



Florence: New Strategic NATO Hub on the Southern Flank

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With the decision to establish the **Multinational Division South (MND-S)** in **Florence**, at the **Predieri** barracks in the **Rovezzano** district, NATO significantly strengthens its strategic posture on the Southern Flank of the Alliance. The announcement, made official in recent months but the result of planning dating back to at least 2020, fits into a framework of the Alliance's increasing focus on the dynamics of the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Sahel.

The MND-S, a multinational-scale land operational command, will be tasked with planning and directing operations in highly unstable scenarios, also performing a logistical and coordination function for allied forces. The Florence headquarters will integrate into the existing NATO network in Italy, alongside the **Joint Force Command (JFC)** in Naples and the **NATO Rapid Deployable Corps - Italy (NRDC-ITA)** in Solbiate Olona. Its role will be intermediate, functional to the direct management of field operations, particularly in the southern quadrant of Europe and the wider Mediterranean.

But NATO's arrival in Florence is not just a geopolitical issue: it also represents an **urban and infrastructural transformation**, with economic, social, and political impacts for the city and for Italy as a whole.

Predieri Barracks: Transformation, Contracts, and Technology

The **Predieri** barracks, located in the residential district of **Rovezzano**, is set to become the permanent headquarters of the MND-S. It is a modern infrastructure, designed to meet NATO's highest standards in terms of **security, interoperability, and environmental sustainability**. The project includes the demolition of two buildings dating back to the 1940s and the construction of a new operational headquarters of about **10,000 square meters**.

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The contract value, managed by **Geniodife** (Directorate of Works and State Property of the Ministry of Defense), is about **27 million euros**, and includes not only the physical construction of the structure but also the installation of advanced systems: **drone surveillance and electro-optical sensors, digital command and control networks**, technologies for real-time operations management. The entire process, transferred from the 7th Infrastructure Department of Florence, will follow public evidence regulations, with the possibility of participation for companies registered in the MIMIT lists and coordinated through **ANCE**, the National Association of Building Contractors.

The project also includes **low environmental impact** solutions, in line with European and NATO directives for more sustainable defense. However, despite the economic potential of the initiative, controversies have not been lacking.

Strategic Opportunity

Florence, therefore, enters a new phase of its history: from the center of the Renaissance to the crossroads of contemporary geopolitics. The city is indeed at the center of a highly functional logistical corridor for NATO operations: a short distance from Camp Darby – an important U.S.

logistical base, from the port of Livorno and the military airport of Pisa. This already operational infrastructure network allows the MND-S command to efficiently integrate into the dynamics of the Mediterranean and Southern Europe, strengthening the Alliance's ability to respond promptly to crisis scenarios.

The establishment of the command is not only a military investment but also a clear affirmation of Italy's contribution to collective security in an era characterized by strong global instabilities. The location in Florence also assumes a symbolic value: a city of culture and dialogue that now hosts a significant international military hub.

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