



Saber Strike 26: Paratroopers and Engineers Respond to NATO's Call on the Eastern Flank

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POZNAN (POLAND) – The massive multinational exercise **Saber Strike 26** has officially begun, one of the key activities of the broader training series *Sword 26*, conducted under the aegis of the United States V Corps. The operations, deployed along the eastern borders of the Atlantic Alliance in a strategic quadrant extending from Finland to Poland, see the participation of the Italian contingent of the **Brigata Paracadutisti “Folgore”** and the **2° Reggimento Genio Pontieri**

The strategic aim of Saber Strike 26 is the **field validation of NATO's regional defense plans**, demonstrating the collective ability to redeploy credible combat assets with maximum speed to deter any threat and defend the integrity of allied territory. The 2026 edition stands out for an unprecedented focus on **tactical integration and the adoption of disruptive technologies learned from recent global conflict theaters**.



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The Italian Contingent: Speed, Engineering, and Projection

The Italian Army participates in the exercise with a highly specialized force package, expressly configured to operate in high-intensity environments and maximum tactical fluidity. Specifically, the national component is centered on:

- **Comando Brigata Folgore:** command and control (C4ISR) and operation synchronization.
- **186° Reggimento Fanteria Paracadutisti “Folgore”:** An elite maneuver unit tasked with ensuring the security of key areas, conducting assault operations, and integrating with allied armored and light devices.
- **8° Reggimento Genio Guastatori Paracadutisti “Folgore”:** A fundamental specialist asset for mobility and counter-mobility, tasked with obstacle reconnaissance, route clearance, and support for crossing watercourses.
- **2° Reggimento Genio Pontieri:** ensures the freedom of maneuver of maneuver units through overcoming interruptions and river obstacles, employing tactical and floating bridges to ensure the rapid projection of heavy forces in various operational theaters.

The coordination and logistical-operational support are ensured by the command structure of the logistics component and the special forces of the Brigade, validating the excellent capabilities of autonomous deployment over a very long range from Italy to the Eastern flank.

A 1,000-Kilometer March and Tactical Integration

The start of the active phase of the exercise saw the spectacular road movement of the **2° Reggimento di Cavalleria dell'Esercito degli Stati Uniti** (*2nd Cavalry Regiment - 2CR*). The military column undertook **a tactical road march of over 1,000 kilometers starting from bases in Germany** to cross Poland, moving in close coordination with the civil authorities of the host nations to ensure public safety.



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The Italian contribution proves crucial precisely in the final phase of this massive redeployment maneuver: the specialists of the **2° Reggimento Genio Pontieri**, operating in synergy with the 7th Engineer Brigade of the U.S. Army and with a pontoon company of the Italian Army, will manage the delicate *River Crossing* operations. This joint engineering capability will allow the U.S. Stryker armored column to overcome natural hydrographic obstacles without losing operational momentum.

Once the influx is completed at the Bemowo Piskie Training Area, the 2nd Cavalry Regiment and the Folgore paratroopers will integrate with the *Forward Land Force – Poland* (FLF-P) Battalion, coming under the command of NATO's Multinational Division Northeast (MND-NE). This phase of the maneuver, called **“Amber Shock”**, will serve to demonstrate NATO's ability to instantly expand a defense device from battalion to brigade level, integrating multinational forces under a single unified command.



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Innovation, Drones, and Artificial Intelligence

Beyond the pure demonstration of strength and mobility, Saber Strike 26 qualifies as a true laboratory for modern warfare. Allied countries will test revolutionary procedures in the medical and logistical fields, including the use of medical triage assisted by **Artificial Intelligence** systems, rapid evacuation of the wounded with modernized procedures, and frontline resupply of ammunition and plasma using **autonomous transport drones**.

In parallel, in the Lithuanian sector (Camp Pabrade), the exercise will host the *Fly Trap 5.0* project, focused on field experimentation of low-cost, highly effective Counter-UAS (anti-drone) solutions. This activity is developed in close contact with dozens of leading defense sector companies, allowing soldiers to test, adapt, and modify software and tactics directly on the ground in real-time.

"Saber Strike is where our commitment to innovation and interoperability becomes reality. We are not just training; we are adapting in real-time, integrating effective low-cost technologies and demonstrating that our Alliance can outsmart and outmaneuver any adversary. This exercise sends an unequivocal message: we are a ready, lethal, and cohesive force."

(Lt. Col. Cain Claxton, U.S. Army V Corps)

The Defense of the Northern Flank

While the Italian-American component consolidates the Polish-Lithuanian sector, the exercise simultaneously develops in the far north. In Finland, the 4-70th Armored Battalion of the United States will operate under the direct command of the Finnish Pori Brigade in the national exercise *Northern Star*. This level of high-level integration — which sees heavy American units fighting under the biological command of Finland — underscores the total mutual trust and deep procedural flexibility that NATO has achieved on its northernmost flank.

The active participation of the Folgore in Saber Strike 26 reaffirms Italy's leading role as a pillar of European security, capable of expressing flexible, highly specialized, technologically advanced forces ready to operate in the most complex multinational contexts to safeguard international stability.