

## **HMS *Queen Elizabeth* cross-decks with the Italian Navy**

History was made on 22 November when HMS *Queen Elizabeth* exchanged F-35B jets from the US Marine Corps VFMA-211 squadron with the Italian Navy and Italian Air Force.

The VFMA-211 US Marine Corps jets departed HMS *Queen Elizabeth* and landed on the Italian carrier *Cavour*. Two F35B Lightning jets from the Italian Navy and Italian Air Force landed, refuelled, and relaunched from *Queen Elizabeth*.

Film of Lightning jets operating on this day with *Cavour* is available here:  
<https://www.defenceimagery.mod.uk/fotoweb/albums/YZuzks-A51YNfq1K/619bb3478061f632810dd70f>

Italy is the third nation that has landed jets on the British carrier. On completion of the refuelling *Queen Elizabeth* launched an Italian Navy F-35, Italian Air Force F-35, US Marine Corps F-35 and finally an F-35B from 617 Squadron, Royal Air Force. The jets then operated in the skies above the two carriers developing their interoperability and mutual understanding of procedures.

*Queen Elizabeth* is the deployed flag ship for Carrier Strike Group 21(CSG21) which by the end of her deployment will have seen her work with over 40 countries around the world in a seven-month deployment.

The Strike Group includes warships from the United States Navy, The Royal Netherlands Navy, and Marines from the US Marine Corps. As well as frigates and destroyers from the Royal Navy, two Royal Fleet Auxiliary supply ships and air assets from 617 Squadron RAF, 820, 815 and 845 Naval Air Squadrons. This will be the largest deployment of Fifth Generation Fighter Jets in history, it has been recorded.

### Picture captions

1. *An Italian F-35B Lightning jet lands on HMS Queen Elizabeth.*
2. *An Italian F-35B Lightning jet is launch from Queen Elizabeth. A US Marine Corps F-35 in the foreground.*

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