

# "Ugo Mara" barracks

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## "Ugo Mara" barracks: past, present and... future.

### FOREWORD.

The Italian High Readiness Force Project started in late 2000 and the following year the "Ugo Mara" Barracks was officially designated to host this NATO Command. The NRDC-IT is conveniently located at only 30 Km from Milan, 15 Km from the main Italian international airport of Malpensa and 1Km from the motorway junction.

The following events should be considered as basic steps of this project:

- 1 Feb 2001: establishment of "Ugo Mara Barracks" Garrison HQ
- 1 Aug 2001: establishment of High Readiness HQ
- 1 Nov 2001: constitution of High Readiness Forces Command (NATO Rapid Deployable Corp- IT) from Operational Projection Forces HQ previously located in Milan. On the same day the IT Signal Bde was established.

### "UGO MARA BARRACKS"- HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

The first news related to the barracks goes back to late 1916. The military compound included several buildings supporting the Busto Arsizio airfield.

During the First World War, the compound was transformed into an internment camp and after this conflict the barracks became an artillery depot.



*The Light Building home of the Signal Brigade HQ.*

In 1936 the barracks was officially named Lt Ugo Mara due to his military valor during the First World War, was awarded a silver and a bronze medals. In 1956, after the Second World War, the barracks hosted the 3rd Armored Bn and later the 4th and 20th Bersaglieri Bn. The Italian Army review carried out in 1975 marked a sequence of events for the barracks; at the beginning it hosted two different units: the 4th Armored Bn "Passalacqua" and the 10th Bersaglieri Bn (moved to Bologna in 1981), then the 67th Infantry Bn and the Legnano Logistics Bn and finally the 33rd Ambrosiano Logistic Rgt (1995).



*The building of the NRDC-IT HQ.*



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## THE NRDC-IT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT.

Since the beginning High Readiness HQ was set up with number of requirements that have to fulfill all needs related to a modern barracks in an international environment.

More than 30 projects were identified and all requirements included in a document, which from the beginning of 2001 became the "Ugo Mara Barracks Master Plan". Major planned activities include:

- a new building for the Corps (nickname STAR SHIP, 9,000 m<sup>2</sup>, cost 6,400,000 euro) providing 230 offices for 450 personnel
- a new building for the Sig. Bde, National Intelligence Cells and National Support Elements (9,600 m<sup>2</sup>, cost 5,165,000 euro) including 218 offices, 3 briefing rooms and an accommodation area with 128 modules
- a modern gymnasium with sauna, body building area and an indoor football field
- the renovation of the existing Officer and NCO clubs
- the construction of a Medical Centre, PX and a building as garrison HQ
- the construction of a parking area for more than 700 cars and a new entrance to the military compound

Particular mention should be made of the "Monte Rosa Village". For the first time in the Italian military history, a village will be built for the families of all personnel serving on the base. This project will utilise an area of 35 hectares, located beyond the logistics area

and will comprise more than 200 houses, schools, leisure and conference centers, a shopping centre, an indoor swimming pool and an outdoor sports complex.



## CURRENT SITUATION

The NATO evaluation process was overcome, after a complex and composite validation process ending with Exercise "Light Ship 2002". The NRDC-IT is now a reality and the Italian High Readiness Corps is one of the six units under direct SACEUR command.

To complete the NATO integration process all of us are now awaiting the implementation of the "Ugo Mara Master Plan". Projects cover a wide range of activities: during last year a number of assignments were completed, such as the

"Light Building", the gymnasium, the joint mess but we have to endure the delay of the other projects. Shortly the work for the new entrance will start together with the demolition of the three old buildings close to the "Star Ship". Infrastructures require a long time between the planning phase and their completion as laws, regulations and fund constraints make the progression of work very slow, but the process has started and is irreversible. All NRDC-IT personnel are eagerly waiting the time when "the dream becomes a reality".



*The new HQ building "Starship".*

