

ITALY IN THE MIDDLE EAST: THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN GEOPOLITICS AND ARM DIPLOMACY

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Abstract: Following the Arab Spring, Italy has tried to improve its geopolitical position in the Middle East. Its approach, however, has suffered from the lack of a grand strategy and overreliance on strategic partners. Weapon export is one of Rome's greatest tools to safeguard its security and energy interests in the Mediterranean region and beyond, a tool it has used in the last decade to cultivate relationships with Turkey, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Rome hoped that their convergence of interests would ensure an improvement in its position. Ten years later, this has not happened: Italy's weapon export policy has been guided by short-term economic interests at the expense of both its declared commitment to human rights and of its greater geopolitical ambitions. Italy's Cold War-inspired threat perception and an unwillingness to commit to a proactive foreign policy approach have resulted in the creation of asymmetric partnerships where Rome needs Ankara, Cairo, and Riyadh more than they need Italy.

Italy's perception of its own military and political position in the Mediterranean Sea and in the wider Middle East has radically shifted after the outbreak of the Libyan crisis in 2011. Since then, Rome has become the first safe harbour in a migration crisis of historical proportions and was forced to shake off almost two decades of foreign policy slumber. Italy's new approach to the region is a Greater Middle East policy; with its preferred instrument being weapon exports to selected strategic partners such as Egypt, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. However, the lack of an overarching grand strategy on Italy's part, as well as the conflict of interest between the military industry and the political apparatus, has resulted in the creation of weak economic links that have failed to advance Italy's national interest. This highlights the structural inefficiency of the Italian Republic, where the rapid succession of weak coalition governments prevents the implementation of a single, coherent line in Rome's foreign relations. Not only has Italy's military industry been complicit in the on-going killing of civilians across conflicts, but Rome's use of arm trade as a foreign policy tool has also backlashed by allowing other regional powers such as Turkey and Egypt to improve their military position at the expenses of its own. This highlights the pressing need to subordinate special economic interests to national interests.

Italy's 'Greater Middle East' policy

The foreign policy of the Italian Republic was born out of the WWII initially and the Cold War later. Securely anchored within NATO, Italy's role was at once that of a bulwark against the west-ward expansion of Moscow's sphere of influence. Italy's identity and foreign policy goals were thus moulded by the bipolar system, and its political and economic development were strongly linked to those of the US, and later of the EU, that it could be argued that Rome lacked

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a distinguishable, independent foreign policy ambition. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the old international order also came a profound institutional crisis, the end of the First Republic and the 'Clean Hands' scandal,¹ which left Italy bereft of its traditional party system as well as of a strong institutional identity. In recent years, Italy has been seeking to create its own foreign policy agenda and independent identity by swinging in between bouts of Europeanism and populism without quite settling for either.² It was in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis, which dealt the finishing blow to the years of the Berlusconi *intermezzo*, that Italy was forced to confront the consequences of decades of low political engagement with its neighbourhood. The Libyan war, and the migration crisis that followed, re-heightened in Italy the perception of its precarious yet strategically vital position in the Mediterranean Sea.

The re-focus on the greater Middle East dominates Italy's strategic outline as presented in the 2020 Programmatic and Multiannual Document for the Defense (DPP).³ Here, officials point to the Syrian war, the Libyan war, and the escalation of tension in the Gulf region as the three most impending threats for Italy's national security. The worldwide increase in military spending to 2.1% of the world's GDP as well as the discovery of new hydrocarbon reserves in the Mediterranean Sea are singled out as two of the potential catalysts for the outbreak of a crisis of unforeseeable proportions.⁴ Italy is first of all worried that regulated access to vital energy resources in the region could be compromised by further militarisation of the Mediterranean Sea. In the light of the necessity of protecting vital waterways, the DPP stresses the importance of equipping Italy with a 'military apparatus that is commensurate to the responsibilities that (Italy) wants to assume, capable of ensuring a credible deterrence and a tangible capability of responding to threats'.⁵

What is of greater interest is the doctrine formulated in the DDP. It states that the environment of both threat and opportunity could be conceptualised as a triangle whose sides represent the eastern, western, and southern geographical vectors of interstate relations. The eastern vector is characterised by strategic competition, the southern vector bears destabilisation, while the western vector represents European and trans-Atlantic alliances. The interpretation of this doctrine is complicated by the lack of an explicit definition of what geographical areas the eastern and southern vectors refer to.

