018, we will build a new production facility that will increase our total indoor area to 25,000 m2, and this new production facility will be equipped with serial production lines, various capabilities, and welding and assembly robots, the likes of which are not found in Turkey. Towards the end of 2018, we will start constructing larger tonnage ships with lengths of 100 to 120 metres, such as offshore patrol vessels, corvettes, fast patrol boats and logistic ships.

MSI TDR: While the project's contract schedule covers a four-and-a-half year period, your delivery schedule is one-and-a-half years ahead. Unless it is a commercial secret, could you tell us how you achieved this?

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: ARES has a dedicated and hard-working team. Together with our subcontractors, we have about 500 employees, and all our team is tightly and inseparably knitted together. We have a logistic and supply chain management that is always two or three ships ahead of production. In other words, before starting the construction of the next ship, we already have the necessary structural materials and equipment waiting in our warehouses. All our production processes are tracked through an ERP programme, and for every work produced through the ERP programme, the numbers of man-hours are determined in a logical manner and then closely monitored. In a shipbuilding industry that is, as I mentioned earlier, used to late deliveries and penalties, I think that we have brought new blood, and have become a cornerstone in this field. Meanwhile, while we are working to ensure rapid production, we also have a training team of six in Qatar consisting entirely of retired Naval Forces Command and Coast Guard Command personnel. This team is giving classroom, port and navigation training to 275 personnel of Qatar Coast Guard Command for a period of 650 business days, or almost two-and-a-half years. So while the boats are being constructed rapidly and without problems, we are also providing training to the personnel who will use the boats, both technically and operationally. And we are moving forward with this entire process one-and-a-half-years in advance. It is through our competent team that we successfully manage this intricate process that depends on so many independent factors.

ARES Shipyard Exceeds Expectations

MSI TDR: You describe ARES 150 HERCULES as the world's fastest ship in its class. Can you tell us how the ship manages to be so?

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: Certainly. With a maximum speed of 37 nautical miles per hour, the 48-metre ARES 150 HERCULES offshore patrol vessel holds the title of the world's fastest ship in its class. However, there is something else I would like to mention first: While the speed requirement specified in the contract was 30 nautical miles, we have made an effort to provide an actual speed nearly 25 percent above this value. These ships will be executing long-range patrol missions in the Arabian Gulf. Their priority missions will be to protect critical structures, such as the oil and natural gas platforms in Qatar's territorial waters and exclusive economic zones, against possible conventional or terrorist attacks, and to also combat trafficking and illegal human trafficking. Therefore, these vessels not only need to navigate swiftly, but they also need to be capable of carrying out their missions in the open seas and under high

ARES 150 HERCULES has a total crew of 28, 10 of which are officers and non-commissioned officers, and 18 who are enlisted personnel.

© ARES Shipyard

sea states, without interruption. This is a responsibility that we also bear, together with the end user. For this reason, we have, without any additional cost, provided the Qatari Ministry of Interior a speed value that is substantially above the minimum requirements, as well as a cruising range of 1,600 nautical miles, which is twice what was required.

If we go back to the technical aspects, the value we add to the ship's capabilities has, indeed, put a number of additional burdens upon us in terms of design and equipment costs. We have had to do a serious amount of engineering work to make the form of the boat suitable both for high speeds and difficult sea conditions. To increase the speed, we were very meticulous when choosing the ship's main propulsion system. In design and production, we had to further elaborate our quality control processes. But all these works, the additional costs, the hundreds of tests and the experiences we gained were all certainly worth it, and we have, through our toils and efforts, successfully delivered ships that hold various records.

Serdar Demirel, Deputy Undersecretary for Defence Industries, was among those touring the ships and being briefed after the ceremony.

In a five-year shipbuilding project involving 17 ships, we have reached the point where we are going to complete, one-and-a-half years in advance, the delivery of boats with superior capabilities in terms production technology and equipment, and which possesses features way above the technical requirements. We are not, of course, saying that what we did is a miracle. However, "doing what others say is unfeasible" has become ARES' motto.

Working with a Human Focus

MSI TDR: As expressed by Ahmet Arslan, the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, your company's boats are – without losing anything of their identity as combat platforms – offering a high level of personnel comfort that can almost compete with luxury vessels of the mega-yacht class. So could we say that "ARES Shipyard places great importance on personnel comfort, regardless of additional costs"? Can you share with us your thoughts about this?

