Crosetto: Plan for Rearmament and Relevance in NATO

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The plan by the Minister of Defense, Guido Crosetto, for Italy's rearmament marks a significant shift in national defense strategy, aiming to increase military spending to align with commitments made to NATO. The challenge is ambitious: Italy will need to invest ten billion euros to meet the target of 2% of GDP allocated to defense, a goal set during the NATO summit in Wales in 2014, but never achieved. Crosetto, along with the Meloni government, is trying to overcome internal resistance and economic difficulties to ensure a more decisive and operational stance in the Atlantic Alliance.

The plan has been outlined in a strategic document from the Ministry of Defense, offering an insight into the new Italian defense strategy. The review of the armed forces is not limited to an increase in spending but also introduces a significant restructuring of the military reserve, focusing on a numerical and qualitative strengthening of personnel. The government has decided to open the doors to civilians with technical skills, such as engineers, IT specialists, and electronics experts, to respond to the challenges of modern warfare and to fill existing gaps in

the armed forces.

The plan, which envisions the formation of a reserve composed of about ten thousand men, focuses on internal scenarios, such as natural disasters and national crises, but does not exclude deployment in international contexts. Crosetto's goal is to create a flexible force ready to intervene quickly, capable of responding to emergencies and threats both internal and external. However, the plan involves a considerable financial commitment, and the government is preparing to support this effort despite the economic and political challenges that may arise.

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Italy in NATO: Ambitions and Challenges in the International Context

Italy's involvement in international missions and its role within NATO are at the heart of the new defense strategy. Crosetto has stated that Italy must gain greater relevance within the Alliance, with a clear objective: to command some of the most delicate missions abroad, thereby increasing its political and military weight. Today, our country participates in numerous international missions, but often in subordinate roles. Italy, in fact, is considered one of the nations with a significant military contribution but not always a leader in operations.

The government's strategy aims to reverse this trend by increasing the number of missions directed from Rome and enhancing the command and planning capabilities of military operations. Crosetto has indicated that the plan for the future includes the need for “a more mature stance towards military operations,” a concept that implies greater autonomy and

operational responsibility. The strategic document emphasizes how Italy, despite having high-level military personnel, does not yet have a significant command role in NATO missions, and this must change.

Despite the urgency for greater assertiveness, the plan faces constraints imposed by the internal situation. Financial resources are limited, and many Italians are concerned about the burden that military spending could have on the state budget, especially during a period of economic difficulties. The government's policy strives to justify these investments, arguing that national security and collective defense within NATO are essential to ensure international stability and protect the country from external threats, such as those arising from Russia's growing aggressiveness.

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The Military Reserve and the Integration of Civilians into the Armed Forces

One of the most innovative aspects of the Crosetto plan concerns the revision of the military reserve. The Italian government has decided to open the military reserve not only to already trained personnel but also to **civilians with technical skills in key sectors such as IT, engineering, and cybersecurity**. This decision responds to the need to modernize the armed forces, making them more agile and capable of facing the challenges of contemporary warfare, which also requires the support of specialized civilian professionals.

The intention is to integrate about ten thousand new members into the reserve, but not just for numerical enhancement. The reserve will not be a mere supplementary tool but a fundamental asset to be used in crisis scenarios, such as earthquakes, floods, and nationwide blackouts. This type of preparation requires the availability of specialized skills that are currently lacking, such as those of IT specialists who could intervene in case of technological or IT emergencies.

Moreover, the plan also provides for greater flexibility in recruitment methods, allowing civilians without previous military experience to enter the armed forces, an initiative that reflects the more dynamic and adaptable approach of modern defense. This change entails a further commitment from the government in training these new soldiers, who must be ready to respond not only to internal emergencies but also to international military operations.

In summary, Guido Crosetto's rearmament plan presents an ambitious vision for the future of Italian defense, aiming to strengthen our role within NATO and modernize the armed forces by integrating new professionals and increasing the number of soldiers available for national and international emergencies. However, the implementation of this strategy will have to face various challenges, including economic and political ones, to ensure that Italy can become a more influential force in the Atlantic Alliance and a safer nation.