New phase for the Marina Militare: TB3 arrives on Cavour and the unmanned shift takes shape

Published on 02/04/2026

The decision of the **Marina Militare** to introduce the **Bayraktar TB3** drone on board the aircraft carrier *Cavour* represents a **significant step in the evolution of the Italian naval air component**. The initiative is part of a process of updating operational capabilities aimed at **integrating manned and unmanned systems**.

According to reports, Italy would be the **first European country to acquire the naval version of the Bayraktar TB2**. The introduction of the TB3 would also constitute the **first integration of a fixed-wing remotely piloted drone** capable of operating from a ship with a **short flight deck**, expanding embarked air capabilities.

The aircraft carrier *Cavour* confirms itself as a **central element of the national naval air device**. The inclusion of unmanned systems allows for **strengthening operational continuity**, improving surveillance activities, and expanding employment options in various

operational contexts.

The initiative is part of a path already undertaken by the Marina Militare towards the adoption of **autonomous technologies**. The progressive integration of these systems contributes to developing a **more articulated operational capability**, capable of responding to the needs of modern maritime scenarios.

The TB3 features, employment, and operational advantages

The **Bayraktar TB3** is a remotely piloted system designed for naval use, with technical characteristics oriented towards operation from units equipped with a **reduced flight deck**.

Among the distinctive elements are the **foldable wings**, functional for space management on board, and a **reinforced structure** suitable for the maritime environment. The system also features a **multi-role configuration**, allowing for reconnaissance missions and, where provided, armed deployment.

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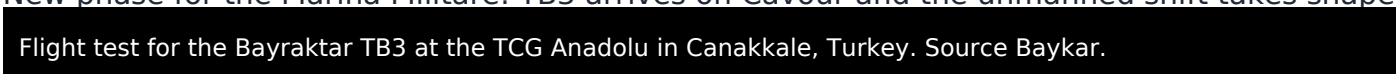

Flight test for the Bayraktar TB3 at the TCG Anadolu in Canakkale, Turkey. Source Baykar.

As highlighted by the Chief of Staff of the Navy, Admiral **Enrico Berutti Bergotto**, the TB3 can be used for both surveillance activities and **operational functions**. This integration allows for combining **information gathering and intervention capabilities** in a single platform.

A relevant aspect is the **flight endurance capability**, which ensures **prolonged coverage of areas of interest**. This contributes to improving **situational awareness** and the management of operational activities.

The use of unmanned systems also allows for **optimizing resource utilization**, complementing manned aircraft without replacing them. Looking ahead, the technological evolution of the sector also includes the development of **platforms with advanced capabilities**, capable of operating in an integrated manner with other assets.

Overall, the TB3 is configured as a **complementary element** within the naval air architecture, contributing to the expansion of the operational capabilities of the Marina Militare.

Leonardo Baykar and the strategic industrial dimension

The introduction of the TB3 is part of a **strategic industrial context** characterized by the collaboration between **Leonardo** and the Turkish company **Baykar**, developer of the system.

The acquisition through Leonardo highlights the **involvement of the national industry**, integrating technological expertise and production capabilities. The cooperation between the two companies is oriented towards the **development of unmanned systems in the European context**.

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In the photo Roberto Cingolani and Baykar president Selcuk Bayraktar. Source turkiyetoday.com.

In an international framework where remotely piloted systems are assuming an increasing role, the TB3 program represents an **evolution consistent with sector trends**. The integration of such systems contributes to strengthening **surveillance, deterrence, and intervention capabilities**.

Aspects related to acquisition times and methods remain to be defined, elements that will be crucial for the implementation of the program. However, the initiative indicates a **clear direction for the development of operational and industrial capabilities** in the maritime domain.

In this context, the integration of the TB3 on board the *Cavour* represents a **further step in the modernization process of the Marina Militare**, in line with the technological and operational evolution of the sector.

News link: https://tg24.sky.it/mondo/2026/03/31/droni-tb3-portaerei-cavour