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GLOBAL RIGHTS

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The Report on Global Rights is a publication on processes related to globalization that has been published annually since 2003. It is a unique publication at international level, which proposes an in-depth analysis of both economic and financial processes, as well as political, social and environmental processes developing in the world, with particular attention to their interdependence and to the problems deriving from them in relation to the labour world and the governance, as well as to human, social and political rights, and the impact with the issues in the world geopolitical framework and its conflicts, of environmental issues on a national and international scale.

Now in its 15th edition, the Report has been confirmed as a fundamental tool for information and now in its 15th edition, the report has been consolidated as a fundamental tool for information and training for those working in schools, in the media, in politics, in public administrations, in the labour world, in social professions, in associations and in NGOs.

The Report on Global Rights is based on the consideration that in the age of globalization rights have become interdependent, depicted as a system of communicating vessels: if interrupted in one point, the whole system is to be compromised. Just think about a single - dramatic, present and visible - example: that of migration, which condenses in the Report the problem of global warming and consequent desertification; economic and social inequalities; of infi-
The economic crisis, which data and statistics tell us has ended, at least in the main European countries, has infected companies and people leaving behind a wave of inequality and disruption that has turned into political and social crisis.

In many countries the right, even the extreme right, is regaining space, while slogans and ideologies that we thought outdated have come back into reality, forcing us to think with concern.

The referendum on the autonomy of Catalonia has opened, after the one on Brexit, a new phase of disorientation within the European Union and, at the same time, has boosted secessionist or autonomist pushes of regions or ethnic groups. The election of Donald Trump in the United States and, on the other side of the globe, the show of muscle of the North Korean dictator, have opened a new phase of instability in the geopolitical landscape in which, after the relaxing phase led by Barack Obama, words like rearmament, nuclear conflicts, wars are back in circulation.

An election, that of the blatantly nationalist and liberal American tycoon, on which few would have bet and that today is said to have been heavily influenced by the unscrupulous use of social media and especially Facebook.

Scenarios, those linked to new means of relation rather than communication, where behind the shield of anonymity and with the potential of big data, big games are played, still not legible to most people, anger and violence finds new free spaces, careers and reputations are created and destroyed. Dynamics that force us to reflection and analysis. Are the new media changing us? And how are they influencing our society and the representation we have of it? Is the reliability and the seriousness of the sources still a value?

**DEPLETED WORK**

Unregulated globalization is unevenly redistributing wealth and profits while it is impoverishing labor. In the meantime economic treaties such as TTIP and CETA are promoted to further liberalize the circulation of goods and products with dynamics penalising local production in favor of large multinationals. At the same time, walls are built, ports and frontiers are closed to the circulation of people.

The migratory phenomenon towards Europe shows no signs of diminishing while the EU institutions are unable to find humanly acceptable solutions. They are elements that, on the one hand, foment racism and, on the other hand, fuel resentment and anger in the young first or second generation of immigrants who struggle to integrate. Problems that overlap and intertwine while in the waters of the Mediterranean people continue to die.

This is the climate of new challenges. Bringing rights back into labour, giving voice and representation to those categories that today are struggling to recognize themselves in the trade union, restore the right recognition of times of life, hardships, burdensome family conditions, those that coexist with non self-sufficiency; make sure that the school and the university return to being a social elevator and not insecure places.

*CGIL General Secretary*
History’s forgotten lessons

THE TRIUMPH OF THE INHUMAN

Without the constant help of memory, the worst past is destined to return. And it is actually returning. Nationalism, racism, fascism, war, and even atomic threat.

We are passively witnessing the triumph of the inhuman, with growing hate speeches, the criminalization of humanitarian workers, the construction of walls everywhere to stop migratory flows, the transformation of the Mediterranean into a marine cemetery. We see populism dangerously proliferate and establish itself, a childish disease and, at the same time, a senile one of democracy.

Those who blame this precariousness to the “caste”, but eventually clash and unleash their anger on who is a step below them, the last in line.

It is now a real social chasm, of proportions most people don’t grasp, but that are certified even by the singers of this globalization, such as the McKinsey Global Institute in the Report Poorer than their parents? (July 2016): in 25 of the advanced economies, 65-70% of citizens between 2005 and 2014 saw their income flatten or decrease: this correspond to 540-580 million people. In the previous decade, between 1993 and 2004 they were only 2%, 10 million people.

