

Drones, Freccia and 350 soldiers: the Italian Battle Group completes high-intensity training

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The **"Golden Tiger"** and **"Silver Tiger"** live-fire exercises have concluded, planned and conducted by the NATO Multinational Battle Group under Italian leadership, commanded by Colonel Stefano Catania. The training activities were designed to verify the capability of the various components to operate in full integration within a high-intensity operational scenario.

Forces deployed and assets used

The exercises involved over **350 soldiers** and approximately **60 vehicles**, testing tactical procedures and interoperability among allied nations. The main assets deployed included:

- The Medium Armored Vehicle (VBM) **"Freccia"**
- The Multi-role Light Tactical Vehicle (VTLM) **"Lince"**
- Support systems with mortars and specialized Engineer units

- **Drones** employed for advanced surveillance and reconnaissance activities

The level of preparation achieved was verified through the coordinated use of these specialized components, confirming the effectiveness of the Battle Group as a cohesive multinational formation.



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The Italian contingent and the strategic context

The Italian contingent is organized on the basis of the **4° Reggimento Carri** of the "Garibaldi" Bersaglieri Brigade and operates within NATO's presence on the eastern flank of the Alliance. "Golden Tiger" and "Silver Tiger" are part of a periodic training cycle aimed at maintaining maximum operational readiness and strengthening NATO's deterrence and defense posture.

Since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Atlantic Alliance has significantly reinforced its eastern defensive structure. Alongside the four historical Battle Groups of the **Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP)** in the Baltic states and Poland, the extraordinary Brussels summit in March 2022 established four additional contingents in Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary. This expansion doubled land forces, extending the presence from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.



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Italy's role and the Battle Group in Bulgaria

The overall eight Battle Groups constitute the **Forward Land Forces (FLF)**, units led by a *framework nation* that cooperate closely with the forces of the host countries to ensure continuity and shared operational standards. NATO's posture remains strictly defensive, proportionate and consistent with regional defense plans.

In line with international commitments undertaken, the Italian Parliament has authorized a total deployment of up to **2,323 soldiers, 1,046 land vehicles and 9 aircraft** distributed across Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary.

Of particular strategic importance is the **Multinational Battle Group in Bulgaria**, located near the southern border of the Alliance in the **Novo Selo** training area. This combat unit, led by Italy as framework nation, brings together approximately **1,000 soldiers** and assets from various allied countries, including Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania and Turkey, confirming the effectiveness of multilateral cooperation in the region.