



Why Tunisia and Italy Must Elevate Military Cooperation

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The Mediterranean is the center of European security, and Tunisia represents its strategic core. While the United States consolidates its influence through the provision of cutting-edge technologies — such as the recent 110 *FirstLook* reconnaissance robots destined for Tunisian forces — Italy is called to make a qualitative leap. Traditional collaboration is no longer sufficient; a comprehensive cooperation model is needed, combining technological innovation with deep integration of training and educational structures.

Beyond US Pragmatism: The Value of the “African Lion” Exercise

The American approach, based on the rapid provision of technological assets for close combat and reconnaissance, is effective but sectoral. Italy has a unique comparative advantage: the ability to integrate partners into complex training ecosystems.

International exercises, with *African Lion* as an essential reference point, must become the theater where interoperability between Italian and Tunisian forces moves from theory to practice. It is crucial that Italy increases Tunisian participation in these maneuvers, not just as observers, but as main actors. Only through the constant sharing of tactical procedures in realistic scenarios can we ensure that Tunisian forces — called to manage asymmetric threats along porous borders — act in perfect synergy with NATO and Mediterranean standards.

Training: Italian Academies as a Forge of Leaders

If technology is the tool, training is the mind. Cooperation must be based on excellence in training. Italy must further open the doors of its Military Academies and elite training centers to Tunisian officer and non-commissioned officer cadets.

Welcoming the future leaders of Tunisian Defense into our institutions means creating a “common language” and a shared vision of regional security. This human and professional bond is the most powerful force multiplier that Italy can deploy, transforming bilateral cooperation into a long-term structural relationship.

Proposal: A Portfolio of Courses for Operational Excellence

To consolidate this partnership, we propose the establishment of a high-level specialized training portfolio open to Tunisian cadres. Here are some key areas where Italian experience can make a difference:

- **Cyber Defense Course:** Advanced training on the protection of critical infrastructures and the resilience of command and control networks.
- **Operations in Underground Environments Course:** Sharing of insertion and control tactics for underground environments developed by our special forces.
- **Integrated Logistics and Support Course:** Management of the life cycle of weapon systems (including the use of drones and new robotic technologies) to ensure that every provided equipment remains fully operational over time.
- **International Humanitarian Law and Rules of Engagement Course:** Essential for operations in unstable contexts, aligning Tunisian procedures with the most rigorous international standards.

Conclusion: A Shared Future

The American example teaches us that technological pragmatism is essential, but the Italian example must focus on strategic depth. Integration in exercises like *African Lion*, investment in cadre training, and the sharing of a highly specialized course portfolio are the pillars on which Italy must build its future in Tunisia.

It is not just about selling technology, but about exporting an “Integrated Security Model”. A closer understanding, founded on trust, exchange of doctrines, and professional growth, is the only way to ensure a secure, resilient, and strategically aligned southern Mediterranean shore with European stability values.