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It is plausible to assume that the eastern vector of interstate competition refers to Russia and its allies, singled out at different points as powers who have increasingly assumed an assertive posture that defies the principles of collective security. In that case, the encounter between Italy's sphere of interests and this threat could be located in the Balkan region. It is also possible that the eastern vector refers to the Eastern Mediterranean and the on-going rivalry between Turkey, Greece and, to an extent, France.

The southern front, characterised by a phenomenon that is destabilising for the regional and international order, may refer only to North Africa, but it could be understood to include the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and the Near East, too. In fact, in recent years there has been a tendency to consider these regions as complementary of the security system of the Middle East because of the perception that the root causes of instability and migration are located there. Under this enlarged definition of the Middle East, countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE can be considered part of Italy's security complex due to their influence in Syria, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region.

Lastly, the identification of the Western vector with the NATO alliance indicates that Italy is placing itself at the centre of the intersection between NATO's search for stability and the state and non-state threats that hamper it. Italy is effectively portraying itself as the front line of a new conflict where 'east' and 'south' take on the established western order.

This triangular doctrine shows that Italy's Greater Middle East policy is in fact not far from being a re-heated Cold War doctrine: the major axis of interstate confrontation is still the east-west one, while the southern element is seen only in terms of 'fragile states' and transnational challenges, which are being exacerbated by the intervention of state actors looking to gain geopolitical and geoeconomics advantages. Guided by this worldview, Italian officials have based their Greater Middle East policy on the necessity to build trusted partnerships with countries that were perceived as stable, in particular, after the escalation of the migration crisis in 2015 Italy has cultivated special ties with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. They hoped that the apparent convergence of interests between Rome and these countries would help alleviate the issues of migration and terrorism

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Italy was facing, while avoiding putting additional weight on the Italian state's already stretched resources through active policy initiatives. But by following this outdated Cold War logic, Rome has failed to see that one of the emerging axes of confrontation in the Mediterranean is north-south and south-south interstate competition: the perceived alignment of interests between Italy and non-European regional powers has turned out to be ephemeral, and Italy is now finding that it has not made much progress at all since 2015 on the Middle East dossier.

One of the preferred instruments through which Rome has tried to cultivate ties with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey has been weapon exports. Ties between Italy and the three countries in the military industry are all but new, with the cooperation between the arms manufacturing company, LEONARDO,⁶ and the Turkish defence industry dating back to at least two decades. However, after 2015 Italy has attempted to leverage the economic and personal links created by arm trade into political links, with scarce results. Italy's political cooperation with Saudi Arabia reached its peak during the Matteo Renzi government (2014-2016) and faded from the mediatory spotlight after sustained public opinion backlash. Renzi's initiative was more guided by perceived common economic and energy interests rather than by geopolitical consideration. For this reason, Italy continued to export weapons to Riyadh even after Germany decided to halt new contract with Saudi Arabia in 2018 over mounting evidence of Riyadh's role in the Yemen war.⁷ We see the greatest jump in Italy's exports to Saudi Arabia in 2019, when they increased to over €100 million from €13 million in 2018, making Riyadh Italy's third biggest market in the MENA region after Egypt and Algeria.⁸ This may be due to the fact that there is a lag between the approval of a contract and the effective delivery of the product; however the lack of transparency of the transaction listed makes it hard to discern whether it was Renzi's or Conte's government who actually approved the orders.

Italy's decision in January 2021 to permanently ban sales of missiles to Saudi Arabia and UAE following NGO advocacy against their use in the war in Yemen should be seen more as a PR manoeuvre on the part of the then-ruling Conte coalition (2018-2021),⁹ and will have limited economic repercussion on the special trade relation.¹⁰ A look at Italy's official

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parliamentary report on authorized weapon exports shows that Saudi-Italian trade has been less prominent overall in the past five years (11th biggest export market in 2019 and 17th in 2018, with a significant decrease in total volume of exports compared to the period 2011-2016 in which it always figured among the top 10 export markets).¹¹ Moreover, exports of missiles and bombs constituted only part of the items sold to Riyadh in 2019 for a total commission of €105 million. While the breakdown is not available due to poor transparency practices, the order included automated weapons, ammunition, military vehicles and aircrafts, all of which are not included in ex-Prime Minister Conte's withdrawal of the licence for bomb and missile exports.¹² A similar loophole was used during the temporary suspensions of export licences to Egypt during the height of the diplomatic crisis caused by the murder of Giulio Regeni in 2016,¹³ when the emission of new export licences was forbidden, but existing contracts were carried to term.

