Check Point Pasta, thirty-three years later: the Folgore preserves the memory of the sacrifice in Somalia

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Memory represents one of the fundamental elements on which the identity of every Armed Force is built. Remembering those who sacrificed their lives in the service of the country means passing on to new generations of military personnel not only the memory of a historical event but above all the legacy of values, responsibility, and sense of duty that continue to guide the daily actions of men and women in uniform.

International missions have profoundly marked Italy's recent history, engaging thousands of military personnel in peace, stabilization, and humanitarian support operations in areas characterized by high instability. In these contexts, Armed Forces personnel often operated in extremely difficult conditions, facing high risks with professionalism, balance, and a spirit of service.

Among the most significant episodes of Italian participation in missions abroad, the battles of **Check Point Pasta**, which took place in Mogadishu on **July 2, 1993**, during Operation **IBIS II** in Somalia, occupy a special place. A clash that represented one of the most dramatic moments of the Italian presence in the African country and that still today constitutes an indelible page in national military history.

Thirty-three years after those events, at the Command of the **Folgore Paratroopers Brigade** in Livorno, the traditional commemorative ceremony dedicated to the Italian fallen of the operations in Somalia was held, renewing a bond that unites the past, present, and future of the paratrooper specialty.

The remembrance of the fallen and the message from the Brigade Commander

During the ceremony, held in front of the monument dedicated to the fallen, tribute was paid to all the Italian military personnel who lost their lives during the **IBIS** operations, recalling their example as the moral heritage of the Italian Army.

In his speech, **Brigadier General Dario Paduano**, Commander of the Folgore Paratroopers Brigade, strongly recalled the most authentic meaning of being a paratrooper, highlighting how **integrity, discipline, loyalty, and respect** represent the first and most important operational capability of the military.

According to the Commander, it is precisely these values that make the Armed Forces credible in the eyes of citizens and constitute the essential reference for every young person who chooses to wear the maroon beret. He also reminded that service to the Nation is not a theoretical concept but a daily choice made of responsibility, availability towards others, and, in the most extreme cases, personal sacrifice.

Brig. Gen. Dario Paduano Commander of the Folgore during his speech. Source Italian Army.

His words reiterated how technical preparation and operational efficiency must always be accompanied by a solid ethical dimension, an element that has always characterized the tradition of the Folgore and the entire Italian Army.

The commemoration was not only of historical remembrance but also a moment of moral formation aimed at the military personnel currently in service, called to inherit a legacy built through the example of those who preceded them.

The sacrifice of Check Point Pasta continues to speak to new generations

On **July 2, 1993**, during Operation **IBIS II**, Italian military personnel were involved in a violent armed clash with Somali militiamen in the area known as **Check Point Pasta**, in Mogadishu.

During the fighting, **Second Lieutenant Andrea Millevoi**, **Sergeant Major Stefano Paolicchi**, and **Paratrooper Pasquale Baccaro** lost their lives, facing an extremely complex operational situation with courage, demonstrating until the end the highest sense of duty.

In the same clash, **thirty-one Italian military personnel** were injured, among them **Lieutenant Colonel Gianfranco Paglia**, who for the valor demonstrated during the action would later be awarded the **Gold Medal for Military Valor**, the highest Italian honor for acts of heroism.

The entire Operation **IBIS** cost the lives of **twelve Italian military personnel** in total, demonstrating how even peace missions can suddenly turn into high-intensity operations.

A moment of the ceremony. Source Italian Army.

More than three decades later, the memory of Check Point Pasta continues to represent a point of reference for the Italian Army and, in particular, for the Folgore Paratroopers Brigade. The memory of the fallen does not belong only to history but constitutes a living heritage that fuels the esprit de corps, strengthens the sense of belonging, and reminds us that service to the Nation requires competence, courage, and absolute dedication.

The commemoration in Livorno thus confirms the Army's desire to preserve the memory of those who served Italy to the ultimate sacrifice, passing on to new generations of paratroopers those values of responsibility, honor, and fidelity that continue to represent the heart of the **Folgore** tradition.

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