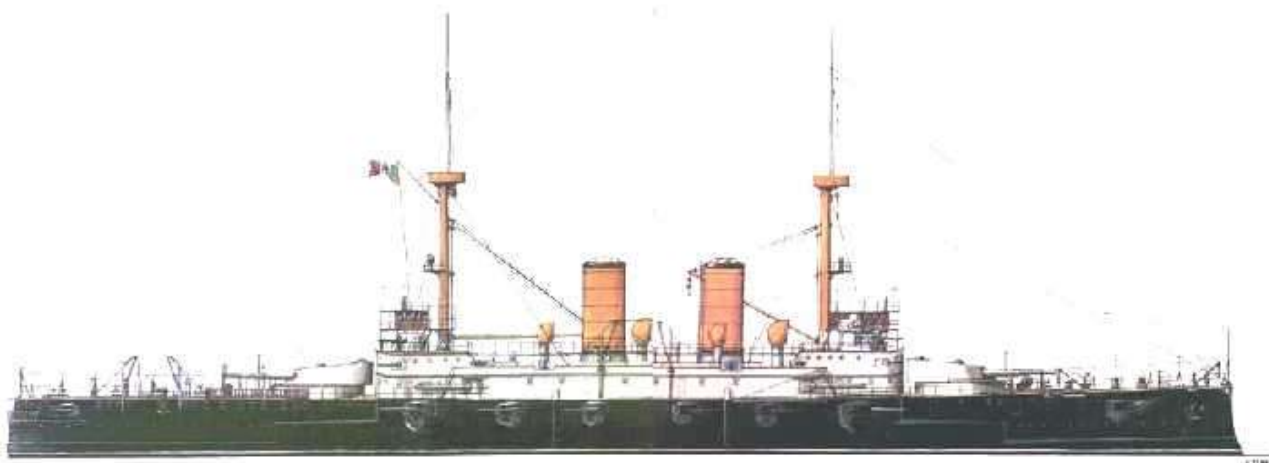


## ***The discovery of the battleship Regia Nave Regina Margherita and the hospital ship Po wrecks***

*(Official press release in conjunction with the Consulate General of Italy in Valona- Albania)*

The IANTD Instructor Trainer, Cesare Balzi; the Consulate General of Italy in Valona, Lorenzo Tomassoni; and myself; administered the discovery and identification of two wrecks of great historical importance, sunk in the vicinity of Valona Bay (Albania) during the World Wars of the twentieth century.

In collaboration with the commander of the 28<sup>th</sup> Naval Group (Italian Navy), Alberto Fiorentino; the Italian Ambassador in Tirana, Attilio Massimo Iannucci; and myself; and with thanks to the historical intelligence provided by Captain Fiorentino and Consul Tomassoni: at around 09.50 on 30<sup>th</sup> of July (U.S.) Cesare Balzi discovered the wreck of the *Regina Margherita* battleship, identified by the name still clearly visible on the stern.



The mysterious sinking of the ship occurred on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 1916, and had huge repercussions for the leaders of the *Regia Marina* (Royal Italian Navy), and for the strategic conduct of the naval war. Until now, the resting place of this famous battleship wreck was unknown.

The following day, the 31<sup>st</sup> of July (U.S.) at 08.30, Cesare Balzi identified the exact position of the *Po* hospital ship: sunk by English torpedo-bombers on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1941.

The sinking of this ship caused a great sensation due to the seriousness of the fact and because Edda Ciano Mussolini – eldest daughter of the Duce - was working on board as a red-cross nurse. These discoveries have prompted a joint initiative between the Italian Ambassador in Tirana; the Italian Consulate General in Valona; and the IANTD S.r.l.; to ensure the realisation of an expedition to document these wrecks of great historical significance of those wartime facts, and to honour the memory of the victims.

**Fabio Ruberti**  
President

Marina di Pisa 15 agosto 2005