Crosetto Pushes for Air/Missile Defense: Italy Will Double SampT Missile Production

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In 2026, the European consortium MBDA will double the production of missiles for the SampT missile system, a significant step that consolidates Italy's role as a leader in the defense sector. The Minister of Defense, Guido Crosetto, announced the increase during an interview on *Quarta Repubblica*, broadcast on Rete 4. Crosetto emphasized that the Italian industry will increase missile production by 40% in 2025, with a doubling of volumes expected for 2026.

The Increase in Production and Investments in Italy

The MBDA consortium, a European leader in missile systems, has planned significant investments in Italy. Giovanni Soccodato, CEO of the Italian division, stated that the company is increasing production to meet growing demand and strengthen its position in international markets. Not only does Italy aim to cover its own needs, but it also intends to maintain a strong

presence in the export market, in a context of growing competition, with new players emerging in the sector.

Already in 2025, there will be a partial increase in production, but it will be in 2026 that the SampT system will reach its full production capacity, capable of meeting the needs of the Italian armed forces and other international partners. This is part of an expansion of the demand for air defense, necessary to update obsolete defense systems in many allied nations.

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The Strategic Role of the SampT System

The SampT missile system is a key element for medium-range air defense within NATO and the European Union. Thanks to its ability to neutralize aerial threats such as cruise missiles, drones, and enemy aircraft, the system is essential for ensuring the security and effectiveness of allied armed forces. Italy, thanks to MBDA, has established itself as one of the main producers of these advanced missiles, a role that becomes even more significant in a period of growing geopolitical uncertainty.

The recent deliveries of SampT missiles to Ukraine highlight their strategic value not only on the defensive but also on the political level. These armaments are a clear demonstration of support for Ukraine, engaged in a war involving the entire European area, and confirm Italy's contribution to the collective defense of the continent.

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A Growing Sector: MBDA and the Italian Defense Industry

MBDA represents a success story in pan-European defense cooperation. The joint venture between Airbus, Bae Systems, and Leonardo is undergoing an expansion phase, with new hires and investments in infrastructure. The company recorded a 40% increase in its order book in 2024 and plans to expand its workforce with 300 new hires in 2025, bringing the number of employees in Italy to over 2,300.

The expansion of research facilities, with new laboratories in Rome and a new production line at the Noceto site in Emilia-Romagna, are concrete signs of the sector's strengthening. MBDA is also considering dual sourcing of some strategic components to distribute risks and optimize production volumes.

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The European Union and the Defense Sector

With the expansion of the defense sector, the European Union has identified air and missile defense as one of the priority objectives, with particular attention to the need to supply member states with advanced defense systems. The intensive use of missiles in the war between Ukraine and Russia has underscored the importance of strengthening missile defense capabilities at the continental level.

In the next two years, Italy, with the support of MBDA, will be at the center of this expansion, ready to meet the needs of its allies and consolidate its position as a leader in the air defense sector in Europe.

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