Since Italy's relation with Saudi Arabia failed to develop beyond economic interests, Rome has been conceiving of its relationship with Egypt and Turkey as a primarily geopolitical one, though one cultivated again mostly through economic means. Italy saw Turkey as the key to its migration policy, holding the place of crossroads for Syrian refugees coming to Europe on one hand, and a strong military and political position in the newly forming Libyan state on the other. Ankara is also part of Italy's strategy of energy diversification, thanks to the completion of the new Southern Gas Corridor. The Southern Gas Corridor is a network of pipelines extending from the Caspian region to the Adriatic Sea through Turkey. The last part of the network, the TAP (Trans-Adriatic Pipeline), was completed in December 2020 and has recently delivered 1 billion m³ of gas from Azerbaijan to Europe.¹⁴ Egypt, too, represents a pivotal nexus in Italy's trade and energy supply chain through the Suez Canal and holds the promising hydrocarbon deposit of Zohr for which Italy's energy state company ENI has an exclusive contract.¹⁵ Even in these interstate relations, however, Italy's political gains are hard to spot. In fact, in both cases Rome has placed itself in an asymmetric relation where Ankara and Cairo need Italy much less than Italy needs them as privileged strategic partners in its Middle East policy.

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Egypt has become a preponderant partner in Italy's arm market, rising in 2019 to become the first export destination for Italian weapons, totalling orders for over €870 million.¹⁶ The sale of two FREMM frigates is a significant component, despite representing only a fraction of the new order placed by Egypt in 2020, which, according to some sources,¹⁷ over the years will total about €10 billion. While the official government records detailing armaments' orders approved in 2020 has yet to be released, media sources claim that Egypt's order includes four more frigates, twenty patrol ships, twenty-four Eurofighter Typhoon aircrafts, and twenty-four M346 jet trainers.¹⁸ If this order is delivered, it will be Italy's biggest armament commission since WWII.

Turkey's market, much like Saudi Arabia's, has shrunk in size compared to previous years. However, this is due more to Turkey's investment on its own domestic armament production and does not represent a weakening of military or economic ties between the two countries. In fact, Italy has long subcontracted the construction of weapons through LEONARDO to Turkish companies such as ONUK,¹⁹ and has been cooperating in joint development of canons and armoured shields for Turkish navy ships.

However, disagreements have surfaced in the last months. With the appointment of the new Mario Draghi government, which has taken a much stronger pro-EU policy, relations with Egypt and Turkey have quickly soured. Italy perceives Turkey as an unfair rival in Libya, which Rome considers its exclusive sphere of interest due to its colonial legacy; this has spread into a wider political disagreement with recent hostile diplomatic moves by Turkey leading to the embarrassment of President of the EU Commission Ursula von der Leyen.²⁰ Prime Minister Draghi replied by calling Turkish president Erdogan a 'dictator'.²¹ Relations with Egypt have also clouded once again due to the continued obstruction to justice on part of the Egyptian magistrates in the Regeni process. This is also now due to the mediatic spotlight shone on the on-going case of the unlawful detention of Patrick Zaki by Egyptian security forces.²²

Italy's military budget controversy

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policy on armament production and export has also come under scrutiny domestically. Italy's civil society has contested the fact that the government has allowed the military industry to continue operations during COVID-19 lockdowns to meet deadlines for on-going export contracts.²³ Many feel that successive governments have prioritised the arm industry over other sectors such as public healthcare: as part of the 2020 budget, the government established a fund of €144 billion for investments which are deemed strategic for the development of the country for the period 2020-2035; out of these, approximately 25% are destined to the defence, compared to 1.5% of the total which has been destined to improving public healthcare.²⁴ This decision sits within a wider trend which sees a progressive contraction in public expenses dedicated to healthcare, and an increase in military expenses, which reached 1.43% of GDP in 2019 compared to 1.25% in 2006.²⁵

One of the narratives that is advanced to justify continued weapon production during the pandemic is that Italy's military industry is a lynchpin of the country's post-COVID economic recovery. Upon the approval of the DDP, the Minister of Defence Lorenzo Guerini said, 'the resources destined to defence represent a strategic leverage for the economy of our country and ensure employment growth'.²⁶ However, the net economic contribution of the Italian military-export complex has been long contested by NGOs. Some evidence that the economic profits attributed to the military industry may not be connected to overall economic growth can be deduced by looking at the interrelation between public spending, weapon exports, and private banks.

