



General Stefano Mannino leads the agreement between Defense and University: agreement signed between CASD and University of Bari

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In a historical moment where cooperation between seemingly distinct worlds is increasingly necessary, an important framework agreement was signed at the Rectorate of the University of Bari “Aldo Moro” between the Bari University and the Centro Alti Studi Difesa/Scuola Superiore Universitaria (CASD/SSU).

The agreement was signed by the **Rector**, **Prof. Stefano Bronzini**, and **General of the Army Corps Stefano Mannino**, **President of CASD**, former **Commander of the 185th Paratroopers Reconnaissance and Target Acquisition Regiment "Folgore" (185th RRAO)** and the **Army Special Forces Command (COMFOSE)**. The agreement is part of a broader vision of institutional collaboration between the academic world and Defense, aiming to promote research, training, and exchange of skills in highly strategic sectors for the country's

system.

The partnership aims to enhance Italian excellence in the academic and military fields, contributing to the development of advanced training paths, joint research activities, and educational projects addressing common interest topics such as international security, STEM disciplines, strategic sciences, digitalization, and leadership.



The signing of the agreement between General Stefano Mannino and Professor Stefano Bronzini

A synergy for future security. Words from Rector Bronzini and General Mannino

During the event, Rector Bronzini expressed great satisfaction with the agreement reached, emphasizing how collaboration between universities and military institutions can generate added value for the country's growth. *“This agreement* – he declared – *represents a concrete opportunity to build bridges between different institutional realities, expanding the horizons of knowledge, innovation, and development. In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, sharing skills becomes essential to face global challenges”*.

General Mannino, an officer with a long and prestigious career, reiterated the centrality of dialogue between different fields, united by the desire to invest in human capital. *“Cooperation between the academic world and Defense* – he stated – *is more necessary than ever today to develop effective responses to the complex threats our society faces. Only an integrated and multidisciplinary approach can ensure solutions that meet the new geopolitical, technological, and environmental challenges”*.

Born in Enna in 1964, **Mannino** embarked on a military career by attending the Military Academy of Modena. Graduated in Strategic Sciences and Political Sciences, he participated in numerous international missions in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He commanded elite units of the Italian Army and served as Military Attaché at the Italian Embassy in London. He is decorated with several honors, including the Bronze Cross of Military Merit, the Mauritian Medal, and the Officer of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic.

His leadership and strategic vision, developed in complex operational contexts and international environments, today represent a fundamental resource to strengthen the bond between defense and culture, between technological innovation and humanistic knowledge.



The CASD/SSU is tasked with training highly qualified military and civilian leadership, combining high-level military and academic education

The role of CASD in national and international training. A unique model between military culture and academic knowledge

The **Centro Alti Studi Difesa/Scuola Superiore Universitaria (CASD/SSU)** stands out as a center of excellence for the training of high-level military and civilian leadership. Its uniqueness lies in its dual identity: that of a high-level military training institution and that of a higher university school recognized by the national system. Within the Ministry of Defense, CASD represents a reference point for the development of critical thinking, analytical skills, and a multidisciplinary approach to national and global security challenges.

The Center is structured into four institutes – **the Istituto Alti Studi Difesa (IASD), the Istituto Superiore di Stato Maggiore Interforze (ISSMI), the Istituto Ricerca ed Analisi per la Difesa (IRAD), and the Centro Formazione Logistica Interforze (CEFLI)** – which offer highly specialized training courses, open to both military personnel and civilian officials, professionals, and scholars. The educational offer includes doctoral programs, first and second-level master's degrees, and advanced training courses.

Among the main thematic areas: **cybersecurity**, **global strategy**, **leadership and organizational innovation**, **process digitalization**, and **legal studies for innovation**. CASD operates with a strong international vocation, hosting officers and executives from allied countries, and promotes the construction of a knowledge network capable of supporting contemporary challenges.

The agreement with the University of Bari is therefore part of a path of growth and openness towards the academic world and scientific research, contributing to training a new generation of professionals capable of interpreting change and leading with competence and vision.

With this collaboration, CASD and the Bari University lay the foundations for an ambitious project: to unite scientific rigor and operational pragmatism, culture and defense, to contribute to the country's security, innovation, and resilience.

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