



Three Akeron anti-tank missiles hidden in a van: French citizen arrested in Bari

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A check by the Guardia di Finanza at the port of Bari led to the seizure of **three Akeron anti-tank missiles** and the arrest of a 46-year-old French citizen.

The man had just disembarked from the motor ship **Superfast II**, coming from Patras, Greece, driving a van with French license plates. During the inspection of the vehicle, the financial police identified **five logistical containers used for the transport of anti-tank weapon systems**.

Three missiles classified as war weapons

According to the investigation records, one of the containers was empty, while another contained a missile intended for training purposes, inert and lacking guidance system, propulsion, and warhead.

In the other three containers were instead three **Akeron missiles**, subjected to technical inspections by personnel from the Italian Army.

A particular detail would have attracted the attention of the specialists: on the containers were present **blue bands**, a coloring normally used according to NATO standards to identify non-explosive training material.

According to the order, however, the bands would have been made with **removable adhesive tape** and would not have been part of the original marking.

Once removed, the **yellow-black** coloring would have emerged, associated with high-explosive ammunition with armor-piercing capability. For this reason, based on the findings, the three missiles were classified by the Army as **war weapons**.

The driver: «Transport on behalf of MBDA France»

The French citizen claimed to have been tasked with the transport on behalf of **MBDA France**, a company belonging to the European group specializing in the production of missile systems.

According to his account, the material was to be transported to Greece, to the company **Altus LSA**, to be subjected to repair and maintenance activities.

The defense presented commercial and travel documentation, as well as an authorization released in 2025 by the French Ministry of Defense to MBDA France for activities related to war material.

The judge for preliminary investigations of the Bari Court, however, would have noted **inconsistencies in the documentation**, including discrepancies in dates and differences in stamps.

According to reports from Repubblica, the authorizations required by Italian regulations for the introduction and transit on national territory of armament material would also not have been produced. The judge therefore ordered against the man **precautionary custody in prison**, pending further investigations.

What is the Akeron missile

Akeron is the family of fifth-generation tactical missiles developed by French MBDA. It comprises mainly two systems: **Akeron MP**, intended for medium-range engagements, and **Akeron LP**, designed for greater distances and for integration on various platforms.

The **Akeron MP**, previously called MMP, weighs approximately **15 kilograms including the launch tube**, is **1.3 meters** long and has a range exceeding **4 kilometers**. It can operate in fire-and-forget mode or with the operator maintaining control during flight through a fiber optic data link. It is designed to strike armored vehicles, infrastructure, and other terrestrial targets.

The **Akeron LP**, an evolution of the previous MHT project, belongs instead to the long-range category: it weighs less than **40 kilograms**, is approximately **1.7-1.8 meters** long in tactical container and can reach distances exceeding **8 kilometers**, up to about 20 km in some configurations. It is also designed for use from helicopters, drones, and land vehicles.

The sources on the Bari seizure speak generically of **Akeron missiles** and, based on available information, do not allow establishing with certainty whether the specimens found in the van were of the MP or LP version.

Origin and regularity of transport remain to be clarified

The investigation must now clarify above all **the actual nature of the transport**, the validity of the documentation produced, and the reason for the markings present on the missiles.

At the moment, therefore, the discovery does not demonstrate the existence of a clandestine arms trafficking: the version provided by the driver indeed speaks of a transfer within industrial activities and maintenance. It will be, however, for the judicial authority to establish whether the transport was regularly authorized and why three devices classified by specialists as war ammunition traveled with markings apparently attributable to training material.

Sources

- **Sky TG24**, August 26, 2026 – *Three war missiles hidden in the van, French citizen arrested in Bari.* [Read on Sky TG24](#)
- **RaiNews**, August 26, 2026 – *Three war missiles hidden in the van, French citizen arrested in Bari.* [Read on RaiNews](#)

- **la Repubblica Bari**, August 25, 2026 – *Van stopped at the port with three war missiles.*
[Read on Repubblica](#)
- **MBDA**, official technical sheet Akeron MP. [Official Akeron MP Sheet](#)