

*Italian prime minister returns to Rome after surprise contact with Trump in the U.S.*

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Rome, January 5 (RHC)-- Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has returned to Rome this Sunday after a surprise trip to Florida, where she met with president-elect Donald Trump at his Mar-a-Lago residence in Palm Beach

A report published this Sunday on the digital site of the newspaper Corriere della Sera highlights that the head of government arrived the day before at Mar-a-Lago at 7:29 PM local time, where she was received by Trump, as well as by members of his cabinet, including Marco Rubio, future Secretary of State, and Mike Waltz, designated as National Security Advisor.

"It's very exciting, I'm here with a fantastic woman," Trump said at the beginning of the meeting, which also included Scott Bessent, appointed Secretary of the Treasury, Tilman Fertitta, the next U.S. ambassador to Rome, and the head of the Italian diplomatic mission in Washington, Mariangela Zappia, the note states.

After the introductions, Meloni and Trump held a private conversation that extended until 9:00 pm local time, and then both, along with the rest of the attendees, watched the screening of the documentary Eastman Dilemma, which questions the alleged unfair position of the U.S. legal system against lawyers of conservative clients.

This meeting between Meloni and Trump took place five days before the outgoing president, Joe Biden's, visit to Rome and two weeks before Trump's inauguration. Although the official content of the meeting's agenda is unknown, U.S. media reported that it addressed positions on the conflict in Ukraine and tensions between the United States and the European Union, amid a potential trade war due to a tariff increase by Trump.

However, sources indicate that the main issue that prompted Meloni's unexpected trip was the case of the Italian journalist Cecilia Sala, who was detained in Tehran on December 19, three days after the arrest in Milan, at Washington's request, of the Iranian engineer Mohammad Abedini.

Last Friday, the Italian ambassador in Tehran, Paola Amadei, was summoned for a meeting with the director general for Western Europe of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, Majid Nili Ahmadabadi, who declared after the meeting that "the detention of Abedini is an illegal act carried out at the request of the American government."

That arrest was carried out, according to Ahmadabadi, "in line with the political and hostile objectives demonstrated by the United States, which takes Iranian citizens as hostages in all corners of the world," pointed out a note released by the newspaper Il Fatto Quotidiano.

According to a report published on the digital site of the Tgcom24 television channel, Tehran intends to exchange the 29-year-old journalist, correspondent for the newspaper Il Foglio, for the 38-year-old Iranian expert, currently interned in the Milanese prison of Opera, while Washington demands his extradition.

After dining last night with Trump and the other guests at Mar-a-Lago, the head of the Italian government headed to Palm Beach International Airport, from where she departed at 11:00 PM local time for Rome, where she is expected to arrive in the afternoon of this Sunday.

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