A multitude of declassed and impoverished people that now constitute the global mass base of populism, where these represent a state of mind, condemned to rancor and channeled towards the different forms of racism.

Masses of angry people who see themselves as betrayed, as they are not represented by traditional political cultures, incapable or disinterested in reflecting on them, their condition and the causes of this condition. They are easy prey for extreme rights and xenophobia, as all the recent elections are showing.

Perhaps it is not as evident as it should be, but inequality, racism, economic crisis, environmental degradation constitute an intertwined set of causal links and all are part of the same system: the liberalist system in the time of globalization and neo-colonialism, based on the freedom of the market, on the supremacy of profit, on the financialization of the economy, on the hoarding of common goods, on land grabbing and water grabbing.

The foreigner induces fear. Here is the word and sentiment that well describes the climate of this time and that raises the roots of creeping racism and, more generally, of the war against the poor (migrants are rejected not only as “different”, but also and doubly as poor), the excluded, the weaker social subjects.

Fear. Fear and legality have become the Italian declination of the US law & order. But also, as a consequence and at the same time, the matrix of hatred. A new type of hatred that gave birth to a neologism: aporophobia, namely fear and hatred of the poor.

ECOLOGICAL AND WAR CATASTROPHES

Some scholars assume there is also climate change at the base of the increase of conflicts in the Middle East in recent years. In any case, the ongoing wars involve 67
To the many wars in progress are added those in itinere and the possible ones, pursued by the ravings of Dr. Strangelove and the geopolitical risiko organized by sorcerer’s apprentices.

Wars that start so easily but that hardly end. The war in Afghanistan is 16 years old (without going back to the previous one, which lasted a decade since 1989). The one in Iraq began in 2003, the one in Syria in 2011, the one in Yemen in 2015. The civil war in Somalia dates back to 1991.

Five years old also the ongoing conflict in the Central African Republic, while that of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was the bloodiest of all, with over five million deaths between 1998 and 2003, is burning under ashes. Not to mention the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has been going on for at least half a century.

The shattering of the former Yugoslavia, with the war from 1991 to 2001, had a preparatory role in the destabilization of the equilibrium in the world, the effects of which are still ongoing.

**TWO MINUTES TO THE APOCALYPSE**

To the many wars in progress are added those in itinere and the possible ones, pursued by the ravings of Dr. Strangelove and the geopolitical risiko organized by sorcerer’s apprentices. At the base of all there are the insatiable appetites of oil and arms merchants.

The muscular competition between Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un, in recent months, has let transpire the risk of a nuclear conflict. And again the memory of the most tragic past, that of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, seems unable to transmit the adequate warning.

The fact is that in 2017 there were 4,150 nuclear weapons located in nine countries (United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea).

If we count also the other nuclear heads, the nuclear weapons available to those countries are about 14,935.

The “Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist” in January 2015, had already moved its “Doomsday Clock” to three minutes before midnight, a level of alert never reached in the last forty years, argued with two looming threats: nuclear weapons and “uncontrolled climate change”.

Today the clock hands have been moved even further: we are two minutes from the disaster.

* Coordinator of the Report on Global Rights
Chapter One

Economy and work

**Excerpts from Chapter 1 of the Report on Global Rights 2017**

**THE CONTEXT**

**ELUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH**

The causes of the multiform uncertainties that make current growth elusive derive from several factors: from the social crisis that has increased inequalities and strengthened mass precariousness; from the political crisis that has contaminated the dominant neoliberalism with populist, sovereign and neo-fascist instances; from the credit crisis. These factors were structured and intertwined during the economic, financial and institutional crisis that began in 2008.

Potential growth is slowing especially in the Eurozone because financial and banking crises tend to have a long-lasting impact on the economy. Its prospects are further slowed by demographic stagnation. Total factor productivity grows less than in the past, and less than in the United States. This could be due to a variety of reasons, but it is likely to be one of the manifestations of the secular stagnation produced by the economy of the crisis.

