

Barduani at the NATO Military Committee: “KFOR determined despite Kosovo's fragilities”

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Brussels, April 18, 2025 – At the NATO Headquarters, Major General Enrico Barduani, former Commander of the Reggimento Savoia Cavalleria, presented his mid-term report as Commander of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) before the Military Committee of the Atlantic Alliance, the highest military authority of the Organization, responsible for implementing the strategic and political decisions made by the North Atlantic Council.

The General's report provided a detailed analysis of the current situation in Kosovo, clearly illustrating the progress made by the KFOR mission over the past months, but also the risks and challenges still present in the operational theater. According to Barduani, NATO's presence remains an essential element for the area's stability, in a context still marked by interethnic tensions, institutional fragilities, and regional political instability.

“Our mission remains to ensure a safe and secure environment for all citizens of Kosovo, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, gender, or political opinion,” Barduani stated. “KFOR's operational posture must remain proactive, to prevent future crises and respond promptly to any possible scenario. Only through a visible, credible, and determined presence can we continue to be guarantors of security.”

KFOR, the General reiterated, acts in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, which gives NATO the mandate to contribute to the area's stabilization after the 1999 conflict. But the framework remains complex: the stalemate in negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina, the lack of a common vision among international actors present in Kosovo, and growing social tensions in the Balkans represent significant obstacles.



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Admiral Cavo Dragone praises Barduani's leadership: “A reference point for Balkan stability”

At the end of the presentation, the President of the NATO Military Committee, Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, expressed strong appreciation for the work carried out by General Barduani and the professional conduct of the KFOR mission forces. “General Barduani's action has been crucial in consolidating the progress achieved so far and strengthening NATO's role as a guarantor of peace and security in the region,” the Admiral declared.

Barduani's commitment has been recognized as a key element in maintaining a delicate balance in a region still crossed by latent tensions. In particular, the Military Committee

highlighted the Italian Commander's ability to maintain a constructive dialogue with all local and international components present in the Kosovo theater, promoting a multilateral approach to security management.

General Barduani also wanted to recall the role of the Italian forces deployed in Kosovo, which represent a significant component of the KFOR mission. “The professionalism, flexibility, and spirit of service of our military are a heritage recognized by the entire international community,” he affirmed.

The Italian contribution fits into a broader framework of shared responsibility within the Atlantic Alliance, which sees the KFOR operation as one of its longest-standing and strategic commitments on the European continent. Despite the absence of open conflicts, security in Kosovo is constantly threatened by political and social tensions that require vigilance, mediation capacity, and operational readiness.



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Tajani: “The Western Balkans must return to being Europe, it is not an enlargement but a reunification”

In the context of the debate on Balkan stability, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Antonio Tajani, also wanted to emphasize the importance of the Italian presence in the region. “We are working so that the Balkans can finally find their natural place within the European family,” Tajani declared in an interview on the sidelines of the NATO Summit. “I prefer to speak of reunification rather than enlargement: the Balkans have always been part of Europe, it was recent history

that kept them out.”

The Minister then expressed some concerns about the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, another sensitive point of the Balkan peninsula, but reassured about the Italian Government's commitment to ensuring a continuous and incisive presence, both politically and militarily. “We are not in the Balkans just to wave the flag,” he stated, “but to be a concrete outpost of Europe. Our missions, like KFOR, testify to our active and responsible role.”

Tajani also drew attention to the economic potential of the Balkan countries in terms of cooperation and development. In particular, he emphasized how the recent Action Plan for strengthening Italian exports looks with interest to this region. “We want to reach 700 billion euros in exports by the end of the legislature. The countries of the Western Balkans, such as Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and North Macedonia, represent real growth opportunities for Italian companies,” he said.

According to Tajani, the full economic and political integration of the Balkans into the European Union is not just a promise to be kept, but a strategic necessity for the whole of Europe. “The stability of the Balkans is the stability of Europe. And it is also the future of our foreign policy.”

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