



185th Paratrooper Artillery Folgore: innovation and esprit de corps in the Yellow Devils' celebration

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The 185th Paratrooper Artillery Regiment "Folgore" celebrated its Corps Day at the "Romano" Barracks in Bracciano, renewing an event that goes far beyond a simple military anniversary. The ceremony was indeed a moment of reflection on the path taken by the unit, its operational evolution, and the role it continues to play within the Paratrooper Brigade "Folgore", in an international context characterized by **increasingly complex, dynamic, and multi-domain threats**.

In the presence of the **Commander of the Paratrooper Brigade "Folgore", Brigadier General Dario Paduano**, civil and military authorities, representatives of local institutions, combat associations, and volunteers, the so-called "**Yellow Devils**" recalled their roots, while confirming their willingness to look to the future with the same determination that has distinguished the unit for decades.

The anniversary holds particular significance as it recalls two fundamental dates in the unit's history: **July 1, 1958**, when the **1st Howitzer Battery** was reconstituted in Livorno, and **July 1, 2013**, when the **185th Paratrooper Artillery Regiment** officially became operational again at its Bracciano headquarters, reclaiming its original function of **fire support** for the Paratrooper Brigade "Folgore" units. This decision restored to the Great Unit an essential capability in airborne operations, integrating mobility, precision, and rapid intervention.

Innovation and training to face future scenarios

In his speech, **Brigadier General Dario Paduano** emphasized how the international security landscape today requires a continuous process of adaptation. Contemporary crises demonstrate that operational advantage does not solely depend on the introduction of new technologies, but above all on the military organizations' ability to **understand change, anticipate it, and transform it into new operational opportunities**.

The Brigade Commander highlighted how the **"Folgore"** is decisively investing in an increasingly realistic training model, oriented towards integration between different capabilities and open to experimenting with new procedures and systems. In an era where drones, electronic warfare, advanced observation systems, and digital capabilities profoundly change the battlefield, even the paratrooper artillery is called to evolve, while maintaining the values that have built its identity.



Speech by the Commander of the Paratrooper Brigade "Folgore" Brigadier General Dario Paduano. Source Italian Army.

Modern artillery indeed represents one of the central elements of land operations. Beyond the traditional function of **fire support**, it today contributes to integration with surveillance systems, unmanned platforms, and command and control networks, ensuring precision, rapid intervention, and coordination with other force components.

In this context, the **185th Regiment** continues to train its personnel through increasingly complex exercises, both nationally and internationally, contributing to the operational readiness of the Paratrooper Brigade "Folgore" and the Italian land component assigned to **NATO** missions and international organizations.

As General Paduano reminded, **innovating means having the courage to question established procedures without losing one's identity**, maintaining high standards of efficiency and operational credibility.

Memory, identity, and the symbol of the War Flag

The most significant moment of the celebrations was preceded by the traditional **airdrop of the Regiment's War Flag** at the "Nella" drop zone in Altopascio, in the province of Lucca. This is a tradition deeply rooted in the culture of the Paratrooper Brigade "Folgore", which unites the most representative symbol of the unit with its operational essence: the parachute jump.

The **War Flag**, decorated with the **Gold Medal for Military Valor** and the **Silver Medal for Army Valor**, represents the collective memory of the unit and preserves the sacrifice of generations of paratrooper artillerymen. Its airdrop is not just a ceremonial gesture, but a strong reminder of the continuity between past and present, reinforcing the sense of belonging of every soldier.



War Flag of the 185th Rgt. Source Italian Army.

In his speech, **Colonel Alberto Licci**, Regiment Commander, recalled how the Corps Day represents a moment of **memory, reflection, and pride**, emphasizing that knowing one's origins means understanding the current identity and finding in past achievements the strength needed to face future challenges.

His words recalled the legacy of the **"Lions of Folgore"**, protagonists of the **Battle of El Alamein** in 1942. In those circumstances, despite operating under severe numerical and material inferiority, lacking adequate supplies of water, food, and ammunition, the Italian paratroopers mounted a resistance destined to enter national military history, rejecting all surrender requests and earning respect even from their adversaries.

Today, the **185th Paratrooper Artillery Regiment "Folgore"** represents a highly specialized component of the Italian Army, engaged daily in operational, training, and international activities. **Tradition, innovation, esprit de corps, and adaptability** continue to constitute the most precious heritage of the "Yellow Devils", called to ensure, even in the most complex contexts, that fire support which is a fundamental capability of modern land operations.

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