

Institutional Visit of General Giovanni Maria Iannucci in Niger

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General of the Army Corps Giovanni Maria Iannucci, formerly Aquila 1 and now Commander of the Joint Operational Command (COVI), recently visited Niger to strengthen bilateral cooperation and support regional security. The General was welcomed at Base Aérienne 101 in Niamey by the Commander of the Bilateral Support Mission in Niger (MISIN), Brigadier General Giovanni Quartuccio, and the Defense Military Attaché, Colonel Vincenzo Addonisio. The meeting with the Italian contingent, which currently includes over 300 military personnel, aimed to provide an update on operations and activities carried out within the mission. The MISIN mission, in fact, was established by the Italian Government to strengthen the security of Niger and other G5 Sahel countries (Mali, Mauritania, Chad, and Burkina Faso) and support local forces in countering illegal trafficking and security threats. The main activities of the mission include strengthening border surveillance capabilities, improving the air capabilities of the Republic of Niger, and training local security forces, with particular attention to counter-terrorism and organized crime.



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General Iannucci emphasized during the meeting the importance of the mission, which is part of a complex international context, where Italy continues to play a crucial role in stabilizing the region, in collaboration with European and American allies.

Infrastructure Projects and Joint Training

A highlight of the visit was the inspection of the Centre d’Expertise de Médecine Aéronautique du Niger (C.E.MED.A.N), a fundamental infrastructure project taking shape thanks to the contribution of the Italian Army's Task Group Genio. This health center will have a significant impact on providing medical-legal fitness for Nigerien air force personnel, both military and civilian, and could, in the future, extend its services to other countries in the sub-Saharan region. The project also includes a training program for local healthcare personnel, with the aim of ensuring the future autonomous management of the facility and improving the quality of medical services in Niger.



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During the visit, General Iannucci also participated in a parachute drop exercise, a fundamental activity to improve the operational capabilities of the Nigerien forces. Italian paratroopers trained Nigerien soldiers in parachute drop techniques, a crucial skill for the rapid deployment of forces in emergency scenarios. On board a C-27J of the Italian Air Force, the General witnessed the static line jumps, thanks to which the Nigerien military personnel were able to obtain the Italian parachuting license. This training represents another tangible example of cooperation between Italian and Nigerien forces, strengthening the bond between the two countries and contributing to the enhancement of local capabilities.

Strengthening Cooperation and National Contribution

General Iannucci concluded his visit by meeting with the leaders of the Nigerien armed forces. Among them, Colonel Major Mamane Sani Kiaou, Chief of Staff of the Army, Colonel Major Salifou Mainassara, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Colonel Major Kimba Tahirou, Commander of the National Gendarmerie. The talks highlighted the solidity of the strategic partnership between Italy and Niger, which has been further consolidated even after the political changes that marked the country's situation in July 2023. The Nigerien authorities expressed their gratitude for the important support provided by Italy, both operationally and in training. In particular, the positive results of the training provided by MISIN were highlighted, which strengthened the capabilities of the Nigerien security forces, improving territorial control and the ability to counter terrorism along the border areas.



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During the visit, General Iannucci also met with Head of Mission Roberto Orlando and the Italian staff of the Italian Embassy in Niamey. He expressed his appreciation for the continuous support offered to the Italian contingent and emphasized the importance of cooperation between diplomacy and the Italian armed forces, which work synergistically for the success of the MISIN mission.

Since its inception in 2018, the MISIN mission has had a significant impact on the security of Niger and neighboring nations. To date, 381 training courses have been conducted, with the participation of over 9,000 Nigerien soldiers. These courses have covered crucial topics such as parachuting, public security, and counter-terrorism. Additionally, the mission has implemented 51 civil-military cooperation projects, contributing to the socio-economic development of the capital Niamey and surrounding areas.



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