

BIOGRAPHY



Colonel Franco MERLINO is an Officer of the Italian Army's Parachute Unit.

He began his service at the Military Academy in 1987 with the 169th Course "Orgoglio".

After having served as an instructor for the new cadets in the Military Academy, he undertook in the "FOLGORE" Brigade all the periods of command up to Regimental level. While in command of the 183rd Regiment "NEMBO" he served in

Afghanistan as Commander of the Transition Support Unit in Shindand. He was also the Commander of the Parachute Training Centre in Pisa.

He served in the General Staff in multiple circumstances where he worked on the long-term planning of the Army's operational component, at the Army General Staff and on Policy Education at the Defence General Staff.

In his assignments abroad he attended the high – level joint course at the military school of the French Armed Forces and served as Assistance Defence Attaché at the Italian Embassy in CAIRO from 2009 until 2012, coinciding with the Arab Spring.

He was involved in operations in the Balkans and in Afghanistan.

From 2016 until 2020 he served as the Director of the Security Force Assistance Centre of Excellence and followed its creation as an International Body and its subsequent accreditation as a NATO Centre of Excellence.

He has been tasked for an important assignment abroad with a diplomatic role in the international field in support of the Italian Defence.