Italy - Indonesia: Military Partnership Grows

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New elements are emerging regarding the **growing collaboration in the defense sector between Italy and Indonesia**, a relationship that has progressively consolidated in recent years both on the military and industrial levels.

At the center of attention is the Italian government's proposal to transfer the aircraft carrier **Giuseppe Garibaldi** to the Indonesian Navy, a historic unit of the **Marina Militare** that entered service in the 1980s and was placed in reserve in 2024 after nearly four decades of operational activity.

According to government documents, the decision is mainly linked to the **evolution of the ship's operational cycle** and the progressive **modernization of the Italian fleet**. The transfer would thus enhance the unit within a **broader collaboration between Rome and Jakarta**.

The potential transfer is part of a path of **dialogue and cooperation in the field of maritime security and the defense industry**. For Indonesia, such a platform could represent an opportunity to **expand coordination and support capabilities for naval operations**.

In this context, the initiative also assumes a broader strategic dimension, contributing to **strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries** in a region – the **Indo-Pacific** – that is increasingly important for **global trade routes and international maritime security**.

Ships and aircraft the industrial programs already underway

The cooperation between Italy and Indonesia in the defense sector did not begin with the Garibaldi dossier. In recent years, several industrial programs have contributed to developing **an increasingly structured relationship between the two nations**.

Among the most significant initiatives is the acquisition by the Indonesian Navy of **two units of the Offshore Multipurpose Patrol Vessel class**, multi-role naval platforms designed to carry out **a wide range of missions**, from maritime surveillance to territorial waters security.

KRI Prabu Siliwangi-321. Source Fincantieri.

The two units, progressively entering service in the Indonesian Navy with the names **KRI Brawijaya** and **KRI Prabu Siliwangi**, represent **new generation ships characterized by high operational flexibility** and advanced technological systems.

Simultaneously, cooperation in the aeronautical sector has strengthened. In 2026, the Italian company **Leonardo** signed a **letter of intent with the Indonesian Ministry of Defense** and the local company PT ESystem Solutions for the possible supply of **advanced training and light attack aircraft M-346 in the M-346F Block 20 version**.

The program provides for **up to 24 aircraft**, intended to strengthen the **advanced training capacity of Indonesian pilots** and support the **renewal of the air force's training fleet**. In addition to the aircraft, the cooperation would also include **training activities, logistical support, and industrial collaboration**.

Overall, these programs testify to **a path of cooperation that goes beyond the mere supply of systems**, also involving **industrial and technological relations between the respective defense industries**.

Compact submarines and maritime patrol new developments

Alongside the programs already underway, **new opportunities for collaboration in the naval and aeronautical sectors** are emerging.

Among the initiatives under study is the possible supply of **six compact submarines of the DGK class** by the Italian company **Drass**, specialized in the development of advanced underwater systems. The program, according to information available in the international specialized press, could reach **a total value of about 1.4 billion dollars**.

Defence 2025 – DRASS presents the DGK submarine to the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Navy. Source: DRASS.

The DGK belongs to the category of so-called **“midget submarines”**, platforms designed for **operations in coastal waters and complex maritime environments**. With a displacement of about **270 tons submerged** and a length of **34 meters**, the vessel can operate with **a crew of nine people** and ensure **operational autonomy for up to forty days**.

The weapon system includes **four heavy torpedoes and six naval mines**, while the modular compartment allows for the use of additional systems such as **supplementary mines, mini-torpedoes, or underwater vehicles for special forces operations**.

Parallel programs in the **maritime patrol sector** are also under study. The Italian industry could provide **three aircraft dedicated to the surveillance of Indonesian territorial waters**, with an estimated total value of around **450 million euros**.

The model has not yet been officially indicated, but among the hypotheses considered is a **maritime patrol version of the C-27J Spartan tactical transport aircraft**, a platform already used in several countries for **maritime surveillance missions**.

Overall, these initiatives reflect **a growing trend towards strengthening military and industrial cooperation between Italy and Indonesia**. In a region characterized by **important trade routes and intense maritime activity**, the collaboration between the two countries represents **an element of dialogue and cooperation within the framework of international relations in the Indo-Pacific area**.

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