



Italians Fleeing War: How the Farnesina is Managing the Return of Citizens from Tehran and Tel Aviv

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The situation in Iran and Israel has become increasingly critical, with the conflict between the two nations prompting thousands of citizens, including about 450 Italians, to try to escape. The Farnesina's Crisis Unit responded promptly, initiating operations for the return of compatriots, but the challenges to be faced are enormous. Italian citizens trapped in Iran, where the war has caused over 600 civilian deaths, have been forced to plan an escape, while those in Israel are considering the possibility of using the “assisted departure,” a model similar to that applied during the Lebanon crisis.

The difficulties are not limited to managing evacuations: communication infrastructures, such as the internet and mobile networks, have been compromised, creating an additional obstacle for coordination operations. Despite the difficulties, the Farnesina has continued to monitor the situation, also using the social media monitoring system to gather timely information and

ensure adequate assistance.

The Escape from Iran and the Overland Strategy

Italians in Iran face a very complex landscape: in addition to the threat of bombings, many are having to deal with the shortage of essential goods such as milk, diapers, and gasoline, making even simple movement difficult. Due to the closure of airports and the difficulty of finding flights, the only practicable escape route is overland. However, the situation is further complicated by the lack of gasoline and the need to plan safe itineraries through countries like Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkey, where it is possible to board direct flights to Europe.

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In these circumstances, many Italians have already moved independently, trying to reach Azerbaijan, where local authorities have reopened the borders with Iran. Some have managed to leave on their own, while the Italian embassy is working closely with the authorities in Baku to facilitate the passage of other compatriots. The operations, despite being difficult, have allowed the evacuation of over 600 citizens from 17 countries via Azerbaijan, demonstrating the effectiveness of international cooperation.

Assistance to Italian Citizens in Israel and the Management of Evacuations

In Israel, the situation is equally difficult. In addition to the 20,000 Italians residing in the country, there are also about 1,000 temporary compatriots, including researchers, students, and technicians, who have requested assistance. The Farnesina has organized charter flights to facilitate the return to Italy, with the first flight scheduled between June 22 and 23, departing from Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt to Verona. However, the proposal has sparked some criticism, especially for the costs borne by citizens for the flight (500 euros per adult) and for the logistical difficulties related to reaching the departure airport.

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Furthermore, the Farnesina is exploring other options, such as flights from Jordan, based on the safety of the skies. Despite the inconveniences and difficulties, the Farnesina's response has been timely, but the requests for free and coordinated evacuation by Italian citizens have become a topic of political discussion. The crisis has highlighted the need for more direct state intervention, rather than resorting to commercial flights, although the practical difficulties are objective.

In conclusion, the management of the emergency in Iran and Israel by the Farnesina highlights the complexity of an operation that requires the harmonization of various factors, including security, bureaucracy, and logistical resources. Despite the difficulties, Italy has shown a rapid and well-organized response, capable of ensuring the protection and return of its citizens, even in a highly unstable and dangerous international context.

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