



☐ BREAKING NEWS | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - HELICOPTER INCIDENT | NAMES OF THE VICTIMS RELEASED

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Update at 23:26 on October 29

The message of condolence from the Chief of Staff of the Esercito Italiano, Gen. C.A. Carmine Masiello

On behalf of the entire Esercito Italiano and personally, I express my deepest and heartfelt condolences over the tragic loss of our two service members and the two personnel of the Corpo Militare Volontario della Croce Rossa Italiana, who died today in the tragic aviation accident involving a CH-47 helicopter deployed on the EUFOR Althea international mission. At this time of devastating grief, the entire Armed Force joins in a symbolic and heartfelt embrace with their families, to whom we extend our fullest support, and with the Corpo Militare Volontario della Croce Rossa Italiana, a historic and fraternal ally in every

operational theater. Their ultimate sacrifice, made far from home for international stability and security, will remain etched in the memory and history of the Army and the nation. I also extend thoughts of hope and wishes for a speedy recovery to those injured in the accident, in the hope that they may overcome this difficult time as soon as possible. To all our service members deployed abroad, I extend my deepest gratitude for the extraordinary courage and dedication with which they fulfill their duty each day.

Update at 23:10 on October 29

Defense Minister Guido Crosetto has released the names of the four Italian service members killed in the CH-47 Chinook accident that occurred today, October 29, 2026, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, during the EUFOR Althea mission.

The four fallen personnel

- **Sergeant Simone Ruggia** – Esercito Italiano, Aviazione dell'Esercito (AVES).
- **Sergeant Claudio Marchesi** – Esercito Italiano, Aviazione dell'Esercito (AVES).
- **Lieutenant Franco Adriano Zecchillo** – Corpo Militare Volontario della Croce Rossa Italiana.
- **Sergeant Laura Procacci** – Corpo Militare Volontario della Croce Rossa Italiana.

Below is Minister Crosetto's full message of condolence:

We waited until the devastating news of the death of their loved ones had been delivered to the families, and we wanted to avoid hundreds more families enduring agonizing hours while waiting to learn the names of those involved.

*Our temporary silence did not prevent news of the loss of four of our service members deployed on the **Eufor Althea** mission from spreading, causing despair among hundreds of people whose loved ones were serving in **Bosnia**.*

*For hours, together with the **Stato Maggiore Difesa**, the **Esercito** and the **Comando operativo di vertice interforze**, I have been following the condition of the 11 injured personnel currently hospitalized*

at the hospitals in **Brcko** and **Tuzla**, where we have sent Italian military medical personnel to closely monitor our people.

Tomorrow morning, together with the **Capo di Stato Maggiore della Difesa**, we will travel to join our wounded personnel and the other service members in **Bosnia**, accompanied by additional Italian military medical specialists.

Those who have served until today and now need help will receive every possible form of support from us.

We join in the grief of the families of Sergeant (El AVES) Simone **RUGGIA**, Sergeant (El AVES) Claudio **MARCHESI**, Lieutenant of the Corpo Militare Volontario della Croce Rossa Italiana (CRI) Franco Adriano **ZECCHILLO**, and Sergeant of the Corpo Militare Volontario della Croce Rossa Italiana (CRI) Laura **PROCACCI**, who lost their lives serving Italy, the **Defense** and the **Esercito**.

The anguish and suffering caused by this tragic event will change what we had planned for the

Armed Forces Day on November 4. Beginning with the Villaggio Difesa, which will not be inaugurated tomorrow and will no longer be the venue for a celebration of gratitude toward the Armed Forces, but rather a place where people can express their closeness to the fallen—Simone, Claudio, Franco and Laura—their families and the Armed Forces, through a prayer, a flower, a note or simply their presence.

Link: <https://www.difesa.it/primopiano/cordoglio-del-ministro-crosetto/116449.html>

Update at 21:13 on October 29

The **Ministry of Defense** has officially confirmed the deaths of **four Italian service members** in the helicopter accident involving the **EUFOR Althea** mission, which crashed on October 29, 2026, near Brčko, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The victims were **two members of the Esercito Italiano** and **two members of the Corpo Militare Volontario della Croce Rossa Italiana (CRI)**.

There were **15 people** aboard the helicopter. The other **11 service members were injured**, but according to the Defense Ministry, **none is currently in life-threatening condition**.

