

Italy calls for Journalist's release following Arrest in Iran



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Italian journalist Cecilia Sala has been detained in Iran for over a week, Italy's foreign ministry confirmed. Sala, a reporter for Il Foglio and podcaster at Chora Media, was arrested by Tehran police on December 19 and is reportedly being held in solitary confinement at Evin prison. Iranian officials have yet to comment on her arrest.

Italy's ambassador to Tehran, Paola Amadei, has visited Sala to assess her detention conditions.

Sala, who holds a valid journalist visa, has been permitted two phone calls to her family. Italy's Defence Minister Guido Crosetto condemned the arrest as "unacceptable" and emphasized ongoing high-level diplomatic efforts to secure her release.

Chora Media disclosed that Sala had traveled to Iran on December 12 for interviews and podcast production. She had planned to return to Rome on December 20, but her communication ceased on December 19. Sala's recent podcast episodes featured diverse voices, including a comedian and a former military commander, and addressed cultural and societal issues in Iran.

Il Foglio called for her immediate release, emphasizing that "journalism is not a crime" and praising Sala's dedication to covering a country she deeply admires.

The arrest comes amid heightened tensions; Iranian authorities recently summoned Swiss and Italian diplomats over the detention of two Iranian nationals abroad. Italy continues to advocate for Sala's freedom, emphasizing her role as a journalist reporting under lawful circumstances.