Italy and Global Challenges: Smart Deterrence for Stability

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General Giovanni Maria Iannucci, since January at the helm of the Joint Operational Command (Covi), described the recent cessation of hostilities between Israel and Iran as “a great opportunity.” According to the Commander, it is a historic moment to seize with readiness and clarity, which could represent a turning point for the entire Middle Eastern region. The truce, although still fragile, is seen as a possible gateway to stability. “If hostile acts continue to remain low intensity, without new escalations, then we can truly talk about a unique opportunity to stop the conflict,” explained Iannucci.

The General is well aware of the delicacy of the situation: the recent bombing of Iranian nuclear sites by U.S. B2 bombers, particularly the Fordow center hit by the powerful GBU-57, has had an impact still difficult to fully quantify. However, positive signals also come from the field: Hamas and Hezbollah, according to General Iannucci, appear to be significantly weakened, and the news coming from Lebanon, where just a few hours ago the Italian General Diodato Abagnara took command of UNIFIL, gives hope for a reduction in tensions.

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Security, Surveillance, and the Italian Role

One of the cornerstones of General Iannucci's intervention concerns the security of Italian soldiers engaged in missions abroad. About eight thousand men and women operate under Covi's coordination in 39 different missions, with significant presences in Kuwait, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Red Sea. In those theaters, attention is at its highest. “The security of our soldiers is our priority, our concern,” he states firmly, emphasizing the constant commitment of top authorities, starting with the Minister of Defense Guido Crosetto and the Chief of Defense Staff General Luciano Portolano.

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Italian soldiers, says General Iannucci, appear “calm, aware, prepared. As always.” Their professionalism is at the service of a task that goes far beyond mere military deployment: it is about ensuring peace, strengthening stability, supporting allies, and preventing the emergence of new conflicts. This is where Italy's historical role comes into play, not only as a peacekeeping force but also in the fight against global terrorism, from Al Qaeda to ISIS. “We have made and will continue to make a decisive contribution,” recalls the General.

Despite the blows dealt to the Axis of Resistance (Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, Houthi), the danger has not definitively disappeared. The risk of sleeper cells, especially in unstable contexts, remains present. However, General Iannucci expresses confidence in the efficiency of our security apparatuses, which operate with attention and promptness, maintaining a high level of vigilance on all sensitive targets.

The New Challenges of Defense: Technology, Deterrence, and Geopolitics

The military world is changing, and Italy, along with NATO partners, is called to adapt. The Alliance summit held in The Hague focuses attention on a much-discussed yet crucial topic: the increase in military spending. But for General Iannucci, “it cannot be just a financial or accounting issue.” It is rather a strategic necessity: the world changes, threats evolve, and old paradigms are no longer sufficient.

The new risks come from non-state actors, capable of using drones, missiles, disinformation tools, and cyber attacks with potentially devastating impact. In the face of this new reality, Italy must strengthen its production capacity, renew equipment, and update military doctrine. The words of NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, stating that Russia produces armaments five times faster than the Alliance countries combined, sound like a wake-up call.

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Meanwhile, on the geopolitical front, the Italian government has clarified its position: no troops in Ukraine or other direct war theaters. A clear line, also shared by Covi, which reiterates the importance of strategic prudence. “Better to prevent crises than to be forced to manage them,” says General Iannucci. The reference also goes to the Mattei Plan for Africa, seen as a crucial tool for the stabilization of the continent and for strengthening Italy's role in the wider Mediterranean.

Ultimately, General Iannucci's words offer a strategic vision that goes beyond contingency: Italy intends to maintain a central role on the international chessboard, focusing on balance, deterrence capability, and the promotion of global stability.

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