



Masiello: «Hybrid warfare is already underway, defense alone is not enough». And warns: «The Army must stay out of politics. Any deviations will be sanctioned without hesitation»

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The Chief of Staff of the Army, General of Corps **Carmine Masiello**, provides a clear picture of the European security scenario: **«There is hybrid warfare underway»** and merely limiting oneself to defense is not enough to face it.

Interviewed by Sky TG24, Masiello indicated some of the main signs of this confrontation: **GPS system disruptions, drone incursions and cyber attacks**, activities whose attribution, he emphasized, can be particularly complex.

«The situation we read about in the newspapers is a situation of hybrid warfare underway», explained the Chief of Staff, emphasizing how Russia is conducting a series of activities capable

of putting pressure on the solidarity and cohesion of Western countries.

For this reason, according to Masiello, it is necessary to adopt an attitude that is not only vigilant, but also **proactive**.

«We must be attentive, we must be vigilant and above all we must be proactive and understand that wars are not won solely by defending ourselves».

The objective must also be to make the adversary understand that there are limits beyond which it is not possible to go.

Cognitive warfare concerns him most of all

Among the various components of hybrid warfare, Masiello pointed out in particular the **cognitive** one as one of the threats that worries him most.

The target, in this case, is not only infrastructure, computer networks or military systems, but directly **people and their perception of reality**.

The Chief of Staff of the Army recounted that he himself received emails from so-called Russian soldiers engaged at the front, claiming to be fighting to obtain peace.

According to Masiello, this is a concrete example of the attempt to **«influence minds»**.

The problem directly affects military personnel as well. For this reason the Army is working on training and raising awareness among its men and women.

A handbook on cognitive warfare for soldiers

Masiello announced that the Army has already created a **handbook dedicated to cognitive warfare**, which will soon be distributed to soldiers.

The objective is to make military personnel understand that they are potential targets of influence and manipulation operations.

«It is a cultural issue», explained the General, emphasizing the need to prepare soldiers to recognize these attacks.

According to the Chief of Staff, such activities also aim to **undermine the solidarity of the institution**, a particularly delicate risk in the current international context.

Hybrid warfare, therefore, is not fought solely through weapons systems and technological capabilities: it also concerns the resilience of people, the ability to distinguish information from manipulation and the resilience of institutions.

«The war scenario has changed the paradigm»

During the interview Masiello also addressed the issue of new resources allocated to Defense, with over **21 billion euros in additional funds planned between 2027 and 2028**.

For the Chief of Staff of the Army, this is a path already underway for several years to close a gap that concerns not only Italy, but numerous Western armies.

For a long time, in fact, military tools were developed mainly for peace support operations. However, the return of high-intensity warfare scenarios has profoundly changed operational needs.

«The war scenario has changed the paradigm and it is necessary to equip ourselves with different systems».

The new resources will therefore serve both to respond to the objectives required by the Atlantic Alliance and, more generally, to strengthen the capabilities necessary for national defense.

Masiello explicitly indicated some of the priority sectors: **drones, electronics, electromagnetic warfare, artificial intelligence and air defense**.

«We have plenty of things to do», summarized the General.

Drones, AI and electromagnetic warfare at the center of transformation

Masiello's words thus confirm a transformation of the Army already evident in the development lines of recent years.

Alongside the renewal of traditional platforms, unmanned systems are taking on increasing importance, capabilities to counter drones, electronic warfare, data management and analysis through artificial intelligence and air space protection.

These are capabilities directly linked to lessons from contemporary conflicts, in which electromagnetic domain control, unmanned systems and the ability to process information very rapidly are now an integral part of land operations.

Masiello: «The Army is a heritage of Italy»

The final part of the interview addressed the relationship between the Armed Forces and politics.

Masiello recalled that the participation of military personnel in political life is regulated in a clear manner by laws and regulations, but above all reaffirmed a fundamental principle.

«The Army is not the heritage of any political party. The Army is a heritage of Italians, it is a heritage of Italy».

The Chief of Staff recalled the oath taken before the Flag and loyalty to the Constitution, emphasizing how this relationship with the Country necessarily implies the **neutrality of the Armed Forces with respect to political competition**.

The message was accompanied by an equally clear reminder of internal discipline: any expressions or deviations from these principles, he stated, will be **«sanctioned without any hesitation»**.

An Army called to prepare for a different kind of war

From Masiello's words emerges a conception of security much broader than the traditional one.

The threat does not come only through conventional military means, but can take the form of GPS interference, drones, cyber attacks, electronic warfare, disinformation and cognitive manipulation.

At the same time, the Army must recover capabilities adequate to a high-intensity war scenario, investing in new technologies and preparing its personnel also for less visible forms of

confrontation.

The message of the Chief of Staff is therefore twofold: **strengthen military capabilities and increase the resilience of the institution and its personnel.**

Because, as Masiello emphasized, in the current scenario of hybrid warfare «**wars are not won solely by defending ourselves**».

News link: <https://tg24.sky.it/mondo/video/2026/09/05/masiello-a-sky-tg24-guerra-ibrida-non-si-vince-solo-difendendosi-1122327>