The Ministry immediately arranged for the deployment of an **Italian medical team** to provide the injured with the highest level of medical support and the best possible care.

The Ministry of Defense further stated that additional details about the incident will be made public only after the families of the four fallen service members have been informed, in full respect of their grief and dignity.

Defense Minister Guido Crosetto expressed, on behalf of the entire Defense establishment, his deep condolences and support for the victims' families, loved ones, and colleagues, stressing that the tragic loss affects the entire defense community:

«At this time of immense sorrow, my thoughts first and foremost go to the families of our fallen service members, to whom I extend my personal condolences and those of the entire Defense establishment. There are no words capable of filling such a great loss. Italy as a whole is grateful to our service members who lost their lives serving the country. We stand close to the wounded, their families, and all those experiencing these dramatic hours. Defense is a community and, in the most difficult moments, it must demonstrate that it can remain united, present, and able to care for its men and women».

Investigations to determine the causes of the incident are still underway.

Link: <https://www.difesa.it/primopiano/comunicato-stampa/116536.html>

Update at 20:58 on October 29

According to the latest updates, the toll stands at **four dead and eleven injured**. The deceased reportedly include **two members of the Corpo Militare della Croce Rossa Italiana**.

The **President of the Republic, Sergio Mattarella**, expressed his condolences in a message addressed to the Chief of Defense Staff, General Luciano Portolano.

The full message from President of the Republic Sergio Mattarella

"I learned with deep emotion of the death of the service members in the tragic helicopter accident in the Bosnian operational theater during Operation 'Althea'. In these sad circumstances, I ask that you convey to the Esercito Italiano and the Corpo Militare della

Croce Rossa my feelings of condolence and heartfelt solidarity over the sorrow caused by this tragic event, asking them to express my closeness and solidarity to the families of the victims”.

Sergio Mattarella, President of the Italian Republic, in his message addressed to the Chief of Defense Staff, General Luciano Portolano.

Source: https://www.ansa.it/sito/notizie/cronaca/2026/10/29/elicottero-militare-italiano-cade-in-bosnia-due-operatori-della-croce-rossa_c2a741c9-64ff-4040-9191-fc48011cdff0.html

Update at 20:05 on October 29

Italy's Ambassador to Sarajevo, **Sarah Eti Castellani**, announced that she was traveling to the site of the Italian military helicopter crash that occurred on the afternoon of October 29, 2026, in Brčko, northeastern Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Speaking live on **Tg4**, the Ambassador stated:

«Unfortunately, this helicopter from the Eufor Althea military mission crashed this afternoon in the northeast of the country».

Castellani also clarified that the circumstances of the accident have not yet been established:

«Eufor has confirmed that it is an Esercito Italiano helicopter. The circumstances of the accident, which reportedly occurred during takeoff from Brcko Airport, are not yet clear».

The Ambassador finally confirmed the presence of **15 Italians on board**, stressing that the number of dead and injured remains uncertain:

«We know there are fatalities and injured people, but the number is still uncertain. There were 15 Italians on board».

Source: https://www.tgcom24.mediaset.it/2026/video/elicottero-precipitato-in-bosnia-l-ambasciatrice-al-tg4-numero-di-vittime-e-feriti-ancora-incerto-a-bordo-c-erano-15-ita_118313979-02k.shtml

Update at 20:02 on October 29

Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani on X:

Deeply saddened, I stand with our armed forces over the tragedy that occurred in Bosnia. My thoughts are with the families of the victims. A terrible tragedy that shakes the hearts of all Italians. The Italian Ambassador to Sarajevo is already on his way to Brcko, the site of the accident. The Foreign Ministry will provide all necessary support. A prayer for our fallen and injured personnel in the line of duty.

— Antonio Tajani (@Antonio_Tajani) [October 29, 2026](#)

Update at 19:55 on October 29

A CH-47 Chinook helicopter of the Esercito Italiano, deployed on Operation EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, crashed this afternoon, October 29, in the Brčko region. The causes of the accident are still being investigated. Emergency responders arrived at the crash site.

Prime Minister **Giorgia Meloni** expressed her condolences:

The Ministry of Defense has officially confirmed the incident, stating that no further information can be released at this time pending more precise details, particularly regarding the health conditions of the personnel involved. Link: <https://www.difesa.it/primopiano/comunicato-stampa/116536.html>

No official Italian casualty and injury toll is yet available, nor have their identities been disclosed.

Updates will follow.