On the one hand, growth was driven by a recovery in domestic consumption and a small increase in investments. Consumers benefited from the recovery in (precarious) employment.

On the other hand, nominal wages grew very slowly: +0.6% in Spain and +2.7% in Germany. Low inflation allowed real income growth to a level close to that of 2006. Low employment, the precarious nature of jobs and modest wages have a decisive influence on this situation.

Add to this the traditional division between the German and the Mediterranean zones of Europe. Within this geo-economic division, where Southern Europe is subject to the rules of German Europe, individual countries register a differentiation. While in Germany the minimum wage has been introduced and there is a tendency towards full employment through the multiplication of the precariousness of “mini jobs”, in Spain unemployment is higher than 16% and inflation will remain below 1% even in 2018.

France and Italy are in an intermediate zone with inflation that tends to 1.5%. This growth must be considered in rela-
The poorest 50% of the world population actually owns less than 1% of global net wealth

A process that has continued at least since 2009 also in Ireland, Greece, Spain and Portugal.

Great poverty and inequalities grow

In 2014 it turned out that 85 individuals possessed the same wealth as the poorest half of humanity, that is, over three and a half billion people (Oxfam, 2015).

In 2016, the wealth of the poorest 50% of the world population was lower than previous estimates: only eight people are sufficient to equal the value of its total assets. The cumulative share of wealth of the poorest 50% is 0.2% (Credit Suisse, 2016). The total amount of global wealth has reached the figure of 255 thousand billion dollars.

Since 2015 more than half of this value is in the hands of the richest 1% of humanity. This year’s data reveal that, at the top of the pyramid, the eight wealthiest individuals have a net worth of $426 billion, corresponding to what is owned by the poorest half of humanity. In the last three decades the returns of the owners of capital have been clearly superior to the economic growth.

The poorest 50% of humanity owns a total of less than a quarter of 1% of global net wealth. 9% of the members of this group have a negative wealth and live mainly in the wealthiest countries, where loans for students and other credit formulas are available; but also ignoring the debts of people living in Europe and North America, the total wealth of the poorest 50% is still less than 1%.

In the United States, according to new research conducted by French economist Thomas Piketty, in the last 30 years the income of the poorer 50% has grown by 0%, while that of the richer 1% have increased by 300%. In the rest of the world, people living in poverty suffer an erosion of their main sources of income (land, natural resources and housing) due to precarious land rights, land grabbing, fragmentation and erosion of the land, climate change, evictions and forced displacement (Oxfam, 2016).

These reforms were aimed at precarising and reorganizing the labor market, canceling the protection of labor contracts and strengthening the corporate decentralization of national bargaining. In practice, they have put the costs and burdens on the workers, forcing them to accept a wage restriction, as well as guarantees in the event of redundancy, insecurity or unemployment.

The model remains that of the Agenda 2010 approved by the German social-democratic government led by Gerhard Schröder in the early 2000s. The Jobs Act in Italy, which abolished Article 18, and the Poletti reform of fixed-term contracts have emptied the indefinite contract. These measures, converging with the French “Loi Travail” (which will be implemented by the new presidency of Emmanuel Macron from 2017 onwards), together with bonuses and tax exemptions for companies, are aimed at lowering the cost of labor and “relaunching competitiveness”.

nation to the “reforms” of the labor market imposed on countries hit by the public debt crisis (France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Ireland).

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raising of capital. In this framework there is a priority: the capital raised on the financial markets - sometimes beyond the listing of the company on the stock exchange - is the condition for producing the services and proceeding with colossal acquisitions. The counter-proof is the disproportionate relationship between the capitalization and the turnover of these companies.

Uber - which is not listed on the stock exchange - has a capitalization of nearly 70 billion dollars and a turnover of more than 400 million dollars. Airbnb raised $3.1 billion in venture capital against a $30 billion listing, 20 times more than its revenue.

Digital capitalism and tax havens

The financial model of digital capitalism contemplates tax evasion. In the years of crisis there has been an increase in this phenomenon accompanied by the proliferation of tax havens.

In January 2016, a sum of $1.9 trillion was calculated in cash and investments only from the United States. The companies of digital capitalism are part of this global migration of capital to offshore platforms: +25% from 2008 to 2014 with a subtraction of 7.6 trillion dollars. In their case, tax evasion is particularly simple since they do not transfer entire factories, but intellectual property, abroad.

