



Italy-USA Cooperation: CEPOLISPE and ERDC Strengthen Technical-Scientific Synergy in Defense

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The cooperation between the *Centro Polifunzionale di Sperimentazione dell'Esercito Italiano (CEPOLISPE)* and the *Engineering Research and Development Center (ERDC)* of the U.S. Army continues with momentum. In June 2025, the Italian center hosted **Dr. Elizabeth Ferguson**, Senior Science Technical Manager of the ERDC, for an official visit that marked another step forward in the bilateral collaboration between the two centers of excellence.

During the meeting, the American delegation was able to delve into the functioning of CEPOLISPE's infrastructures and closely observe the experimental activities conducted by Italian engineer officers on **military vehicles, weapon systems, materials, and advanced technologies**.

A Strategic Alliance for Innovation in Defense

The cooperation between CEPOLISPE and ERDC fits into the broader framework of **strategic relations between Italy and the United States in the military and scientific fields**. Both centers stand out for their advanced capabilities in **research, development, and technological experimentation**, representing two pillars for innovation in the land defense sector.

CEPOLISPE, which plays a fundamental role in the **advanced training of the Italian Army Corps of Engineers**, strengthens its international profile with this collaboration. The ERDC, based in Vicksburg, Mississippi, is one of the main research hubs of the U.S. Army.

The ESEP Program: Exchange of Technical-Operational Skills and Culture

The core of the collaboration is the **ESEP (Engineers and Scientists Exchange Program)**, which promotes the **exchange of technical personnel between the two Armed Forces**. Since September 2024, an engineer officer from CEPOLISPE has been serving at the ERDC, actively contributing to American research projects and strengthening the technical-scientific interoperability between the two countries.

During recent visits, **new cooperation prospects** emerged, including:

- the **possible signing of a Data Exchange Agreement** in the procurement field;
- the **creation of a joint working group** for *Testing & Evaluation* activities.

These initiatives highlight the **shared desire to expand technical dialogue**, even in critical areas such as the evaluation of new materials and dual-use technologies.

Training, Experimentation, Synergy

In light of the excellent results achieved, the parties confirmed **the intention to continue and expand the ESEP program**, recognized as a **key tool for transferring strategic know-how to Italy** and enhancing the technical expertise of engineer officers.

The cooperation between CEPOLISPE and ERDC represents **a virtuous model of technological exchange between two allied nations**, capable of generating concrete benefits for military innovation, operational security, and scientific development on a global level.