

Brother forever: the Armed Forces, veterans and institutions' final farewell to Toni Capuozzo

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The death of **Toni Capuozzo, who passed away yesterday at the age of 77**, has sparked an immediate and profound outpouring of grief across the highest offices of state, the world of journalism and, in particular, the entire defense establishment. From institutional leaders to rank-and-file personnel and veterans of international missions, **the messages posted on social media in recent hours** portray a journalist who, over more than 30 years of reporting from the world's hottest front lines, earned **universal respect through a direct, humane perspective free of ideological rhetoric.**

The tribute from institutions and the world of journalism

Leading the chorus of institutional tributes was Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who wrote on X that with Capuozzo's death "*Italian journalism loses an unmistakable voice*", joined by messages from the presidents of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, including Ignazio La Russa, and the

deputy prime ministers. On the parliamentary front, Maurizio Gasparri, chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, also spoke out, remembering the Friulian reporter not only as a great chronicler of conflicts, but "*as a friend who stood by us at a time of great commitment*".

Meanwhile, from the Mediaset newsroom — where the illuminated message "*Ciao Toni*" was projected onto the tower in Cologno Monzese — came heartfelt tributes from lifelong colleagues. Enrico Mentana bid him farewell with a succinct and affectionate "*Ciao Toni, friend forever*", while **Clemente Mimun, Paolo Liguori and Giovanni Minoli** recalled his rigor in the field and the deep humanity he showed during the siege of Sarajevo, when he saved and brought the young Kemal to Italy by hiding him beneath his ballistic vest.

The official message from the Ministry of Defense

Especially heartfelt was the remembrance from the ministry at Palazzo Baracchini. On its official X and Facebook channels, the Ministry of Defense paid tribute to the journalist, describing him as "***a friend, but above all a person to whom the entire Defense establishment is bound by esteem and affection***", concluding its statement with a direct "*We will miss you!*" and expressing its closeness to his family and colleagues.A tribute of closeness reflecting decades of discreet and respectful presence alongside Italian contingents deployed in the most complex operational theaters, from Somalia to the Balkans, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

The Paracadutisti and mission veterans: "He was someone who understood what it meant to be under fire"

However, it is on the noticeboards of military associations and in comments from serving and retired personnel that the truest measure of the bond between Capuozzo and those who wear the uniform emerges. On pages linked to the Brigata Paracadutisti "Folgore" and the **Associazione Nazionale Paracadutisti d'Italia (ANPd'I),** the maroon-beret community paid tribute to him, explicitly remembering him as an "***friend of the paratroopers***".

In the many messages shared by veterans of overseas missions, gratitude recurs for a correspondent who did not observe operations from behind a desk, but shared checkpoints, dust, and risks with units on the ground. Among veterans' comments are direct remarks such as "***He was someone who understood what it meant to be under fire***", "***Never any prejudice against those who wore the uniform***" and the traditional farewell "***Cieli blu,***

Toni", accompanied by memories of the many ceremonies commemorating the fallen and gatherings at local sections where Capuozzo was often a guest of honor.

His bond with the Alpini and Friulian roots

A particularly heartfelt tribute came from the world of the **Penne Nere**, closely tied to the Friulian roots of the journalist, who was born in Palmanova. On the channels of the Associazione Nazionale Alpini and local sections, Capuozzo is remembered as someone who — despite having completed his conscription service in Piacenza and often joking about his "guilt" at not having worn the Alpini hat — was a "friend" member of the Gruppo Alpini di Tarvisio and edited the magazine *Alpin* for years.

Messages from Friuli and the Altopiano di Asiago recall his constant participation in association life, including the recent presentation of the documentary *Mandi Fradis*, dedicated to the Alpini's reconstruction work in Friuli after the 1976 earthquake, emphasizing that he was regarded in the sections as "*one of the family*".

The Marina Militare, the "San Marco" case, and practical support in Herat

Under the official post by the Ministry of Defense and in social media groups frequented by Armed Forces personnel, messages of thanks from members of the **Marina Militare.Many sailors, both serving and retired**, wished to recall the firm and unconventional stance taken by Capuozzo during **the long-running case of the two riflemen of the "San Marco" Regiment detained in India, when he publicly defended the dignity and operational integrity of the Italian military personnel.**

Completing this mosaic of memories from the military "rank and file" is a concrete gesture that veterans of the *RC-West* contingent in Afghanistan have never forgotten: the full proceeds from the theatrical performance *Tre uomini di parola*, staged with Mauro Corona and Luigi Maieron, were donated to fund the construction of a residential facility for the major burns center in Herat. A tangible sign of that quiet closeness to the disadvantaged and to soldiers in the field that will accompany the journalist until his final farewell, scheduled for lunedì 16 novembre at 15:30 in Udine