The reserves held offshore by “unicorns” are huge. It has been calculated that only Apple owns $215.7 billion in reserves, 92% or over €200 billion are held abroad. Microsoft has 102 billion dollars in reserves and holds 93%, 96 billion; Google 58% (42 out of 73 billion) Amazon 36% (18 out of 49) and Facebook (1.8 out of 15, 11%) (Srnicek, 2016).
Chapter Two

Social Policies

Excerpts from Chapter 2 of the Report on Global Rights 2017

THE CONTEXT

POVERTIES AND INEQUALITIES. THE MANY SPEED OF EUROPA

WE ARE QUICKLY APPROACHING AT THE DEADLINE FOR THE EUROPE
2020 PROGRAM AND ALREADY WE ARE THINKING ABOUT THE OB-
JECTIVES OF THE 2030 PROGRAM, WITH ANNEXED DECLARATIONS,
STATEMENTS AND CONFERENCES.

But in the meantime, the Europe 2020 objectives in the social sec-
tor have not given a good image of themselves: one of these envisaged
to improve the conditions of 21 mil-
ion Europeans, bringing them out
of poverty, but the positive down-
turns that are also found in the most
recent statistics are minimal and
above all they are not distributed ho-
mogeneously in the Union.

For community statistics, being poor
means falling into one or more of
these typologies: being at risk of
poverty (an income threshold below
60% of the national average), suf-
ferring severe material deprivation
(with 9 relative indicators) or having
a low work intensity (work less than
20% of one’s potential).

Well, in the EU28 there are
118.700.000 poor people, 23.7% (2015 figures), 24.4% in 2014, so the
fight against poverty has produced a
minimum improvement, which con-
cerns 0.7% of the Europeans.

But above all, the geography of these
poverty varies greatly within the
Union: some countries account for
over a third of poor residents, Bul-
garia (41.3%), Romania (37.3%) and
Greece (35.7%); on the other side,
Finland (16.8%), the Netherlands
(16.4%), Sweden (16.0%), the Czech
Republic (14.0%). If there was a slight
decrease on average, in some coun-
tries between 2015 and 2014, poverty has increased, as in Lithuania (+ 2%) and Cyprus (+ 1.5%).

The poverty among minors persists, the figures on poverty and social exclusion show a more serious condition: they are poorer than the rest of the population (26.9%), particularly in Romania, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Slovakia; the percentage of them living in poor households ranges from 14% in Sweden and Finland to 40% in Romania and Bulgaria.

The reasons for this poverty of the family are above all to be found in the position of parents in the labor market, in the number of family members and in local welfare policies, i.e. in transfers and services offered. And also material deprivation, which measures the quality of life with indicators concerning food, the quality of living, access to culture and other economic indicators, such as being indebted or unable to cope with sudden expenses.

8% of the population of the Union is severely deprived, with peaks of 22.2% in Greece, 22.7% in Romania and 34.2% in Bulgaria, and smaller situations in the Netherlands (2, 6%) and Finland (2.2%). On average, deprivation drops by 0.8% but in some countries it is growing. An indicator such as not being able to cope with unexpected expenditure (calculated at one-twelfth of the poverty line) reaches as much as 37.3% of the EU28 population, and is also high in the less poor countries, such as Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden and the Netherlands.

Social expenditure in the Union. A map of lights and shadows

Faced with this difficult scenario for Europe, the community response in terms of welfare and social protection does not seem to have recorded the urgent need for effective counter-moves. It is true that on average more has been invested in social spending, but not so decisively: it reaches 28.7% of GDP (2014 data), it was 28.3% in 2011, therefore one +0.4 increase.

One of the problems related to the fight against old and new poverty is not only the extent of expenditure, but also its composition: the EU28 average sees 49.5% of pensions, 36.5% for health, while voices such as unemployment, family and housing, they collect one-figure percentages, respectively 5.1% of total spending, 8.5% and 4% (Eurostat, 2016).

