Kratos XQ-58A Demonstrates Collaborative EW and Kill Chain Closure under USMC Control in Large Force Exercise

December 5, 2024

SAN DIEGO, Dec. 05, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. (Nasdaq: KTOS), a Technology Company in the Defense, National Security and Global Markets and an industry-leading provider of high-performance, jet-powered unmanned aerial systems, today announced the successful performance of a recent series of flight tests of the United States Marine Corps' XQ-58A Valkyrie, manufactured by Kratos. These flights and exercises were conducted jointly earlier this year by Kratos, Northrop Grumman Corporation, Autonodyne, the United States Marine Corps (USMC), the United States Navy, and the United States Air Force (USAF).

Kratos' XQ-58A Flies in Joint Emerald Flag Exercise

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/94bd48b4-0b84-4660-8063-18330361338a

The test was conducted as a part of Emerald Flag 2024—a multiservice and multi-domain training exercise. During this milestone event, the USMC demonstrated cooperative kill chain closure between crewed and uncrewed strike platforms, specifically Kratos' XQ-58A Valkyrie, for the first time in a large-force exercise.

The USMC kill chain closure demonstration, hosted in a joint force environment, showcased collaborative electronic warfare (EW) operations in addition to newly added tactical data link capabilities. These tests mark the first time the Department of Defense (DoD) controlled an XQ-58 using expeditionary methods. Initial results indicate the system met threshold requirements for autonomously exchanging relevant tactical information. These capabilities significantly enhance the Marine Air-Ground Task Force's ability to conduct integrated and joint operations, contributing to the USMC's mission to deter conflict and, when necessary, defeat enemies in complex and evolving scenarios.

These flights were conducted in partnership with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) AIRWorks, and industry partners. Flight test support was provided by the 40th Flight Test Squadron, the 46th Test Squadron, the 96th Test Wing, and the Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron 1 (VMX-1).

The latest event was witnessed by the USMC Deputy Commandant of Aviation, Lt. Gen. Bradford Gering, as well as officers and civilians from the Marine Corps Cunningham Group, Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Expeditionary and Maritime Aviation-Advanced Development Team (XMA-ADT), and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

As the USMC advances towards the operational fielding of a new uncrewed system, Kratos is at the vanguard of technological

advancement to ensure the Marines have the best tactical asset to complement their fleet of F-35B aircraft.

Flying alongside four USMC F-35B aircraft from the Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 214 (VMFA-214) and two USAF F-15E/EX aircraft from the 40th Flight Test Squadron, the USMC XQ-58A operated under vehicle-level autonomy to perform maneuvers in a simulated threat environment. The Valkyrie's on-board sensors identified and geolocated relevant threats, and simultaneously passed targeting data to collaborating air and ground platforms over tactical networks.

During the exercise, the XQ-58A was also flown by a USMC aviator, and control was passed between air and ground control methods which can command multiple Valkyries simultaneously. This demonstration of the XQ-58A's ability to support crewed-uncrewed teaming and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO) marks a significant milestone in the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Unmanned Aerial System Expeditionary (MUX) Tactical Aircraft (TACAIR) development.

Steve Fendley, President of Kratos Unmanned Systems Division, said, "We're proud to be leading the industry effort to demonstrate and deliver this critical collaborative uncrewed aircraft capability. The mission capability demonstrated during the latest exercise – enabling Marine Corps pilots to lead a strike package of multiple Valkyries seamlessly transferring C2 between crewed aircraft and expeditionary ground control stations, to autonomously accomplish the mission while reducing risk exposure – will be a force multiplier. Our integrated, autonomous collaborative platform, jet-powered aircraft systems truly validate the DoD's goal of achieving effective, survivable, affordable mass."

Flying since 2019, the Kratos XQ-58A Valkyrie is a high-performance, runway-flexible tactical unmanned aerial vehicle capable of long-range flights at high-subsonic speeds. The Valkyrie can serve as a loyal wingman, conduct single unmanned aircraft system operations, or operate in swarms. Combining affordability, survivability, long-range, high-subsonic speeds, maneuverability, and ability to carry flexible mission kit configurations and mix of lethal weapons from its internal weapons bay and wing stations, the XQ-58A provides unmatched operational flexibility at an affordable price for multiple DoD customers.

About Kratos Defense & Security Solutions
Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. (NASDAQ: KTOS) is a technology, products, system and software company addressing the defense, national security, and commercial markets. Kratos makes true internally funded research, development, capital and other investments, to rapidly develop, produce and field solutions that address our customers' mission critical needs and requirements. At Kratos, affordability is a technology, and we seek to utilize proven, leading-edge approaches and technology, not unproven bleeding edge approaches or technology, with Kratos' approach designed to reduce cost, schedule and risk, enabling us to be first to market with cost effective solutions. We believe that Kratos is known as an innovative disruptive change agent in the industry, a company that is an expert in designing products and systems up front for successful rapid, large quantity, low-cost future manufacturing which is a value add competitive differentiator for our large traditional prime system integrator partners and also to our government and commercial customers. Kratos intends to pursue program and contract opportunities as the prime or lead contractor when we believe that our probability of win (PWin) is high and any investment required by Kratos is within our capital resource comfort level. We intend to partner and team with a large, traditional system integrator when our assessment of PWin is greater or required investment is beyond Kratos' comfort level. Kratos' primary business areas include virtualized ground systems for satellites and space vehicles including software for command & control (C2) and telemetry, tracking and control (TT&C), jet powered unmanned aerial drone systems, hypersonic vehicles and rocket systems, propulsion systems for drones, missiles, loitering munitions, supersonic systems, space craft and launch systems, C5ISR and microwave electronic products for missile, radar, missile defense, space, satellite, counter UAS, directed energy, communication and other systems, and virtual & augmented reality training systems for the warfighter. For more information, visit www.KratosDefense.com.

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Certain statements in this press release may constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements are made on the basis of the current beliefs, expectations and assumptions of the management of Kratos and are subject to significant risks and uncertainty. Investors are cautioned not to place undue reliance on any such forward-looking statements. All such forward-looking statements speak only as of the date they are made, and Kratos undertakes no obligation to update or revise these statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Although Kratos believes that the expectations reflected in these forward-looking statements are reasonable, these statements involve many risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from what may be expressed or implied in these forward-looking statements. For a further discussion of risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ from those expressed in these forward-looking statements, as well as risks relating to the business of Kratos in general, see the risk disclosures in the Annual Report on Form 10-K of Kratos for the year ended December 31, 2023, and in subsequent reports on Forms 10-Q and 8-K and other filings made with the SEC by Kratos.

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Source: Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc.

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