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# Italy: The Critical Left faces the April elections

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**We reproduce below the motion adopted by the national Coordination of the Critical Left - Movement for the Anti-capitalist Left, on February 17, 2008 in Turin, as as related press agency dispatches and article.**

We have decided to present our lists at the elections, not to build a small self-proclaimed party but to continue to defend the need for an anti-capitalist constituent through our program and in the manner of forming our lists.

At a meeting in Turin on February 17 the national coordination of the Critical Left characterised the legislative decree by which the government released political groups from the obligation to collect signatures for presentation on the electoral rolls as anti-constitutional. A generalized exemption, which excludes only the Critical Left, whose two members of Parliament would be thus less equal than the others, is obviously a violation of article 67 of the Constitution, which stipulates that each member of Parliament represents the Nation.

This decision makes us indignant us but it does not surprise us: it is not fortuitous that the only political movement which voted against the war and the package of so-called laws on well-being suffers discrimination. It indicates also in an obvious way the will of the governmental left to prevent the ballot paper from presenting the symbol of the hammer and sickle. We will fight against this anti-constitutional measure through recourse to the regional administrative court but, especially, by presenting our lists everywhere.

Because the critical Left has decided to be present at the coming political elections. We have in the past few days launched a call for a plural anti-capitalist left. This call did not obtain adequate and significant support. We regret this, because the idea of a broader coalition remains our fundamental orientation. Consequently, we have decided to present our lists at the elections, not to build a small self-proclaimed party but to continue to defend the need for an anti-capitalist constituent through our program and in the manner of forming our lists.

We present ourselves at the elections so that there is an anti-capitalist point of view to the left of the Rainbow, to affirm an ecologist, feminist and internationalist viewpoint turned towards struggles and mobilizations across the country, in defence of the environment, against Italian military interventionism or by women in defence of their self-determination, or the LGBT movement for civil rights and a secular state. So that there is a communist point of view, because once again the symbols of labour are thrown into the dustbin to justify the umpteenth turn to the right by the governmental left.

We present ourselves with an innovative candidacy for the presidency of the Council (which we will illustrate at the time of the press conference on Tuesday) and the symbol of the hammer and sickle,

on an anti-capitalist programme of workers, women, young people, for a new left, class-based, ecologist, feminist and Communist.

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## **Agency Dispatches**

**AGI:**-The Critical Left has appealed to the President of the republic, Giorgio Napolitano concerning the government's electoral decree to allow "all to present lists without collecting signatures, except for a left list, with a hammer and sickle in the symbol".

The members of Parliament for the Critical Left, Salvatore Cannavò and Franco Turigliatto, stressed that: "Tomorrow, the national coordination, which meets in Turin, will decide whether we present ourselves at the elections. We could be the single political force present in the Parliament obliged to collect signatures. We have confidence in the democratic and institutional ideas of President Napolitano, who will manage to find a non-discriminatory interpretation of the decree. In any case we await an answer quickly because, otherwise, we can only pose the question in all places and in all forms which we consider convenient, without exclusion".

**ANSA:** "The new standards of the government concerning the presentation of lists at the elections "discriminate against us and seem to me anti-constitutional" said senator Franco Turigliatto in Turin, before attending a meeting organized by the Critical Left. He referred, in particular, to the rule making it possible for parties not to collect signatures if they have at least two deputies.

"This law covers everyone, the centre, the right, the reactionary movements and discriminates, it seems, only against the anti-capitalist left". According to information collected in Turin, the Critical Left has started to contact members of Parliament and plans to turn to the Head of State. "In any event" Turigliatto concludes, " we will decide tomorrow what we must do. It is necessary that positions like ours are represented within Parliament, because it is a strong demand which emerges from society". Things will only change "if there is a new 1968 ago and a new 1969: then the partisan delegations will no longer be enough, we will change protagonists with the participation and the democratic presence of the neighbourhoods and the workplaces."

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## **Italian elections: The Critical Left, the lists with the hammer and sickle**

In Italy "another Left beyond the Rainbow is needed". It is with this slogan that the Critical Left, the first formation to present a symbol with the hammer and sickle, is contesting the coming elections.

And after the old symbol of the labour movement, it innovates by presenting "a tandem and not a chief candidate" for the presidency of the Council, a young feminist activist, Flavia d'Angeli, together with the "heretic" senator, Franco Turigliatto.

"Another left is needed", explains the outgoing deputy, Salvatore Cannavò "because that which is gathered under the symbol of the rainbow failed: the bankruptcy of the Prodi government is especially a bankruptcy of their first candidate, Fausto Bertinotti". A left, continues Flavia d'Angeli,

which is “inert and useless, which in recent months only said to the workers, to the young people, to the precarious: “I cannot do it”... ”.

The Critical Left, which includes among its candidates the former chief leader of the PRC group in the Senate, Gigi Malabarba, the journalist Umberto Gai and the historian Antonio Moscato, will give a voice to the students and teachers who disputed the presence of the pope with Sapienza, the women who defend law 194 on the termination of pregnancy (“in Ferrare we say” says Angeli “that men cannot control maternity. Why? Because they cannot experience it! ”) and the workers who struggle to reach the end of the month on their wages.

A left with the hammer and sickle, therefore “Communist”, but also “ecologist and feminist”,

which calls for an “emergency social program” with proposals for a minimal wage of 1,300 Euros, a tax on inheritance, social benefits of 1,000 Euros for the unemployed and the precarious and the reconversion of the army “to civil employment”.

The first obstacle on the road of the Critical Left is the electoral rules, which specify the obligation to collect the signatures in order to present lists for formations which do not have two members of Parliament in the same Chamber. “It is absurd”, said Cannavó, “we are two elected officials, one in the Chamber and one in the Senate, and are excluded by the rule. We called upon the President of the Republic and presented an amendment to remove this disparity. In words, all the other parties said they agreed, we will see at the time of the vote... But in any event they are informed, we will present ourselves at the elections”.

**AGI**

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**P.S.**

\* From International Viewpoint Online magazine : IV n° 399 - April 2008.

\* Critical Left (In Italian, Sinistra Critica) is an association of those “who want to create an alternative and anti-capitalist left for the radical transformation of society”