PresaDiretta, a TV programme airing investigative journalist reports, has looked at Italy's sale of two FREMM frigates to Egypt. It was reported that the frigates had originally been commissioned for the Italian military by the Minister of Defence, and were subsequently built by FINCANTIERI, an Italian company with 70% state ownership; moreover, Egypt's payment for the frigates, whose total sale price amounts to €990 million, has been fronted by a group of five Italian banks (36% financed by investment bank *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti*, which is among the major private stock owners of FINCANTIERI and is itself 86% owned by the Ministry of Economy and Finance), with the Italian state acting as guarantor for the payments.²⁷ New estimations by NGO *Osservatorio MilEx* place the cost sustained by the Italian state for the

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construction of the two frigates at €1.2 billion, or €210 million more than what Egypt will pay.²⁸ In other words, the frigates were built with public money, sold for less than they costed, and acquired by Egypt through a loan with Italian commercial banks guaranteed, again, by Italy's state funds.

Of course, the sheer volume of the new €10 billion order ensures that beyond this single frigate weapon producing companies will enjoy profits, and a great part of the appeal of the deal lies in the expectation that this level of economic and military cooperation will be renewed in the coming years. While private profits are guaranteed, it remains doubtful whether or not the way in which these deals are conducted is a fair use of public money that contributes to Italy's domestic economic needs, not just to the stock portfolio of shareholders. Some have speculated that Italy's choice can be explained in terms of energy interests: Rome's weapon procurement comes with an implicit understanding that on its part Egypt will oversee the security of ENI's hydrocarbon deposit of Zorh.²⁹

Italy's double standards on the international sphere: preaching cooperation, practicing secrecy

In spite of the inevitable interlinking between the Italian military institution and the country's military industry, there exist contradicting interests that pull Italy's governments in opposite policy directions. On one hand, Italy's defence forces have repeatedly highlighted the necessity of cooperation within NATO and, increasingly so, EU frameworks to strengthen individual and collective defence capabilities, as well as for the development of future technological innovations that would otherwise result too costly for a single country to shoulder on their own. Following Brexit, many analysts noticed how Italy, as the third largest defence spender, was best placed to take the UK's position, alongside France and Germany.³⁰ Many had also hoped that the elimination of Franco-British disagreements from the table would have pushed forth EU defence integration within the established framework of EDA (European Defence Agency).

Italy's 2015 White Paper made a strong case for closer European collaboration not only on the defence front, but also in developing a common framework for armament production. It does, however, also make a crucial distinction between 'sovereign' and

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'collective' technologies, the first including those critical for the security of the country and those in which Italy has a perceived market edge.³¹ Italy seems to have followed a similar pick-and-choose approach to its international obligations on weapon exports: Italy has failed to declare the destination country of its weapon exports to UNROCA since 2009, consistently appealing to a confidentiality clause that is meant to safeguard national security.³² Italy's lack of transparency on its weapon exports extends to official internal documents as well: recent investigations trying to trace its arm trades highlighted how information is purposefully provided in fragmented and incomplete tables that, many times, cannot be pieced together.³³

Behind this veil of secrecy there is a systematic violation of national and international regulations on weapon exports. In recent years, the use of weapons of Italian manufacture has been documented in the conflicts in Yemen and Syria, as well as in the repression of the 2011 protests in Bahrain.³⁴ One glaring example includes the sale of bombs to Saudi Arabia. In 2016, the Renzi Government authorised the supply of over 19,000 MK82 bombs to Saudi Arabia, of which about 1,700 were shipped in 2018. Mwatana for Human Rights has provided evidence that the fragments of bombs found among the debris of the Yemeni conflict are made in Italy.³⁵ As in the case of the Egyptian FREMM frigate, in many cases Italian banks directly funded the production and sale of weapons,³⁶ creating a recycling of capital that is very far from the claim of economic 'virtuosity' attributed to the military industry.

