



## “The Bersaglieri are Italy running forward”: General Portolano defends the values of the Armed Forces

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A wave of indignation and solidarity swept across the country after the incident at a Lombard scientific high school, where some teachers expressed reservations about welcoming the Associazione Nazionale Bersaglieri, judging its values as “distant from those of the school.” A serious judgment that touched the heart of national identity, generating a firm response from the highest institutions of the State.

But among the most authoritative and vibrant voices, that of the **Chief of Defense Staff, General of the Army Corps Luciano Portolano**, resonates with particular strength and dignity. His words are a clear call to national conscience and collective memory, a bulwark against any attempt at ideological revisionism disguised as educational debate.

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## “Values not divisive, but universal”

In a heartfelt letter addressed to the President of the Associazione Nazionale Bersaglieri, **General of the Army Corps Giuseppe Nicola Tota**, General Portolano expressed **“the firmest solidarity and total closeness”** to a Corps that represents not only a glorious military tradition but an ethical and civil model for the entire society.

*“It is simply unacceptable that the values the Bersaglieri embody – and which have always incarnated the very essence of the Italian Armed Forces – could be considered in contrast with any educational path.”*

Portolano does not limit himself to an official defense: **he lists one by one those values that every Italian school should teach**. Loyalty, sense of duty, spirit of sacrifice, love of country, solidarity, and respect for institutions – founding principles of our Republic and our Constitution.

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## “The Bersaglieri are a bastion of Italian identity”

The Chief of Defense Staff recalls how the peripheral sections of the Association are **“true bastions of Italian identity and active citizenship”**, capable of testifying, with sobriety and passion, a historical memory that does not divide but unites.

In a moment when **national identity is often subject to instrumentalizations or removals**, Portolano courageously states that “in every school these universal values should be conveyed,” implicitly condemning the act of exclusion as **a wound to the educational community and respect for common history**.

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## An indomitable race towards the future

The General's message does not stop at condemnation: it becomes **a spur and encouragement for the entire Corps of the Bersaglieri**, which he defines as “a virtuous example for the entire society.”

*“I am sure you will overcome this moment as well. The Bersaglieri, with their unmistakable run, have always been able to look ahead, overcoming every obstacle with an indomitable spirit.”*

A declaration that becomes a symbol: **the Bersaglieri, yesterday protagonists of the Risorgimento and today actors of national and international security, embody Italy running forward, not yielding to ideological simplifications, proudly looking at its roots.**

## Meloni and Crosetto: “Unacceptable and shameful”

Alongside General Portolano, the Prime Minister, **Giorgia Meloni**, and the Minister of Defense, **Guido Crosetto**, also took a stand. The Premier called the episode “**frankly unacceptable**”, reminding that “it is also thanks to the Bersaglieri that we have a nation today.” Crosetto spoke of “ideological prejudice” and reiterated that the Bersaglieri are **bearers of constitutional values** such as “freedom, equality, and democracy.”

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## Beyond the plume, a lesson in civility

In difficult times for collective identity, the words of the Chief of Defense Staff represent much more than a military stance: they are **a lesson in civility, a call to educational and institutional responsibility**, an invitation not to lose the sense of what unites.

Because – as Portolano himself said – **there is nothing divisive in serving one's country with courage, discipline, and love.** On the contrary: that is where true citizenship is born. And the Bersaglieri, as always, will continue to run ahead of us.

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