



Villaggio Difesa: opening ceremony canceled after Bosnia tragedy; opens October 30 at 2 p.m.

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The Ministry of Defence has cancelled the opening ceremony for the Defense Village, scheduled for Friday 30 October at 10:00 at Rome's Circus Maximus, following the deaths of Italian service members in the accident involving a CH-47 Chinook helicopter on 29 October in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Village will nevertheless open to the public at 14:00 and remain in place until 4 November.

The decision was made as a mark of mourning and solidarity with the fallen service members and their families. The Defense Village, initially conceived as a venue for meeting and celebrating the Armed Forces, will therefore take on a different meaning on its opening day.

In its statement, the Ministry of Defence stressed that, in times of grief, the military community rallies around its members and their families.

The initiative will therefore open to the public not with a celebratory ceremony, but as a place of reflection and solidarity, where citizens will be able to express their closeness to the Fallen through, as the Ministry of Defence writes in its statement, a prayer, a flower, a message, or simply their presence.

What is the Defense Village

The Defense Village is an initiative promoted by the Ministry of Defence as part of the celebrations for National Unity and Armed Forces Day on 4 November.

From 30 October to 4 November 2026, Rome's Circus Maximus will host citizens and visitors free of charge in an exhibition area dedicated to learning about the Armed Forces, their operational capabilities, and the professionals working daily to ensure the country's security.

The event will feature exhibition spaces, meetings, conferences, and interactive activities, with particular focus on technology, military training, and career opportunities for young people.

Army, Navy, Air Force, Carabinieri, and Guardia di Finanza

The Village will bring together representatives of the Italian Army, the Italian Navy, the Italian Air Force, the Carabinieri, and the Guardia di Finanza.

One of the main spaces will be the so-called Stella, an area dedicated to the five representatives where visitors will be able to meet military personnel and cadets from the academies, noncommissioned officer schools, and military schools.

The aim is to enable citizens to learn firsthand about the activities carried out by the various branches, their training pathways, and the career opportunities offered by military institutions.

The program: technology, operational capabilities, and training

The schedule prepared by the Ministry of Defence includes events dedicated to global security challenges, the Armed Forces' operational capabilities, and new technologies.

Topics will include artificial intelligence, digital security, aerial remote sensing for territorial surveillance, and the employment of the F-35 Lightning II.

Further sessions are also planned on aerospace training, leadership, the return to civilian employment of discharged volunteers, and the role of military associations.

On November 4, the final day, meetings are scheduled on explosive ordnance disposal activities and the social commitment of the Associazioni d'Arma, as well as a performance by the Fanfara Bersaglieri «Nulli Secundus».

A concert on the RAI tent stage is also scheduled from 20:30.

The official program, updated on October 26, predates the decision to cancel the opening ceremony. Events on the first day may therefore be subject to changes.

The Village Passport: ten areas to explore

Public initiatives also include the Village Passport, an interactive route through ten themed areas dedicated to different aspects of defense, security, and service to the country.

Visitors will be able to take part in the scheduled activities and collect a stamp at each of the ten stops. Upon completing the route, they may receive a personalized certificate.

The initiative is designed to show how personnel, expertise, technologies, and equipment contribute to the activities carried out by the Armed Forces, both within Italy and in international operations.

Opening hours and free admission

The Villaggio Difesa will be open to the public free of charge from October 30 to November 4, 2026.

For Friday, October 30, opening has been postponed to 14:00, from the initially announced 10:00.

Date	Opening hours
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Friday, October 30	14:00–18:00
Saturday, October 31	09:30–18:00
Sunday, November 1	09:30–18:00
Monday, November 2	09:30–18:00
Tuesday, November 3	09:30–18:00
Wednesday, November 4	09:30–23:30

The hours after October 30 correspond to those published by Rome's official mobility information services. Any changes will be announced through official channels.

To allow the event to take place, Roma Capitale has also introduced temporary traffic measures on streets around the Circo Massimo, including restrictions on traffic and parking, particularly on October 30 and November 4.

The event will thus accompany the November 4 celebrations, which this year will also commemorate the Italian servicemembers who lost their lives in the tragedy in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

News link: <https://www.difesa.it/primopiano/incidente-in-bosnia-erzegovina-annullata-la-cerimonia-di-inaugurazione-del-villaggio-difesa/116448.html>