



Italian Army: General Gagliano outlines the evolution and future of military drones to future NCOs

The meeting examined the development, use and integration of new technologies in Italian Army activities.

Published on 28/10/2026

Lieutenant General Giovanni Gagliano, Commander of the Forze di Supporto al Combattimento dell'Esercito Italiano, delivered a conference at the Scuola Sottufficiali dell'Esercito entitled "Unmanned capability: evolution, employment and prospects," dedicated to the development and integration of unmanned systems in modern operational environments.

The event provided an important opportunity to examine the technological transformations affecting the Armed Forces, with particular attention to the growing use of remotely piloted systems and their contribution to reconnaissance, surveillance, intelligence gathering and operational decision support.

During the conference, General Gagliano outlined the main development paths for unmanned capability, highlighting the opportunities offered by new technologies and the challenges the Esercito faces in effectively integrating them into its structures and operational procedures.

Unmanned systems and the transformation of the battlefield

The employment of unmanned systems is one of the most significant aspects of the evolution of contemporary warfare.

Unmanned Systems encompass a wide range of platforms without onboard crews, which can be used in different operational environments. These include remotely piloted aircraft systems (APRM), as well as ground systems and other robotic platforms designed to carry out observation, reconnaissance, logistical support and other specialized tasks.

Their growing use makes it possible to expand the capabilities of military units, improving the availability of battlefield information and helping reduce personnel exposure during certain high-risk activities.

The ability to rapidly acquire, process and share information is a decisive factor in the effectiveness of military operations, especially in environments characterized by high complexity and rapidly evolving tactical situations.

In his remarks, General Gagliano examined the contribution these systems can make to enhancing the Esercito's operational capabilities, emphasizing the importance of their integrated employment within operational planning and execution procedures.

From reconnaissance to decision support: employment prospects

One of the central aspects of the conference concerned the development prospects of unmanned systems and their contribution to commanders' decision-making processes.

Unmanned platforms can collect data and information from different sensors, helping build an up-to-date operational picture.

Integrating these tools with command-and-control systems makes it possible to improve the timely transmission of information, facilitating coordination among units and greater situational awareness on the ground.

The applications of these technologies are set to play an increasingly important role not only in surveillance and reconnaissance, but also in additional activities supporting operations.

However, their effectiveness depends on the ability to integrate platforms, sensors, communications networks, and trained personnel within a coherent operational system.

Technological innovation, therefore, is not limited to introducing new equipment; it also requires the evolution of procedures, training, and the professional skills of military personnel.

The importance of technological integration for the Army

The conference highlighted how the development of unmanned capabilities represents a strategic component of the military's modernization process.

Modern operational environments require an increasing level of integration between the traditional capabilities of ground units and advanced technological systems designed to support the various phases of maneuver.

In this context, the coordinated employment of unmanned platforms, observation systems, and information-processing tools can help improve unit effectiveness and the ability to adapt to emerging threats.

Particular importance also lies in preparing the personnel tasked with operating and managing these technologies, which require specific technical expertise, knowledge of operational procedures, and the ability to assess available information.

The evolution of unmanned capabilities is also part of the broader transformation of the Armed Forces toward an increasingly integrated operational model, in which cooperation among different domains plays a fundamental role.

The Scuola Sottufficiali dell'Esercito and training future commanders

The meeting with General Gagliano confirmed the role of the Scuola Sottufficiali dell'Esercito as a center for training, professional development, and the advancement of the skills needed to address the transformation of the military instrument.

The preparation of Sottufficiali cannot, in fact, be separated from knowledge of technological innovations and new methods of employing operational capabilities.

Alongside traditional skills in command, leadership, and personnel management, the ability to understand the functioning and potential of the technological systems that characterize modern military environments is becoming increasingly important.

Through conferences and meetings with senior leaders and representatives of the Army's operational components, the Institute fosters a link between training and the concrete needs of units, offering attendees opportunities to exchange views on experiences and on the Armed Force's development prospects.

The objective is to prepare Sottufficiali capable of combining technical expertise, command ability, a sense of responsibility, and an aptitude for innovation—essential qualities for operating effectively in an ever-changing environment.

Innovation and training to meet future challenges

The conference “Unmanned capability: evolution, employment and prospects” provided an opportunity for an in-depth discussion on the relationship between technological innovation and the training of military personnel.

The evolution of unmanned systems requires not only investment in new capabilities, but also the continuous professional development of those who will be called upon to employ and integrate them into operational activities.

From this perspective, the exchange between the Comando delle Forze di Supporto al Combattimento and the Scuola Sottufficiali dell'Esercito helps strengthen the link between training, capability development and operational requirements.

The preparation of future Non-Commissioned Officers is therefore a key element in supporting the evolution of the Esercito Italiano, ensuring that the introduction of new technologies is backed by competent, well-trained personnel capable of making responsible decisions in the

complex operational environments of the future.

News link: <https://www.esercito.difesa.it/comunicazione/la-capacita-unmanned-evoluzione-impiego-e-prospettive/213098.html>