



“African Lion 2026”: Strategic Visits and Meetings in Morocco

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The visit of the **Operational Commander of the Joint Forces Command, General of the Army Corps Giovanni Maria Iannucci**, on the occasion of the multinational exercise “**African Lion 2026**”, represented one of the most significant moments of the training activity hosted between Morocco and Tunisia under the aegis of the **U.S. Africa Command**.

The meeting with the leaders of the Moroccan **Forces Armées Royales**, captured during the institutional activities held in Agadir, confirms the level of cooperation achieved between the Armed Forces of the partner countries committed to strengthening security in the **wider Mediterranean** and the African continent.

During the visit, **General of the Army Corps Giovanni Maria Iannucci** participated in the Distinguished Visitor Day of the exercise, taking part in operational briefings, bilateral meetings, and on-ground demonstrations. “African Lion 2026” is confirmed as one of the most important multinational exercises on the African continent, involving **34 partner countries** in activities

dedicated to interoperability, joint planning, and integration of joint operational capabilities.

The Italian participation involved personnel from the **Special Forces**, the **Italian Army**, the **Carabinieri Corps**, and the **Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ)**, engaged in training, observation, and specialized support activities.

Agadir and Tan Tan, Interoperability and Complex Scenarios

During the visit, **General of the Army Corps Giovanni Maria Iannucci** participated in the events scheduled at the **Southern Zone Headquarters in Agadir**, one of the main coordination centers of the exercise. He then attended the operational demonstration in the **Tan Tan** area, where the participating forces simulated complex operations in a multinational environment.

The activities allowed for the verification on the ground of the level of integration achieved between contingents from different countries, with particular attention to the ability to share operational information, coordinate terrestrial and special assets, and manage **multi-domain operations**. Elements that are indispensable today in modern crisis scenarios, characterized by increasingly dynamic and interconnected threats.



Operational briefing with international military delegations participating in "African Lion 2026" in Morocco. Source: Ministry of Defense.

One of the most significant aspects of the exercise was precisely the work on **interoperability**, a central theme in modern international operations. Operating together means using common

procedures, compatible systems, and shared languages, reducing decision-making times and increasing mission effectiveness.

In “African Lion 2026”, great attention was also paid to the integration of capabilities in different operational domains: land, air, cyber, and informational. An approach that is now essential in contemporary operations, where strategic advantage increasingly depends on the speed of information processing and the ability to coordinate different assets.

Meanwhile, Morocco confirms itself as a central partner in the African and Mediterranean scenario. In recent years, Rabat has intensified military cooperation with the United States, NATO countries, and European partners, consolidating its role in **regional stability**. The Italian participation in these activities further strengthens the strategic dialogue between Rome and Rabat, already developed in the field of security, combating illegal trafficking, and cooperation in the Mediterranean.

Strategic Cooperation and Security in the Wider Mediterranean

On the sidelines of the exercise, the COVI Commander had important institutional meetings with allied and partner military authorities. Among them were the Inspector General of the Moroccan **Forces Armées Royales**, **General Mohammed Berrid**, the Commander of **U.S. AFRICOM**, **General Dagvin Anderson**, and the Commander of the U.S. Army Forces in Europe, **General Chris Donahue**.

The talks allowed for an in-depth discussion of the main issues related to the security of the African continent and the wider Mediterranean, with particular attention to the development of joint activities, the exchange of operational experiences, and the enhancement of the **lessons learned** gained in different international theaters.



Military authorities and delegations from partner countries participating in the multinational exercise “African Lion 2026” in Morocco. Source: Ministry of Defense.

In recent months, cooperation between NATO countries and African partners has gained increasing importance, also in light of the evolution of the international scenario. Tensions in the Sahel, the presence of terrorist groups, political instability in some areas of North Africa, and strategic competition between global powers are indeed redefining regional balances.

In this context, the Italian Defense continues to maintain high attention towards the **southern flank of the Atlantic Alliance**. The participation of COVI in “African Lion 2026” confirms Italy's willingness to contribute to building shared security through operational dialogue, military cooperation, and joint training.

The Italian commitment to multinational exercises also represents an important opportunity to consolidate the **international credibility of the Italian Armed Forces**. The ability to operate in complex contexts, integrating terrestrial assets, special forces, and joint components, is indeed one of the most appreciated elements by allied partners.

“African Lion 2026” thus confirms itself not only as a great military exercise but also as a strategic laboratory where **interoperability, cooperation, and international presence** become fundamental tools to face future challenges in the Mediterranean and the African continent.

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