Another critical element is the very differentiated map of social spending among the countries of the Union, which means that European citizens are not at all equal: from 34.3% of GDP invested in social spending in France, 33, 5% in Denmark, 30.9% in the Netherlands and 30% in Italy, up, by contrast, 14.5% in Latvia, 14.7% in Lithuania, 15.1% in Estonia and 18.5% of Bulgaria and Slovakia.

This varies the per capita (weighted) expenditure: 100 of the EU28 average, ranging from € 32 in Bulgaria to 188 in Luxembourg.

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FOCUS

SOCIAL HATE IN THE SOCIETY OF EXCLUSION

Securitarism and cultural catastrophe

When the model of post-war Western democracies, based on the conflictual and negotiating pact between capital and labor and on the Welfare State as its expression of government of society, is said to have come under the blows of globalized capitalism, we think firstly to the affirmation of those "society of exclusion" that gradually expel more and more numerous social groups from a concept full of citizenship.

A process that - we have treated it over the years in this Report - brings with it not only the growth of old and new poverty, and therefore, exclusions, but also and above all the shift from the welfare state to the "penal state", with an increasing emphasis on repressive and disciplinary tools (legal or administrative) to support the government of a fragmented and ever less cohesive society.

The cultural shift from social security to security law & order has immediately had to build a solid alliance with the media: when it is governed, however, consensus is needed, and the “penal state” needs it as more than the social one; media devices have worked on the social construction of that perception of insecurity that, in public discourse, has quickly taken the place of any measurable evidence of hardship or social risk.

The trigger of this virtual insecurity with increasing conditions of real hardship for many social groups has started then a process that appears today dramatically unstoppable.
Hate speech. The construction of a new “public discourse”

The process that sees the construction of a link between the growing social unease of many and some specific social groups, to be charged partly or fully responsible, in support of policies of exclusion and discrimination, has been expanding and changing; in a certain sense, in the last few years it has acquired the pervasive functionality of a “regime device” of public discourse.

The chronicles of 2017 are a continuous, daily evidence of how this device - think of the refugees figure - is effectively at work and has passed the threshold of a media communication definable as functional, subject to dominant interests or without deontology.

We are beyond: hate speech, as production, circulation and amplification of stigma, social blame, discrimination or criminalization of social groups is today the frontier of this public discourse.

The “foreigner” is the first perfect enemy of globalized Western societies. The field in which there has been an attempt to act at an early level, both against hate speech and against hate crimes, is that relating to racism and xenophobia; only later will other fields be tackled, as the hate speech spreads like wildfire and involves different subjects, from the LGBT1 to the disability, up to touch groups that minority can not be defined, like women.

The Roma, the usual “perfect enemy”

Prejudice, discrimination and hatred have always afflicted the Roma communities in Europe converting them in a privileged target people have suffered not only harassment and threats but also physical violence, a figure that is definitely underestimated, considering the low inclination to report or report the episodes suffered.
Chapter Three

International

Excerpts from Chapter 2 of the Report on Global Rights 2017

THE CONTEXT

TRUMP, A PRESIDENT AMID CONTROVERSY

THE ELECTION OF DONALD TRUMP AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WAS PRECEDED, AND CONTINUES TO BE ACCOMPANIED, BY CONTROVERSY. AT THE BEGINNING IT WAS FOR THE PERSONAL FEATURES OF THE CHARACTER HIMSELF - A MULTIMILLIONAIRE WITH LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS, AGGRESSIVE AND NOT VERY TONED. THEN FOR HIS MESSAGES AND PROMISES DIRECTED TO SPECIFIC SECTORS AND NOT TO THE WHOLE OF AMERICAN SOCIETY AND FINALLY FOR THE very results of the elections revealing two different United States: a profound and traditionalist one pro-Trump and a urban and cosmopolitan, fearing the “threat” he represent, rather than be in favor of Hillary Clinton.

A division that has been further explained with the different and participated social mobilizations that took place in the great North American cities, once the results were confirmed.

In parallel, the fact that the official winner actually got a million and a half votes less than the defeated candidate, has once again highlighted the imperfections and problems of a democracy that presents itself as a global model but which continues to be founded on the concepts of lobby and local and regional elites more typical of the nineteenth century than of the value of equality (one head, one vote).