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: ARES has a very large product portfolio, ranging from warships to patrol boats, from ambulance boats to fire-fighting ships, and from passenger ships to yachts. While these platforms each have very different capabilities and characteristics, they all have one thing in common. We know full well that there will be people of different professions, classes, ages, genders and tasks working and living aboard these ships, and we attach great importance to them. We know from our forefathers as well as our own experiences that being a seaman is a gruelling occupation. We are aware that spending your life on those ships requires many sacrifices.

That's why, in every solution ARES has produced to date, we have not only strived to meet operational requirements to the highest possible degree, but also worked with a human focus. And we will continue to the do so. This is an innovation that ARES has introduced to the military shipbuilding industry. Although we have come under criticism from our competitors for this, we think that even if we are producing warships, it is important to provide a measure of comfort to the people who will be serving for months at sea, away from their families. Obtaining favourable feedback [from users] in this regard, years after delivery, provides us a 10-fold return, at a spiritual and moral level, over the additional costs we had to make in design and production.

ARES 110 HERCULES can be controlled from the consoles located on its uppermost open-topped deck. ARES 150 HERCULES shares the same feature.

Team Work: The Secret behind Our Success

MSI TDR: In such a competitive tender with such an intensive production schedule, you have been able to deliver, without any problems, highly capable and comfortable ships at standards that even exceed the project requirements. What is the secret behind this?

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: Looking at the global shipbuilding industry, we see that the success we've had has no comparable examples. In a five-year shipbuilding project involving 17 ships, we have reached the point where we are going to complete, one-and-a-half years in advance, the delivery of boats with superior capabilities in terms production technology and equipment, and which possesses features way above the technical requirements. We are not, of course, saying that what we did is a miracle. However, "doing what others say is unfeasible" has become ARES' motto.

Superior engineering, infrastructure

and technological capabilities have certainly had an impact on this success; but these are assets that any enterprise can acquire, given a sufficient amount of money. And yes, we do possess these assets. However, beyond these, there is also an excellent team spirit at ARES, which can be thought of as a large family of individuals focusing on the same goal. Thanks to this team spirit, we have ensured highly effective project planning, excellent design, high quality production and customer-oriented after-sales support. Thanks to our team, which works compatibly and harmoniously, the result has naturally been a very good final product, delivered at a record schedule, and with 100 percent customer satisfaction.

MSI TDR: **Could the boats you have delivered to Qatar also meet Turkey's requirements? In this respect, are there any tenders you are waiting to be opened in Turkey? Or, speaking more generally, are there any tenders in Turkey to which you have, or are planning to, submit proposals?**

Kerim KALAFATOĞLU: The boats we are building for Qatar were, following negotiations with the Qatari Minister of Interior and the Qatari Coast Guard, designed especially for the sea conditions and operational requirements of Qatar. The same hull shapes can, of course, be optimised to suit Turkey's requirements, in line with Turkish Coast Guard Command's (TCGC) needs, with several modifications at a system and device level. In the end, these boats have, in a design and operational sense, proven themselves in every way.

There are a number of tenders we expect to be opened within the context of the TCGC's requirements. In this regard, we prioritise the interests of our country, and have shared our design and construction experiences with TCGC officials. Our doors are always open to them, so that they may examine, on-site, our production infrastructure and capabilities. We know that the TCGC has a need for boats as part of one of its priority areas, namely the prevention of illegal migration. In line with such a requirement, we have produced indigenous solutions, designed specifically for Turkey's seas and territorial waters, for use in combating illegal migration. Soon, or whenever we are asked, we will be presenting solutions that will best respond to the TCGC's needs, and our foremost priority in this regard will, as always, be our country's interests.

I would like to highlight once again – as I proudly express on every platform – that we also stand as the strongest candidate for the "Fast Patrol Boat Project", which involves the modernisation of the assault boat fleet in line with the requirements of Turkish Naval Forces Command, and for which development and procurement is planned for 2018.

On behalf of our readers, we would like to thank Kerim Kalafatoğlu, Chairman and Executive Director of ARES Shipyard, for taking the time to answer our questions and for providing us with such valuable information.