

E5, European Defense Accelerates from Rome

Published on 16/05/2025

Today, Rome hosts the **fourth "E5" Meeting of Defense Ministers** at the Palazzo dell'Aeronautica. The meeting involves representatives from **France, Germany, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom**, at a strategic moment for the future of European security.

The **E5 format was born in 2022**, in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, as an informal but highly operational tool for coordination among the continent's main defense players. Initially promoted by **France and the United Kingdom**, the E5 stands out for its **agility, informality, and rapid response**, offering an alternative platform compared to the slower structures of the European Union and NATO.

A distinctive element of the format is also the **involvement of the United Kingdom**, which, despite having left the EU, maintains a central role in the continent's security. The E5 thus allows for **bridging the strategic gap between London and Brussels**, fostering smoother cooperation among countries with complementary visions and tools.

After previous meetings in **Berlin, Helenów, and Paris**, Rome hosts the fourth summit, with the aim of consolidating the role of the E5 as a political and operational engine of European defense. The choice of the **Palazzo dell'Aeronautica** is not accidental: a symbol of the Italian Armed Forces, it underscores Italy's role as a **key player in building a new European defense architecture**.



Common Defense and Support for Kyiv: The Two Priorities

The agenda of the E5 Meeting revolves around **two strategic axes**: the **strengthening of European defense**, both industrial and operational, and the **continuous support for Ukraine**, at a still delicate moment for the continent's geopolitical balance.

The war in Ukraine remains the testing ground for European unity. The ministers confirm their commitment to **ensuring military, logistical, and training assistance to Kyiv**, emphasizing the importance of better coordinating national efforts to avoid dispersion and maximize the effectiveness of aid. The Russian invasion, in addition to threatening Ukraine, **directly affects the security of the entire Europe** through hybrid forms of conflict involving cyberspace, infrastructure, and public opinion.

This is precisely what **Andrius Kubilius**, European Commissioner for Defense and Space, insists on, present at the Roman table. On the eve of the summit, he sends a strong message: **"We need a Big Bang in European defense"**. For Kubilius, Europe must stop acting in a fragmented way and start **investing at least 3% of GDP** in defense, but above all, do so intelligently, with **joint purchases, common supply chains, and a shared industrial**

strategy.



Italy is indicated as a virtuous example, thanks to the role of Leonardo, defined by the commissioner as **“the strongest company in Europe in the defense sector”**. Kubilius invites the Union to **value and replicate effective industrial models**, which combine technological innovation and production capacity.

However, his words also include a **jab at Italian politics**, accused of ambiguity in supporting the “Readiness 2030” plan, aimed at improving the EU's operational readiness. On the institutional level, Italy declares itself in favor, but the issue of **military spending still divides political debate and public opinion**. Kubilius poses a clear question: “Does Italy support or not the need to generally strengthen our defense?”

The E5 Towards the Future: Autonomy, Cohesion, and Realism

The Rome summit demonstrates that the E5 format is no longer just an informal experiment, but increasingly configures itself as a **reference operational core for European defense**. Its **flexibility** makes it capable of adapting to new threats and responding quickly, qualities essential today in an unstable geopolitical context.



Italy, host and protagonist of the summit, reaffirms its commitment to a **stronger, autonomous common defense compatible with Atlantic ties**. It also emphasizes the centrality of the **enlarged Mediterranean** as a strategic area often overlooked in collective defense plans.

The future of European security depends on the ability of member states to **overcome fragmentation** and build **concrete synergies between industry, operational capabilities, and political will**. The E5 format can become a reference platform, capable of uniting countries with different visions but shared goals.

The message coming from Rome is clear: **Europe can no longer afford to be a spectator**. It must act, invest, decide. The E5 Meeting, with its practical and results-oriented character, represents **a concrete response to the challenges of our time**, between conventional warfare, hybrid threats, and the need for strategic autonomy.

In an era marked by uncertainty, the E5 stands as a **credible tool of unity, deterrence, and European strategic vision**.

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