General Portolano in Viterbo - 423 Cadet Marshals Swear Allegiance to the Republic

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VITERBO – In a solemn joint ceremony at the Army Non-Commissioned Officers School, 423 cadet marshals swore allegiance to the Republic. The Chief of Defense Staff issues a warning about new hybrid challenges: "Cohesion is our center of gravity".

The solemn sound of the band, eyes turned to the sky, and a single, powerful cry: **"I swear"**. In a setting of deep emotion and military rigor, the city of Viterbo hosted the joint oath of **423 cadet marshals** of the Army and the Air Force. A historic moment featuring the young members of the 28th course "Laran II" and "Impeto", ready to serve the country in an increasingly complex international landscape.

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Portolano's Warning: "Hybrid and Invisible Conflicts"

The top authority present, **General Luciano Portolano**, Chief of Defense Staff, addressed the young military personnel with a speech of profound geopolitical analysis. According to Portolano, the current world is traversed by threats that are no longer confined to the traditional battlefield.

> *"Today's threats infiltrate **financial systems**, **digital infrastructures**, and the fabric of our economy, blurring the line between peace and war, making it uncertain and often invisible," declared the General.*

Portolano then emphasized how the adversaries' goal is the **disintegration of national and international cohesion**:

- **Hybrid Warfare:** Silent conflicts aimed at eroding institutions from within.
- **The Center of Gravity:** Social and military cohesion is the main target of external attacks.
- **Training as Respect:** Preparing the military for current threats is the first duty towards those who risk their lives for the Homeland.

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Values and Training: the Backbone of Defense

During the ceremony, it was reiterated how the oath represents the most significant commitment of professional life: a conscious choice to put the collective good before oneself. For the cadets, this solemn act crowns a journey that began with the delivery of the sword and will continue with an intense two-year study aimed at obtaining a degree in **Political Science and International Relations**.

The emphasis was placed on the centrality of human capital over technological means. The new non-commissioned officers were defined as the **"backbone"** of the Armed Forces, called to operate in contested environments with loyalty, pride, and esprit de corps. A message of gratitude was also extended to the families, whose support is considered fundamental for the growth of future platoon commanders.

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Values and Future

The ceremony concluded amidst the embraces of family members and citizens, witnesses to a commitment that goes beyond a career. For the 423 cadets, the oath is not just a formal act, but the beginning of a command responsibility that will soon see them leading platoons and units, in an era where — as reminded by General Portolano — the defense of the Homeland involves both physical borders and **digital servers** and the **economic resilience** of the country.