



Iran: Drones Challenge the United States. Italy Must Act Now!

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The news published by the *Washington Post* should prompt much more reflection than many official statements. According to an analysis of satellite images, Iranian attacks have damaged or destroyed at least **228 structures or vehicles** at **15 U.S. military sites** in the Middle East: hangars, accommodations, fuel depots, radars, communications, air defense systems, and even aircraft. The most significant fact is not just the number of targets hit, but the fact that the level of damage is much higher than publicly acknowledged so far by the United States.

The political and military point is clear: if a power like the United States, with the most advanced military apparatus in the world, struggles to protect bases, radars, and personnel from missiles and drones, no European country can afford to feel safe. Least of all Italy.

The Lesson: The Low Sky Has Become the New Front

For decades, Western military superiority was based on aviation, aircraft carriers, precision missiles, satellites, intelligence, and advanced defense systems. But the drone has changed the

equation. It is inexpensive, can be produced in large numbers, flies low, can saturate defenses, and forces the defender to use much more expensive systems to intercept it.

This is the strategic issue: **it's no longer enough to have the best missile if the enemy can launch a hundred cheap drones and force you to consume precious interceptors.**

The war in Ukraine has shown this every day. The Iranian case against U.S. assets confirms it on an even more alarming scale.

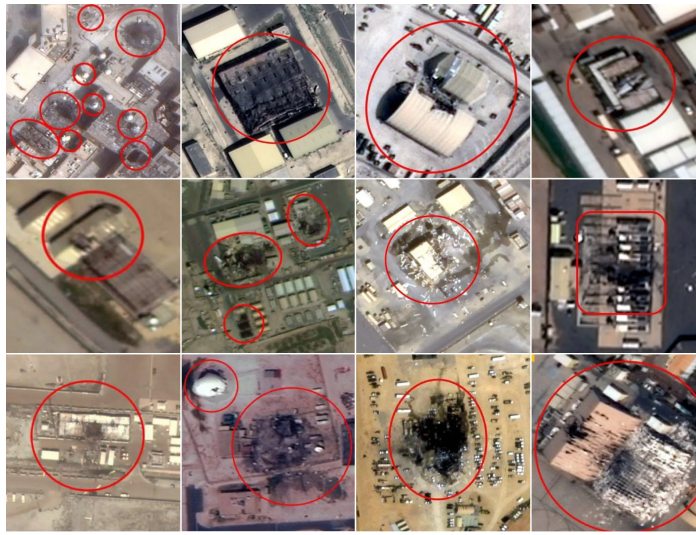
The *Washington Post* reports that some experts have interpreted the damage to American bases as a sign of underestimating Iranian targeting capabilities and insufficient adaptation to modern drone warfare. The article also mentions the problem of interceptor consumption, with estimates suggesting that the United States has used a significant portion of its pre-war stocks of THAAD and Patriot in the conflict.

The Problem Is Not Just Military: It's Industrial

Anti-drone defense cannot be improvised. It requires sensors, low-altitude radars, electronic warfare, command and control systems, economical interceptors, rapid-fire guns, lasers, physical protection of infrastructure, dispersion of assets, continuous training, and an industrial chain capable of mass production.

Europe is moving, but often with the slowness typical of community processes. The European Commission presented an action plan in February 2026 against the threats posed by drones, citing risks to critical infrastructure, airports, borders, and public spaces. NATO has also initiated specific tests on UAS and C-UAS technologies in Latvia, a sign that the Alliance now considers countering drones an operational priority.

But the threat's timeline does not wait for bureaucracy.



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Italy Cannot Remain a Spectator

Italy is exposed on multiple fronts: the Mediterranean, NATO bases, energy infrastructure, ports, airports, submarine cables, industrial plants, missions abroad, and military presence in unstable areas. In a crisis scenario, an adversary would not need to hit Rome with ballistic missiles to create panic or paralysis: it could target a few logistical, energy, or military nodes with swarms of drones and loitering munitions.

Italian expertise already exists in the sector, and there are anti-drone systems, radars, and industrial capabilities. The Italian specialized press has reported that Gulf countries have asked Italy for air defense and anti-drone supplies in the context of the crisis with Iran. The *Corriere della Sera* cited, among Italian capabilities, C-UAS systems, radars, satellites, Skynex, and Grifo.

But having technologies is not enough. They need to be transformed into **widespread capabilities**, available in quantity, integrated among the armed forces, civil protection, intelligence, law enforcement, and critical infrastructure managers.

What Italy Should Do Immediately

The priority is not to chase the miracle weapon. Anti-drone defense only works if it is layered. Italy should accelerate on five fronts.

First: create a national low-sky surveillance network around bases, ports, airports, refineries, regasification plants, power plants, railway hubs, and institutional sites.

Second: purchase and produce anti-drone systems in quantity, not just in demonstrative versions or for elite units. Mass matters as much as quality.

Third: integrate electronic defense, kinetic interceptors, guns, passive sensors, and mobile systems. Against drones, there is no single solution: a response chain is needed.

Fourth: physically protect critical assets. Hangars, radars, fuel depots, command centers, and accommodations cannot remain vulnerable as fixed and predictable targets.

Fifth: build a national and European industrial supply chain capable of rapidly producing sensors, munitions, interceptor drones, and software. Contemporary warfare consumes materials at a speed that Europe is not yet accustomed to sustaining.

The Real Urgency

The message of the *Washington Post* investigation is brutal: technological superiority does not guarantee invulnerability. Drones and low-cost munitions are democratizing the ability to strike deep. They make bases transparent, infrastructures fragile, and defense extremely costly.

For Italy, the risk is not theoretical. It is strategic. A country with our geographical position, our Mediterranean exposure, and our dependence on energy and logistical infrastructures cannot afford to discover vulnerability only after the first attack.

The conclusion is simple: **Italy must equip itself quickly. Not tomorrow, not after the next European summit, not when the threat has already arrived. Now.** Because in the drone war, those who arrive late not only lose a technological advantage: they risk losing the very ability to defend themselves.

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