

US Order Against Russia: Italy at Attention

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Italian Foreign Minister Di Maio and Defense Minister Guerini were urgently summoned to NATO headquarters in Brussels for an extraordinary meeting of the North Atlantic Council on April 15: the same day on which President Biden signed the “Executive Order Against Harmful Foreign Activities of the Russian Government” in Washington. The Order not only decrees expulsions of diplomats and economic sanctions, as reported by the media. “If Russia continues or intensifies its destabilizing international actions”, the Order established, “the United States will impose such costs as to cause a strategic impact on Russia”.

Precisely in order to prepare the “strategic impact”, that is an intensified political-military escalation against Russia, the North Atlantic Council was convened at the level of Foreign and Defense Ministers of the 30 NATO countries, formally chaired by the Secretary-General Stoltenberg, in reality by US Secretary of State Blinken and US Defense Secretary Austin.

The North Atlantic Council – the Alliance political body which, according to NATO rules, decides not by majority but always “unanimously and by common agreement”, i.e. in agreement with what was decided in Washington – has immediately approved, unanimously, a «Declaration of solidarity with the United States on actions, announced on April 15, to respond to Russia’s destabilizing activities». The Council then listed the charges against Russia: “Destabilizing and provocative behavior, violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and Georgia, interference in US and Allied elections, vast disinformation campaign, use of nerve gas against Navalny, support for attacks on US / NATO forces in Afghanistan, violation of agreements on non-proliferation and disarmament ” in the same words as the Biden Executive Order.

On the merit of these accusations, it is enough to consider one for all, the latter: who accused Russia of having violated the agreements on non-proliferation and disarmament is the United States, which has always violated the Non-proliferation Treaty, deploying nuclear weapons in Italy and other European countries, and tore up the INF Treaty by reopening the way for new nuclear missiles installation in Europe.

The escalation is not just verbal. The day before the North Atlantic Council meeting, the US Army in Europe announced that it will retain three bases in Germany that it should have returned to the German government because it will receive two new operational units in the coming months. The day after the North Atlantic Council meeting, the United States announced an agreement with Norway, which allows the US to have four air and naval bases on the border with Russia.

In the meantime, the US destroyer Arleigh Burke has returned to Europe after undergoing a modernization that has “increased the range and capacity of its armaments”. The Arleigh Burke is one of the four advanced deployment missile-launching units of the Sixth Fleet that operate mainly in the Baltic and Black Sea under the orders of the US Naval Forces Command in Europe (with their headquarters in Naples-Capodichino).

These ships are equipped with Lockheed Martin Mk 41 vertical launchers, capable of launching (according to official technical specifications) «missiles for all missions: anti-aircraft, anti-ship, and attack against land targets». This latter, including the Tomahawk missile, can be armed with a conventional warhead or a nuclear warhead. Unable to know, Russia takes it of granted that nuclear attack missiles are aboard these ships near its territory.

While London also announces the forthcoming dispatch of a missile-launching unit to the Black Sea, Moscow announces that no passage of foreign warships will be allowed through Russian territorial waters in three areas of the Black Sea from April 24 to October 31. The situation will become even tenser when, next summer, the US-Ukraine Sea Breeze exercise will take place in the Black Sea with over 30 ships supported by airplanes, helicopters, and drones with the participation of other NATO countries.

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