

Sixtieth anniversary celebration of the NATO Defense College - ACT

Written by LtCol. Mario Masdea, Chief Public Affairs and Protocol Officer, ITA-A
Friday, 20 May 2011 09:52

Today, the celebrations for the NATO Defense College's 60th Anniversary culminated in the military ceremony hosting the highest officials and representatives of NATO and Partner Countries.



After two days of special events, including a concert by the Italian Air Force Band in the Auditorium of the Parco della Musica on Wednesday evening and a Gala dinner on Thursday, the festivities came to a successful and gratifying end. For the College, this was certainly the most magnificent event since its foundation in 1951. It was the first time that the College had hosted a national President together with NATO's highest authorities and such a large group of ministers, ambassadors, generals and flag officers. All those present were thus able to participate in a unique moment in the College's history.

The event started with the arrival of the Italian President Giorgio Napolitano and NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Franco Frattini, the Italian Minister of Defence Ignazio La Russa and the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola, who were officially welcomed by NATO Defense College Commandant Lieutenant General Wolf-Dieter Loeser.

The Flag-Raising Ceremony was performed in the presence of the entire delegation of the North Atlantic Council, the NATO Military Committee and Chiefs of Defence Forces, the Mayor of Rome, the Course Members of Senior Course 118, other guests and College personnel.

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A special moment was the unveiling of the NDC History Wall and the complementary Senior Course Column, in the College's main entrance. This remembrance area, designed by the Public Affairs Office for the 60th anniversary celebrations, presents photographic highlights of the College's history with brief explanatory texts.

After the inauguration of the History Wall, all guests were accommodated in the main auditorium of the College.

The Anniversary Celebration Ceremony was opened by the NATO Defense College Commandant, who briefly presented the new College Video Spot now available for viewing on the NDC web site. This was followed by the addresses of the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, the Italian Minister of Defence, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the NATO Secretary General, before the concluding speech by the Italian President.

As a sign of appreciation for their visit, a copy of the NATO Defense College 60th Anniversary Chronicle Book was presented to the Italian President and the NATO Secretary General. The book takes the reader on an imaginary journey through the College's life from 1951 to 2011, the aim of editors Mario MASDEA and Valerie KASSECKERT being to convey something of the atmosphere which makes the NATO Defense College such a unique institution.

After the final honours to the Italian President, guests were invited to participate in a vin d'honneur which offered all concerned an excellent opportunity to exchange views and talk about ongoing NATO and world matters.