



Defense: General Iannucci in Serbia for the Historic NATO-Serbia 2026 Exercise

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BELGRADE – Today, at the *Borovac Training Area*, the *Distinguished Visitors (DV) Day* of the **"NATO-Serbia Exercise 2026"** took place, the first historic joint military exercise between the Atlantic Alliance and the Serbian Armed Forces. The event was attended by **General of the Army Corps Giovanni Maria Iannucci**, Commander of the Joint Operational Command (COVI), as a testament to Italy's strong commitment to the stability of the Balkan area.

The training, focused on cooperation and interoperability in peace support operations, marks an important step in the diplomatic-military relations of the region.



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The Numbers and Scenario of the Exercise

Organized by the *Allied Joint Force Command Naples* in close synergy with the Serbian Armed Forces, the exercise began on May 11. The activity saw approximately **600 soldiers** deployed on the ground from four nations:

- **Serbia** (Host country)
- **Italy**
- **Romania**
- **Turkey**

The training scenario allowed the units to operate in a complex multinational context, focusing on consolidating common procedures, coordination capability, and operational readiness in rapid times.



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The Role of Italy and the Words of the COVI Commander

During the *DV Day*, General Iannucci attended a tactical demonstration in the field and subsequently met with the Italian contingent. The Defense's contribution was ensured by the **Italian Army with 71 soldiers**, perfectly integrated into the multinational setup.

Addressing the Italian soldiers, the COVI Commander emphasized the strategic importance of these activities:

"Exercises serve to transform different procedures, means, and skills into a common capability. It is here, on the ground, that interoperability becomes real readiness."

— Gen. C.A. Giovanni Maria Iannucci



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Geopolitics and Regional Stability

The *NATO-Serbia Exercise 2026* is part of the cooperation initiatives launched by the Atlantic Alliance in the **Western Balkans**. A path guided by the principles of transparency and operational dialogue, conducted in **full respect of military neutrality** and Serbia's sovereign decisions.

The presence and support of Italy once again confirm the leading role of our Defense in ensuring collective security and regional stability, demonstrating the ability to project stability through military cooperation in complex international scenarios.