Another harsh controversy, was the one which followed the accusations of interference by the Moscow government, to the detriment of the defeated democratic candidate. A serious accusation, which still rages and which could lead to legal and institutional action against Trump.

US foreign policy: Europe and NATO

More than on the domestic front, however, in the first months of his mandate it was in the international field that Trump stood out for some political “clarifications”. The President has occupied the media that seem destined to be a must in all its public “declarations”.

Even if, chronologically speaking, Europe was not the first stop of Trump’s foreign tour, this seems to be the journey of greater content. Europe is still the main US “ally” in all senses. The message of the North American mandatary to the old continent has been articulated and rich in nuances.

First, Trump has ratified that the US is a great world power but also a “big brother”; secondly, he reminded everyone that “security” and the maintenance of world hegemony is an expensive and complex affair, for which everyone must pay the share that corresponds to it; third, he reiterated that NATO is essentially an instrument serving the US, which are those who created it during the Cold War, in their image and likeness.

A look at old Europe in terms of identity
Beyond the harshness with the powerful ally oversea, the European Union has been facing for years a phase of redefining its internal relations.

The negotiations on Brexit and the exit of Britain from the EU will follow their own roadmap, but neither the tone nor the actual content of this “divorce” of mutual agreement is still entirely clear.

The early elections, convened by the conservative British Prime Minister, Theresa May, on 8 June 2017, have weakened May’s position, both inside and in the negotiations with the EU.

On the contrary, the excellent result obtained by the Labor party led by the veteran Jeremy Corbyn has shown that his speech (a sharp turn left compared to the Blair era) has breached the traditional base of the party but also in new sectors of young voters.

As already in 2015, in 2016 the Middle East and North Africa were the least peaceful regions in the world. But North America was the region where the indexes that ‘measure’ levels of peace have deteriorated the most. A deterioration mainly due to the intensification of internal conflict and the level of perception of crime in society.

Measuring the level of peace or calculating the costs of wars and violence is not an easy task. The global cost of war is estimated at 1.04 trillion dollars in 2016.

The region that recorded the greatest improvement in terms of peace was South America, which ranked fourth ahead of Central America and the Caribbean.

In terms of countries, Iceland is confirmed as the most peaceful country in the world of 163 analyzed. Followed by New Zealand, Portugal, Austria, Denmark, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Canada, Switzerland.

Ireland is in tenth place. To find Italy we must go down to the thirty-eighth place.

Unstoppable exodus

It is an exodus apparently unstoppable the one we are witnessing for years now. The images of the refugees columns on foot through the Balkans or locked up in crowded refugee camps hunt us on television and internet but they are not the headlines. The exodus, the migration, seem to increase as much as respect for human rights decreases. Rights in general, human, global rights.

Millions of people looking for their place in the world

In the last twenty years the population forced to move, fleeing wars, violence, abuses, poverty passed from 33,9 millions in 1997 to 65,6 millions in 2016. A sad record affecting both people internally displaced and people trying to rebuild their life in another country.

The internally displaced people at the end of 2016 were 40.3 millions (of these, 6.9 millions were new refugees, i.e. those who moved in 2016). The refugees who fled from their countries of origin and registered by the UNHCR were 22.5 millions (3.4 millions new refugees). The asylum seekers in 2016 were 2.8 millions.

This forced migration increased especially between 2002 and 2015, mainly because of the war in Syria. At the end of 2016 more than half the Syrian population was IDP or refugee. Responsible of this exodus are also the wars in Iraq and Yemen as well as the wars in Africa (Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and South Sudan). And of course the never ending Afghanistan war.

To better visualise the entity of this exodus, is perhaps sufficient to think that if ten years ago one person out of 160 was forced to leave his house every day, today that proportion is 1 out of 113.

Furthermore, 20 people have been forced to flee every minute of every day in 2016. 51% of the refugee population is represented by under 18 (it is estimated that children represent 31% of the world population).

The developing regions, say the UNHCR, receive 84% of the world refugees (34.5 millions). The so called underdeveloped countries, receive 28% of the refugees, i.e. 4.9 millions. One country alone, Germany, belonging to the developed region is among the first 10 countries receiving the highest number of refugees.

