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Brazilian defense contractor Avibras will join plane maker Embraer SA and the local unit of Israeli Defense Company Elbit Systems in developing unmanned aircraft in Brazil, the companies informed. Brazil will be hosting next year the World Cup and in 2016 the Olympic Games and needs to keep tight control of its 16.000 kilometers of frontiers with ten Latin American countries.

This is particularly serious in the central south, Argentina, Paraguay and Bolivia, where smuggling is an everyday business from colonial times but now includes deadly arms for criminal activities and drugs.

Unmanned aircraft can play a key role in patrolling jungles and rivers from the air.

Avibras will take a 9% stake in a joint venture known as Harpia Systems, which will expand its line-up to include the Falcão unmanned aircraft that Avibras has developed for Brazil's Air Force.

"Avibras' participation increases domestic shareholding in Harpia Systems," Embraer's defense chief Luiz Carlos Aguiar said in a statement, adding that the joint venture now qualifies as a strategic defense company under Brazilian law.

Embraer will hold on to its 51% stake in Harpia, while Elbit's Brazilian unit AEL Systems will reduce its stake from 49% to 40%.

Harpia is one of several new defense projects Embraer has undertaken in recent years to take advantage of Brazil's burgeoning military budget and offset the volatile sales cycle in commercial aviation.

## Brazil Building Its Own Drones with the Help of Israel

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Defense contracts will likely contribute 21% of the Embraer's revenue this year, the company said, more than doubling its share in five years.

From São Paulo it was also announced that Embraer would be refurbishing the five AWAC from the Brazilian Air Force in a program that will demand 210 million dollars.

The refurbishing will include avionics, electronic war systems, command and control, air vigilance radars with the purpose of improving border patrolling and transmitting to land, sea and air forces any strange movements or targets

The AWAC fleet will also be used to keep track of the great sports events in the busy international agenda extending until 2016.

Founded in 1961, Avibras is a 100% domestic company, specialized in engineering, which conceptualizes, develops and manufactures products for the defense and civilian markets. Its broad defense product line includes artillery rocket systems, autonomous and guided missiles, anti-aircraft defense systems, aircraft armament systems, armored military vehicles, unmanned aircraft systems, command and control vehicles, and control and integration of complex systems.

AEL Systems (www.ael.com.br) is a Brazilian company headquartered in the City of Porto Alegre, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. For more than two decades it has dedicated itself to conceptualizing, developing, manufacturing, maintaining, and providing logistical support for military and civilian electronic products for use in aircraft, seacraft, and ground transport, manned and unmanned.

In 2001 AEL Systems became a subsidiary of Elbit Systems, Ltd., a major private-sector Israeli defense products manufacturer, and in 2011 Embraer Defense and Security acquired a 25% shareholder stake in AEL Systems.

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With more than 40 years of experience in supplying platforms and systems to armed forces around the world, Embraer Defense and Security has a growing presence in the global market and fulfills a strategic role in Brazil's defense system.

Embraer Defense and Security's portfolio includes military airplanes, state-of-the art radar technologies, unmanned drones, and advanced information and communications systems, such as Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance applications (C4ISR). Embraer aircraft and military solutions are found among more than 50 armed forces in 48 countries.

## **Mercopress**