

Rome, 08 NOVEMBRE 2013

PROT. N. 5013/025405

Gentile Onorevole Nissoli Fitzgerald, Dear Hon. Pascrell,

I refer to your recent letter regarding the upcoming closure of the Italian Consulate in Newark. Firstly, I would like to thank you for your commitment to support the Italian Community in New Jersey. I can assure you that my Government attaches great importance to our relations with the State of New Jersey, which are historically very intense in all areas. They are based on a strong link of friendship reinforced over the years, also thanks to the large Community of Italian citizens who work and live in the State.

Nevertheless, the present financial constraints force our Administration to accelerate the plans of reorganization of the Italian diplomatic-consular network and to adopt concrete steps towards its implementation. This process - which involves several Consular Offices, along with the one in Newark - was presented in November 2011 to the representative body of the Italians Abroad (General Committee of the Italians Abroad) in full accordance with the regulations in place. It was also recently discussed in depth in the Italian Parliament.

The requirement to reorganize the Italian Offices abroad is dictated not only by binding provisions on budgetary spending review, but also by the need to update the network itself - one of the largest in the world - in order to ensure the best possible use of steadily decreasing financial and human resources. The freeing-up of resources, in this historical moment, is strictly connected to our capacity to reach out to newly emerging markets, which are vital for our country's economic recovery. Moreover, similar processes are being carried out by our main European partners, with the same purpose of updating their diplomatic networks to the new geopolitical scenarios.

Hon. Bill Pascrell, Jr.
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