From Pope Francis to Isabella Rauti: when sharing values earns the title of “paratrooper ad honorem”

Published on 26/10/2025

In the military world, symbols hold weight only if supported by values. This is why the awarding of the **paratrooper brevet “ad honorem”** is extremely rare: it is not a ceremonial gadget, but a recognition for figures who embody **courage**, **duty**, **integrity**, **spirit of service** — the cornerstones of the **Folgore** ethics.

The last, in chronological order, to receive such an award was **Pope Francis** in **April 2024**.

A symbolic gesture that the then **commander of the Folgore**, **Gen. Massimiliano Mongillo**, indicated as a testimony, on the part of **Pope Francis**, of the universal values of **courage**, **duty**, **integrity**, and **spirit of service** — foundations of the actions of the Paratroopers of the **Brigata Folgore**.

Friday, during the ceremony for the **83rd anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein**, **Isabella Rauti** did not expect it. It was an unscheduled moment full of emotion: when the **Chief of Staff**

of the Army, **General of the Army Corps Carmine Masiello** — dean of the Paratroopers and the first Paratrooper in history to hold this position — placed the glorious **Amaranth Beret** on her head and handed her the framed **diploma**, **Senator Rauti** struggled to hold back her emotion.

Isabella Rauti is now a constant presence at the **Paratroopers' Specialty** celebration.

Even though, fortunately, the times when a **Minister of Defense** avoided applauding our soldiers at the June 2nd parade are long gone, here it is not a matter of political alignment: when the **Senator** speaks to the Paratroopers, she does so with her heart. We are certain: the writer has listened to her several times, live and on multiple occasions.

*"**The values and principles of loyalty to the Homeland of the Heroes of El Alamein are vital memory and belong to the men and women of the Folgore and to all those who put Italy first"***, declared Rauti on the legendary **parade ground of the "Gamerra" barracks in Pisa**, in front of hundreds of Paratroopers lined up, the **War Flags** of the units, and thousands of people who came from all over Italy.

"*Italy first*". Exactly.

Today, the Italian military instrument is entrusted to a political class that values it and believes in it with conviction: from the **Minister of Defense, Hon. Guido Crosetto**, to the **Undersecretaries Matteo Perego di Cremnago** and **Isabella Rauti**. Competent and prepared people, making bold choices — like the appointment of **Gen. Carmine Masiello** as **Chief of Staff of the Army**, who has managed to revolutionize the Armed Force decisively, from head to toe.

Not forgetting the appointment of **Gen. Luciano Portolano** as **Chief of Staff of Defense**: a true soldier among soldiers, also esteemed internationally. A choice, **this too**, outside the usual practice that would have someone who has already commanded an Armed Force at the helm of Defense: a decision not in line with the past - it hadn't happened for 15 years since the appointment of Gen. Abrate - but made in the **exclusive interest of Italy**.

For tomorrow, we ask for **continuity**: beyond political color, it will be essential that the future leaders of the **Ministry of Defense** maintain the same level of capability and determination as the current ones: **courage**, **sense of duty**, **integrity**, and **spirit of service**, in the interest of

Italy.

Those **values** that the **Folgore** has embodied in its DNA for over eight decades.