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## **CROATIA AND ITALY ANNOUNCE DEFENCE COOPERATION**

- 20.06.2019

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Total Croatia News (19 June 2019)

Krstićević and Trenta expressed their satisfaction with increasing cooperation, which is mostly evident in traditional cooperation between the two countries' navies. Croatian and Italian naval forces are currently participating in the international military exercise Adrion 2019 Livex.

In order to further strengthen the bilateral defence cooperation, the two ministers announced that a new defence cooperation agreement would be signed soon.

As European Union members, Italy and Croatia are participating in four PESCO projects and in European firefighting forces. In 2017, Croatia provided two firefighting planes to help Italy in putting out fires in the Genoa region, and in 2018 and 2019 Croatian troops were attached to the Italian contingent as part of the UN peacekeeping mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

The two ministers agreed that there was a lot of potential for advancing defence cooperation, especially in the defence industry.

"Croatia has a high-quality military industry and Italian soldiers have had a chance to see the exceptional quality and functionality of the Croatian helmet for themselves," Krstićević said.

The meeting also focused on the current security and political situation in Southeastern Europe, with Krstićević reaffirming Croatia's commitment to the EU and NATO's enlargement policy and readiness to provide further support to membership aspirants.

As part of the official visit, the Croatian delegation visited the Vatican and met with the Holy Father, and were also scheduled to visit the Pontifical Croatian College of St. Jerome in Rome, according to the press release issued by the Ministry.

<https://www.total-croatia-news.com/politics/36638-defence>

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