Conclusion: special interests have trumped national interest

Italy's Greater Middle East policy has failed to provide the country with any lasting geopolitical foothold in the region precisely because it has failed to appreciate the fundamental divergence in strategic goals between Italy and its chosen partners. Instead of serving national interests, the economic interests of the military industry have actually prevaricated considerations of national security, such as in the case of the sale of the FREMM frigates to Egypt, providing a non-NATO regional power with infrastructures that had been built for the Italian navy and thus allowing it to increase its military

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autonomy and to solidify its hold on the Suez Canal against potential instability in the Sinai Peninsula. Favouritism for weapon producing companies has also contributed domestically to deteriorating Italy's already fragile public trust in the government's will and ability to provide for essential public infrastructure such as healthcare. Its hands-off approach to the spiralling crises that are still enveloping in the region has left Rome in a precarious position on issues of energy policy, migration, and conflict without a clear path forward. What is needed right now in Rome is a strong and clear vision of the role that Italy should aim to play in the Middle East and the formulation of a proactive rather than a reactive tactic of engagement with all parties towards the regional ecosystem that builds enduring political links rather than temporary economic ones.

Endnotes

- 1- The 'End of the First Republic' is a common political and journalistic expression in Italy which does not indicate the end of a system of government, but rather the end of the party system that had dominated Italian politics from 1948 to 1994 with the election of Silvio Berlusconi. The greatest catalyst of this change, aside from the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, was the outbreak of the 'Clean Hand' (Mani Pulite) scandal in 1992, when the Italian magistrature uncovered a series of conflict of interest and corruption practices embedded in the existing party structures.
- 2- Ruggeri, Andrea. 'What If We Talked about Foreign Policy? Italy's Opportunities for Global Leadership in 2021'. *Ox-Pol*, <https://blog.politics.ox.ac.uk/what-if-we-talked-about-foreign-policy-italys-opportunities-for-global-leadership-in-2021/>.
- 3- The DPP (Documento Programmatico Pluriennale per la Difesa) is a special report produced by Italy's Ministry of Defense to outline the strategy, needs, and development plan for Italy's armed forces.
- 4- 'Il documento programmatico pluriennale per la difesa (DPP) 2020-2022 - Difesa e Sicurezza'. *Camera dei deputati*, 24 Nov. 2020, p. 2-6. <https://www.difesa.it/Content/Documents/DPP/DPP%202020-2022.pdf>
- 5- 'Il documento programmatico pluriennale per la difesa (DPP) 2020-2022 - Difesa e Sicurezza'. *Camera dei deputati*, 24 Nov. 2020.
- 6- 30% of LEONARDO is owned by the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance, while 48.8% of the company is owned by institutional investors, of which 90% are foreign investors. <https://www.leonardocompany.com/en/investors/stock-in-fo/shareholders-base>
- 7- 'Germany Halts Weapons Exports to Parties in Yemen Conflict'. *Deutsche Welle*, 19 Jan. 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-halts-weapons-exports-to-parties-in-yemen-conflict/a-42229376>.
- 8- *Camera Dei Deputati: Relazione Sulle Operazioni Autorizzate E Svolte Per Il Controllo Dell'esportazione, Importazione E Transito Dei Materiali Di Armamento* (anno 2019), Table 6 p. 24, and Table 8.1 p 31. https://documenti.camera.it/_dati/leg18/lavori/documentiparlamentari/IndiceETesti/o67/oo3vo1_RS/INTERO_COM.pdf
- 9- In 2018, Giuseppe Conte was appointed as the Prime Minister of a government formed by the MS5 (Movimento 5 Stelle) party and the League (Lega) party; this was a grand coalition of a right and an independent party which ended when Matteo Renzi defected in 2021. Renzi led a small party which ensured the Conte coalition a majority in the Senate.
- 10- 'Italy Permanently Halts Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia, UAE'. *Al Jazeera*, 29 Jan. 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/29/italy-makes-permanent-arms-sale-freeze-to-saudi-arabia>.
- 11- *Relazione Sulle Operazioni Autorizzate E Svolte Per Il Controllo Dell'esportazione, Importazione E Transito Dei Materiali Di Armamento*. Camera dei Deputati, 2019, p.19, Table 6., and pp 23, https://documenti.camera.it/_dati/leg18/lavori/documentiparlamentari/IndiceETesti/o67/oo3vo1_RS/INTERO_COM.pdf.
- 12- *Relazione Sulle Operazioni Autorizzate E Svolte Per Il Controllo Dell'esportazione, Importazione E Transito Dei Materiali Di Armamento*. Camera dei Deputati, 2019, p.448, Table B7, https://documenti.camera.it/_dati/leg18/lavori/documentiparlamentari/IndiceETesti/o67/oo3vo1_RS/INTERO_COM.pdf.
- 13- Giulio Regeni was a PhD Candidate at Cambridge University (UK) and a visiting researcher at the American University of Cairo where he was conducting research on Egypt's labour unions. He was abducted, tortured and murdered; Rome's magistrature has indicted four members of Egypt's secret services for his murder. Pegolo, Valentina. 'Kowtowing to Egypt's Military Regime is Letting it Get Away with Murder', *Jacobin*, 31 Dec. 2020, <https://jacobinmag.com/2020/12/egypt-military-regime-italy-eu-foreign-policy>.
- 14- Lmahamad, Ayya. 'TAP transports first 1 bcm of Azerbaijan's natural gas to Europe'. *Azernews*, 27 Apr. 2021. https://www.azernews.az/oil_and_gas/177478.html.
- 15- Zohr: *The Giant Offshore Field in Egypt*. <https://www.eni.com/en-IT/operations/egypt-zohr.html>. Accessed 15 Apr. 2021.
- 16- *Relazione Sulle Operazioni Autorizzate E Svolte Per Il Controllo Dell'esportazione, Importazione E Transito Dei Materiali Di Armamento*. Camera dei Deputati, 2019, p.448, Table B7, https://documenti.camera.it/_dati/leg18/lavori/documentiparlamentari/IndiceETesti/o67/oo3vo1_RS/INTERO_COM.pdf.
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- 18- '#StopArmiEgitto: fermiamo l'invio di armamenti'. *Amnesty*, 10 Jun, 2020. <https://www.amnesty.it/stoparmiegitto-fermiamo-linvio-di-armamenti/>.

