

Trieste: thousands of citizens rally in the streets against Italian violations on the Free Port

Sunday 8 February, 2015

TRIESTE – Today, 8 February 2015, on a cold and windy sunday afternoon, **thousands of citizens of Trieste** have come to the streets to a peaceful rally against the Italian proposal to kill a big part of the Free Port of Trieste.

Trieste is the main city of the Free Territory of Trieste and has been, since 1954, administered by Italy. The Free Port was established by **Annex VIII of the 1947 Treaty of Peace** with Italy, an International law that is still in force, which provides the boundaries, the advantages and the instruments for the administration of **the main Free Zone in Central Europe**.

Thousands of citizens complain that **the Italian administration seems to have no intention of complying with this treaty**, and claim their specific Human and Civil rights over this Free Port.

Flags of Trieste, of the United Nations, as well as of dozens of countries have been waved, representing the communities of this International city, as well as the countries who have, as of today, specific rights over the Free Port of Trieste.

The last straw: at the end of december a few lines have been added by senator Francesco Russo (Italian Democratic Party) , at the last minute during a night session and without any discussion, inside the Italian yearly fiscal law act, according to which Italy would be trying to unilaterally dissolve a substantial part of the Free Port of Trieste, by changing its property in favour of the city council of Trieste, who should then be in a position to sell these areas as if they were a normal public property.

Many are complaining that the Free Port of Trieste is to be, when activated, the socio-economical engine for fair growth and development for the whole of Central Europe; yet it's the city of Trieste, in particular, that has been hit the hardest by the Italian violations: **Trieste lost almost one third of its inhabitants in only four decades, mainly due to the lack of jobs and development**.

This lack of development could dramatically change with the application and enforcement of the current laws in force over the very same Free Port of Trieste, which Italian governments have had so far no intention to comply to.

In such a geographical position, with unusually deep waters and with such specific International laws in force, the Free Port of Trieste represents a source of wealth, as the only natural resource of the Territory of Trieste. **Neglecting its International legal status and avoiding any sustained development of the Free Port represents, as of today, an International crime, according to many Triestines**.

The question of whether this initiative by the Italian parliament to try to overwrite **International treaties it signed and ratified** will reach any result is still open: according to the protesters and to local movements and NGOs, this will simply maintain the **current state of ruin** in which most of the Free Port of Trieste is kept in.

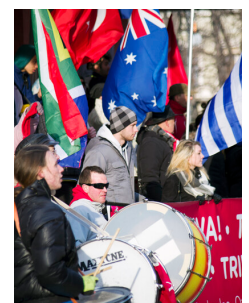
In order to make this known to the **United Nations, which is the direct guarantor** of the Territory and Port of Trieste since resolution N.16 of the UN Security Council, TRIEST NGO, which [on last November has been intervened at a UN General Assembly \[watch video\]](#) on the Question of Trieste, has introduced a **request to open an inquiry procedure on the serious and systematic violations by Italy** of the aforementioned Annex VIII to the Treaty of Peace, which has been signed by hundreds of protesters during the demonstration.

As an example, Article 18.2 of this Annex states that "The Director [of the Free Port] shall not be a citizen of [ex]Yugoslavia or Italy.". In blatant contrast to this, during the last decades the Italian governments have **always** been nominating Italian directors.

Many clear violations such as this have been and are being committed, according to the citizens of Trieste.

How and when will this end? **International action is urgently needed**, in order to establish a truly legal Status for this unique Free Port, that today only waits to become the true productive Free Zone that current International laws, as well as some of the main Economic and Financial agreements (such as GATT/WTO) acknowledge it to be.

Media:



The current attitude of Italy towards the Free Port of Trieste, and therefore towards the weakened economy of a city-port which keeps on losing inhabitants, can be described as a clear government order to ban on trade or other commercial activity in and around the Free Port. This is the definition of a proper **embargo by Italy on the Free Port of Trieste**, which has to be lifted, right now.



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