Air Defense: Training between Italy and Greece in Gioia del Colle

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GIOIA DEL COLLE – In recent days, the Apulian air base of Gioia del Colle (BA) was the setting for a significant joint training that featured the personnel and aircraft of the **36° Stormo Caccia** of the Italian Air Force and the elite units of the Hellenic Air Force.

The Dissimilar Air Combat Training (DACT)

At the heart of the operations was the activity known as **"Dissimilar Air Combat Training (DACT)"**, a cornerstone of modern training that allows pilots to engage with weapon systems of different technological characteristics. The exercise involved a total of six aircraft, with the participation of the following units:

- **36° Stormo Caccia (IT):** Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft.
- **335° Squadron (GR):** F-16 aircraft.
- **332° Squadron (GR):** Rafale aircraft.

The simulated air-to-air combat engagements allowed for the refinement of fundamental operational tactics to ensure **air superiority** in extremely complex and dynamic contexts.

Operational Scenarios and NATO Integration

During the planning phase, capability packages of increasing difficulty were prepared to simulate different types of missions:

- **OCA (Offensive Counter Air):** Offensive air attack missions.
- **DCA (Defensive Counter Air):** Airspace defense missions.

The activity, as reported by **Ten. Fulvio Mallardi**, aimed to increase levels of operational readiness and consolidate cooperation among the assets of the Atlantic Alliance. The exercise also confirmed the effectiveness of DACT in testing the **Command and Control (C2)** structure and the coordination of national air defense systems.

The Role of the 36° Stormo

The 36° Stormo Caccia is under the **Comando delle Forze da Combattimento (CFC)** in Milan and represents one of the five Wings of the Italian Air Force tasked with ensuring national air defense and the NATO **Quick Reaction Alert (QRA)** service. Its mission is to maintain the constant operational efficiency of weapon systems and personnel through the continuous updating of operational procedures.