- 19- La dittatura delle armi'. *PresaDiretta*, Rai 3, 22 Mar. 2021, <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2021/03/Presa-diretta---La-dittatura-delle-armi-502f4b5a-cc46-4870-88b4-426do28bec91.html>.
- 20- 'Ahem! No Chair for von Der Leyen'. *BBC News*, 7 Apr. 2021. *www.bbc.com*, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-56668347>.
- 21- 'Turkey Demands Apology after Draghi Calls Erdogan a Dictator'. *ABC News*, 14 Apr. 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/turkey-demands-apology-draghi-calls-erdogan-dictator-76970842>.
- 22- Patrick Zaki is an Egyptian citizen who is studying at the University of Bologna in Italy; he was detained and incarcerated without trial by Egyptian security forces due to his public opposition to el Sisi's rule. He has remained in prison since February 7, 2020. See: 'Italy's Senate Votes to Give Citizenship to Jailed Egyptian Activist Patrick Zaki'. *Middle East Eye*, 14 Apr. 2021, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/italy-senate-egypt-patrick-zaki-activist-citizenship-granted>.
- 23- 'La dittatura delle armi'. *PresaDiretta*, Rai 3, 22 Mar. 2021, <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2021/03/Presa-diretta---La-dittatura-delle-armi-502f4b5a-cc46-4870-88b4-426do28bec91.html>.
- 24- Vignarca, Francesco. 'Alla spesa militare il 25% (oltre 36 miliardi) dei fondi pluriennali d'investimento'. *MIL€X*, 21 Mar. 2021, <https://www.milex.org/2021/03/21/a-spesa-militare-oltre-36-miliardi-fondi-pluriennali-investimento/>.
- 25- 'Rete per il disarmo, "Il Sistema Sanitario Nazionale è stato devastato ma crescono le spese militari e l'industria degli armamenti"'. *la Repubblica*, 18 Mar. 2020, https://www.repubblica.it/solidarieta/diritti-umani/2020/03/18/news/salute_e_disarmo-251600850/.
- 26- *Approvato il Documento Programmatico Pluriennale della Difesa per il triennio 2020 – 2022*. https://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Pagine/Documento_Programmatico_Pluriennale_2020.aspx.
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- 29- 'إيطاليا تزود مصر أسلحة في صفقة ضخمة... ما حاجة القاهرة إليها؟' (Italy supplies weapons to Cairo in a huge deal: why does Egypt need them?) *Raseef22.net*, 5 Mar. 2020.
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- 33- 'Turkmenistan (#ItalianArms): A Dictator, Millions of Euros, and Italy's Bureaucracy'. *Bellingcat*, 25 Jan. 2019, <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/01/25/turkmenistan-italianarms-a-dictator-millions-of-euros-and-italys-bureaucracy/>.
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