Strade Sicure: between military deployment and national security

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The decision of the **Minister of Defense** to confirm the number of Army soldiers employed in the **Strade Sicure** operation for 2026 as well is part of an already consolidated institutional continuity. Despite past evaluations on the opportunity to reshape the device, the government deemed it appropriate to maintain the current configuration unchanged. The **2025-2027 Budget Law** indeed provides for the financing of the operation until 2027, with an average contingent of about **6,000 units** and an annual allocation of around **200 million euros**, confirming its role in the overall framework of national security.

Launched in 2008, Strade Sicure has been confirmed over time by governments of different political orientations; in fact, attempts to revise the operation have often faced changes in the security context, both internally and internationally. In this framework, the presence of the military on the territory has continued to be perceived as a reassuring element for a significant part of the population.

The evaluation of the opportunity to reduce the employed contingent is therefore closely linked to the need to ensure continuity in the protection of sensitive objectives and the availability of alternative resources. In this sense, the institutional debate focuses mainly on the balance between the use of the Armed Forces and the strengthening of the police forces, rather than on an immediate discontinuity of the operation.

Operational aspects and sustainability in the medium-long term

Alongside the political dimension, the analysis identifies **operational and financial factors** that help explain the persistence of Strade Sicure. In particular, over the years, the employment of the Army in surveillance tasks has represented a mode of support to law enforcement in a phase characterized by budget constraints and increasing security needs.

The Chief of Staff of the Army, General of the Army Corps Carmine Masiello, meets the Strade Sicure personnel.

Over time, a broader reflection has emerged on the impact of this employment on the ordinary activities of the Armed Forces. In peacetime, indeed, a significant part of the military function is dedicated to **training**, aimed at maintaining and developing operational capabilities. Prolonged employment in garrison activities entails a different distribution of human resources and available time, an element that is carefully considered in the planning of the military instrument.

In recent years, even the leaders of the **Armed Forces** have drawn attention to the need to ensure a sustainable balance between the various tasks assigned to the Army. In parallel,

professional military associations have contributed to the debate by highlighting the importance of ensuring adequate employment conditions, protections, and professional recognition for the personnel involved.

Defense culture and development prospects

An additional element of reflection concerns the **defense culture**, understood as widespread knowledge of the functions, responsibilities, and operational needs of the Armed Forces.

Italian Army soldiers engaged in a training activity, Operation Mangusta, a central element for maintaining operational readiness and the capabilities of the military instrument.

In public debate, the issue of security is often addressed in terms of immediately perceivable results, while the dimension of operational efficiency and long-term preparation requires more specialized analysis tools. In this context, investment in means, infrastructure, and personnel is accompanied by the need to ensure that these resources can be enhanced through adequate training and educational paths.

In this perspective, the strengthening of the **educational dimension** assumes a central role. Training initiatives, university programs, research activities, and public discussions on defense and security issues can contribute to a greater collective awareness. An informed and structured debate is indeed an essential condition for evaluating, over time, the evolution of tools like Strade Sicure and for guiding future choices in a manner consistent with the overall needs of the national defense system.