Niscemi, Red Zone: Army working on roads, Carabinieri guarding evacuated homes

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In Niscemi (Caltanissetta), the emergency related to the large landslide that, since **January 25, 2026**, affects the area near the southern part of the town continues to keep the attention of Civil Protection and institutions high. The priority remains twofold: **securing the population** and **maintaining operational connections** with the town, while the "red zone" — the area prohibited due to the risk of further collapses — is monitored to prevent accidents and illegal behavior.

Roads and connections: the work of the Engineers and the military on the ground

On the operational front, Army personnel are engaged in works to **restore roads and connections**, with interventions that include alternative routes and the recovery of secondary

roads' functionality, allowing residents to move in safer conditions and ensuring the continuity of essential activities.

In this context, the contribution of **Operation “Strade Sicure”** is also included, which at this stage supports law enforcement in controlling the prohibited perimeter.

Alongside infrastructural interventions, the action to protect citizens' safety continues: the goal is to **prevent looting attempts**, control access points and passages of the “red zone” and allow — when possible and under controlled conditions — some families to **retrieve personal belongings** from evacuated homes without exposing themselves to risks. (This is a recurring need in large evacuations: returning even for a few minutes can become dangerous if the slope is still moving.)

The political-institutional message has been reiterated several times by the Minister of Defense, Guido Crosetto, who emphasized the willingness to employ means and personnel for population assistance:

> *“The Defense is close to the community of Niscemi, protecting and supporting it. I confirm the maximum availability to employ means and personnel of the Armed Forces to continue to help the population.”*

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A massive event: displaced people, affected buildings, and evolving front

According to the latest updates released at the rescue coordination meeting, the “red zone” includes **hundreds of buildings** and the **displaced people** have exceeded **1,600**.
In the previous days, the National Department of Civil Protection highlighted the still **active** nature of the phenomenon and the need for extensive precautionary measures.

The technical-scientific insights published in recent weeks converge on one point: the Niscemi landslide is not a “bolt from the blue,” but the result of a combination of **predisposing factors** and **triggering factors**.

- **Vulnerable geology**: the area features layers with **sands overlying clay levels**, a configuration that can favor slips when water saturates the finer soils and “lubricates” the sliding planes.
- **Intense and/or prolonged rains**: precipitation (especially if persistent) increases water pressure in soil pores and reduces material resistance, triggering or accelerating landslide movements.
- **Anthropic factors**: water management, urbanization, impermeabilization, and alterations of the drainage network can worsen the hydrogeological balance of an already fragile slope.

This interpretation is consistent with the approach adopted in reference documents on hydrogeological instability: landslide risk arises from the interaction between natural conditions and human pressures, with precipitation among the main triggers.

Parallel to emergency management, the Gela Prosecutor's Office has launched an investigation (against unknown persons) hypothesizing crimes related to **negligent disaster** and damage followed by landslide, with acquisition of documents and involvement of technical consultants.

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What happens now: surveillance, assistance, and difficult decisions

In the short term, the central point remains the **surveillance of movement** and the possible remodulation of prohibited areas, especially in case of new rainfall. In the medium term, when a landslide front remains active or leaves residual instability conditions, administrations often face complex choices: consolidations, relocations, demolitions of irreparably compromised buildings, and a reconstruction plan that takes future risk into account.

News link: https://www.difesa.it/primopiano/frana-a-niscemi-la-difesa-impegnata-nella-zona-rossa/88218.html