Italian Technology at the Service of NATO: the Key Role of IDV

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The defense of the future increasingly speaks the language of robotics and autonomy. It is in this direction that the new three-year contract awarded to **Iveco Defence Vehicles (IDV)** by the **NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA)** moves, aiming at the **conceptual development and experimentation of Robotic and Autonomous Systems (RAS)** in **complex and realistic operational scenarios**. IDV, a company of the Iveco group born from the spin-off of military activities from CNH Industrial and controlled by Exor (the holding of the Agnelli family), will lead the project, in collaboration with leading technological partners.

The program, highly strategic for the Atlantic Alliance, aims to **combine unmanned ground and air vehicles**, known as **UGV (Uncrewed Ground Vehicles)** and **UAS (Uncrewed Air Systems)**, coordinated through an **advanced and interoperable Command and Control (C2) system**, distributed over predefined network nodes. NATO thus aims to develop a fully integrated RAS capability, with tangible operational impacts on the battlefield.

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The operational concepts and methods of use will be defined together with the end users, such as the **Italian Army** and the **Armed Forces of the Member Countries**, to concretely demonstrate **the revolutionary advantages** of a coordinated RAS ecosystem: greater logistical efficiency, ability to operate in hostile environments, and a drastic reduction in risks for personnel.

An International Technological Consortium Led by Italy

Leading the development of the project will be an international consortium with **IDV in a leadership position**, supported by Italian companies specialized in robotics and artificial intelligence: **LEM, Siralab**, and **Rebel Alliance**. These partners will contribute with specific technical expertise in design, sensing, automation, and control.

There will be two **main platforms** provided by IDV: the **Viking UGV**, an autonomous ground vehicle designed to undertake missions in hostile environments, and the **Light Multirole Vehicle – Optionally Uncrewed (LMV OU)**, a versatile and proven multirole vehicle, operable in manual, teleoperated, or fully autonomous mode, with various interchangeable mission payloads.

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The heart of the program will be the **advanced C2 system**, capable of coordinating UGV and UAS platforms in real-time. This network-distributed command environment will ensure **operational flexibility, communication reliability, and rapid decision-making**, dynamically adapting to changes on the ground.

The experimentation involves **real operational scenarios**: logistical resupply, medical evacuation, reconnaissance of communication lines, **ISTAR** operations (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance), and vehicle recovery in hostile contexts. The goal is not only to demonstrate the effectiveness of the systems but also to contribute to **redefining military doctrines** centered on human-machine cooperation.

A Strategic Program that Enhances Italian Industrial Excellence

The three-year contract with NATO confirms **Iveco Defence Vehicles (IDV)** as a protagonist of technological innovation in the military field, strengthening **Italy's role as a key player in European and Atlantic defense**. The direct involvement of an Italian company in such an advanced program represents **an important affirmation of national know-how** in the field of robotics, autonomy, and integrated security systems.

The RAS program fits into a phase of expansion for the Italian industrial sector, where the integration of technological excellence assumes strategic value. In this context, the proposed acquisition of IDV by **Leonardo**, a national leader in aerospace and defense, could result in an

all-Italian synergy with high technological content. Leonardo already collaborates with IDV through **Oto Melara** and the **CIO consortium**, developing vehicles like the Centauro I and II, confirming a cohesive and high-performing industrial fabric.

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The potential consolidation of IDV within a large Italian group would allow for the **strengthening of the national land defense hub**, promoting an autonomous and competitive industrial supply chain at the European level. In a context of increasing investment in security and modernization of the armed forces, this vision reinforces **Italy's position as a reliable and technologically advanced partner** on the international stage.

Ultimately, the NATO RAS program not only testifies to the **recognition of Italian leadership in the sector** of robotic and autonomous systems but also strengthens the path of **industrial, employment, and strategic growth** of our country. Italy is ready to play a leading role in the evolution of 21st-century defense, with an integrated vision between technology, innovation, and collective security.

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