

REDE

SVEN WEIZENEGGER

LEITER, CYBER INNOVATION HUB DER BUNDESWEHR

**MSC Innovation Night 2025, 13. Februar 2025**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

a dramatic shift in global powers is unfolding right before our eyes.

Facing these dramatic changes, we must stay focused and must double down on our efforts to defend democracy, to defend peace, and thrive in unity with those, who share our belief in the values of a free society.

Let's be clear: Action is required. Bold action. And these efforts must start with strengthening the backbone of our defense – our troops.

This includes, more than ever: delivering innovations at scale, and with speed - for the battles of today and tomorrow

Speed, Scale and Innovation: These are the pillars of success in modern defense. And this is where the Bundeswehr Cyber Innovation Hub has stepped up. Over the years, we have proven our ability to deliver digital innovations that shape the future of defense – innovations that meet the real-world needs of our soldiers in combat.

To date, we have a portfolio of 180 Projects, have already completed over 80 innovations, 40 are in service, used daily. Four of our projects will be presented later tonight, to give you firsthand impressions.

Each of these solutions contributes to the defense of our soldiers and our allies. These successes have been achieved despite extremely limited resources.

Now imagine what could be possible with more resources.

The question is not if we can do more – it is how much more we can achieve, when empowered with the right resources.

If we are serious about innovation at speed and scale, we cannot wait for perfect conditions. Bureaucratic roadblocks must not slow us down. That is why we need a Freedom Act for the Bundeswehr Cyber Innovation Hub.

Our strength lies in our direct access to the Bundeswehr and our deep ties to the startup ecosystem. Startups are the cradle of disruptive innovation in defense tech. But their success – their survival – is dependent on two critical factors: access to venture capital and streamlined procurement processes.

Unfortunately, the Cyber Innovation Hub does not have influence over procurement, yet. As much as I wish we did... But where we can make a difference is in access to venture capital.

Innovation cannot be held back by process delays. That is why, outside of the Bundeswehr Cyber Innovation Hub, a private initiative has taken action. From within our ecosystem, individuals have stepped forward to create something new:

The Deep Tech Defense Innovation Fund.

This fund will be a milestone not just for the Bundeswehr, but for the entire defense ecosystem.

With a target of up to 300 million Euros, this initiative aims to provide the critical financial lifeline that defense tech startups need. It will empower them to accelerate innovation, scale solutions, and bring transformative technologies to life, technologies that will safeguard our future.

This is a commitment.

A commitment to excellence.

A commitment to speed.

A commitment to fostering collaboration between defense, startups, and venture capital.

This is how we accelerate defense innovation.

This is how we stay ahead in an increasingly competitive and uncertain world.

Together, we build a future where technology and defense reinforce one another.

And so, it is with great honor that I welcome our keynote speaker this evening.

Please join me in welcoming to the stage, our Federal Minister of Defence, Boris Pistorius!

*Es gilt das gesprochene Wort.*