For the third consecutive year, Turkey has been the country that received the highest number of refugees, 2.9 millions people. Followed by Pakistan with 1.4 million, Lebanon with 1 million.

Lebanon is the country hosting the highest number of refugees with respect to the local population: one person out of 6 is a refugee. In Jordan one person out of 11 is a refugee, while in Turkey one person out of 28.
Despite the criminalization attempts against them, the NGOs have saved over 70 thousand migrants, more than a third of the total of those who reached Europe.

In concrete terms, this support to Libya has translated into 46 million euros for a project prepared by Italy to strengthen the capacity of the Libyan authorities and the creation of a Maritime Coordination and Rescue Center in the same African country. According to data in the hands of the EU, Libya is the country of departure of 95% of arrivals in Italy. As to the situation in Turkey, the number of crossings from this country to the Greek islands remains about 50 people per day. The agreement between the EU and Ankara meant a 97% decrease in arrivals, even if the fatal accidents in the Aegean sea did not stop. The European support for the refugee fund in Turkey for 2016-2017 is 3 billion euros (2.9 billion have already been allocated and contracts for another one and a half billion have already been signed).

Frontex insinuates that “clear instructions would be given before departure on the direction to be followed to reach NGO boats” and “contacts with smugglers” are assumed.

Data on the presence of humanitarian ships, even in the winter months, are clear: to them, in 2016 alone, more than 70,000 migrants were helped, more than a third of the approximately 180,000 arrived throughout the year. A year, 2016, with a negative record as we have seen: that of the dead because of shipwrecks, almost five thousand.

Progressively abandoned the search and rescue policy, the European agencies have concentrated on the militarization of borders, which continues with over 1,600 officers sent to support the Greek, Italian, Bulgarian and Spanish forces.

According to the European Commission, today the European external borders are more protected than ever. The number of migrants repatriated from January to June 2017 was 6,799, 15% more than in the same period of 2016. The even more militarized frontiers correspond to the desperate search for migrants fleeing increasingly dangerous routes.

The geopolitical interests of the EU: The new witch hunt

It had been announcing itself for some time. That an offensive was being prepared against those who disturbed the plans of European “policemen” (Frontex and EUNAVFOR Med) was clear.

The “legal” alarm bell so to speak (because on the field, the attitude was very clear for months now) started to ring on February 15th 2017, when Frontex presented its Risk Analysis for 2017, a report which states that NGOs’ humanitarian ships would frequently enter the territorial waters and far below the Libyan shores, lending themselves to collect migrants.
Chapter Four

Environment

Excerpts from Chapter 4 of the Report on Global Rights 2017

THE CONTEXT

THE PLANET PAINFUL OBSOLESCENCE


CETA: the twin brother of the TTIP

The sentence of the Court of Justice comes at the height of the CETA ratification process.

The first substantial obstacles to its approval emerged in October 2016, on the occasion of the ratification by the European Council, the community body that brings together the Heads of State of the 28 member countries (which will become 27 with the implementation of Brexit). To be able to hold a clear and unambiguous position on some issues (the international treaties are one of those), the Belgian government needs the two subnational parliaments (the Walloon and the Flemish parliaments) to give their consent. But it was precisely the Walloon, through the mouth of its president Paul Magnette, that decided to interpret the concerns of civil society by engaging in a contend with the European Commission on the sustainability of the agreement. Weeks of controversy, resulting in more or less legitimate pressures on the Walloon regional parliament and its president, to advance the path of CETA without hindrance.

The Walloon opposition imposed on the European Council to find a compromise through an official document that should have clarified the most controversial points of the agreement, an unsuccessful attempt in substance, although much propagandised in form, as denounced by various civil society organisations such as the European Public Service Union (EPSU), after analysing the “leaked” text, a few weeks before it was formally made public.

But beyond the ‘interpretative statement’, Paul Magnette and the Walloon regional parliament obtained other formal assurances, including the official request to the European Court of Justice...
On 15 February 2017 the ratification process was officially launched at member state level, and on 1 June Denmark will be the second country to approve the Treaty after Latvia. In Italy, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, on 27 June, will give the green light to the ratification process that will be scheduled in the Senate for the month of July.

And in the meantime, the TTIP crumbles ...

In the race among Treaties, CETA, which seemed to have slowed its approval process after the signing of Canada and the European Union in September 2014, precisely following the freezing of the TTIP on the choice of the new US administration, becomes the privileged objective of international networks on Trade Justice. Faced with a strong acceleration in ratification procedures, European and Canadian civil society has redirected its mobilisation to block the approval process.

But what happened during the last year to make the European Union think about its priorities of foreign trade policy? The American elections, which in November 2016 created a real revolution. And not just in Washington.

by the Belgian government on the compatibility of the ICS system with the European treaties.

The impasse was overcome and the text of the agreement arrived in Strasbourg on 15 February 2017: thousands of people took to the streets in front of the European Parliament, while many emails, tweets and local actions to avert the approval were organised.

With 408 votes in favour and 254 against, and a split within the group of European Social Democrats, CETA will be ratified by the European Parliament: “An important milestone in the democratic process of ratification of the agreement reached with Canada, which allows its application provisional”, will underline President Jean-Claude Juncker on the day of the vote.

“Today a dark page was written for democracy in Europe, but not everything is compromised”, replied Monica Di Sisto, spokesperson for the Stop TTIP Italy Campaign, in a press release issued immediately after the vote.

“The battle of civil society now moves to the national level. We will monitor the impact of the agreement, showing that we were right to criticise it, and we will push the Italian Parliament to block this treaty harmful to our citizens and workers. European parliamentarians, particularly social democratic and popular, have abdicated their role as guarantors of rights and the environment. But in Italy - concluded Di Sisto - such an attitude will not be tolerated. The polls are close, and the voters will make this reckless choice weigh on the parties that have disappointed them in Europe”.

European deputies, especially the social democrats and popular, have abdicated to their role of guarantors of the rights and the environment.
FOCUS

GLOBAL WARMING AT THE TIME OF DONALD TRUMP

There is nothing more clear and obvious than a chart to understand the trend of the climate in the new millennium.

Confronting the figures of the summer temperatures of the ‘boreal hemisphere in the decade 2005-2015 with an average temperature base recorded in the thirty years 1951-1980 a decisive shift of the median has been noticed: if in the first decades the distribution of the temperatures showed a third of the recordings considered “medium”, another third “cold” and the remaining “hot”, over the years has had to create a new category (extremely hot) within which fall 15% of the data. The climate change, the lands and the oceans

In March 2017, the intergovernmental panel of almost 2,500 climate change scientists (IPCC) met in Mexico, in Guadalajara, to approve three new reports to be annexed to the sixth Assessment Report (AR6) which represents the sum of knowledge on the phenomenon and is expected for 2020-2022.

The first, strongly requested at the Paris Conference, concerns the 1.5°C limit for increasing the average global temperature, inserted as a wish (and possible target to be respected) right within the premises of the 2015 agreement. Substantial and particularly awaited by governments, to be able to make the balance (or inefficiencies) of their environmental policies.

Arguments concerning all member countries, but in particular the island states (and the atolls of the Pacific Ocean in particular), which risk being the first victims of the effects of climate change.

On the other hand, the risk to the oceans is becoming relevant, and not only for the rise of the seas (due to the combined disposition of the melting of the ground glaciers and the physical expansion of the water due to the temperature): the oceans are in fact a huge buffer that allows to mitigate the effect of CO2 on the atmosphere.

The carbon dioxide, in fact, dissolves in water, proportionally to the temperature, coming out of atmospheric equilibrium but impacting on the sea: the consequence is a progressive acidification that is beginning to put at risk animal and algal species, with the risk of extinction for some varieties as early as 2050.
Chapter Five

Thinking new worlds is the first step to create them. Experiencing different lifestyles and social relationships makes that thought a concrete step, capable of reproducing itself and convince others. To be an example following horizontal logic and virtuous contagion that moves from below, from single territories, from the ability to exit from the consolidated, especially when this has become manifestly destructive.

The structural nature and the depth of the current crisis show how much, in the past decades and still now, the globalised and financialised economy, the deregulation and supremacy of the market, the uncontrolled power of big corporations, a global order based on the geopolitics of war and neocolonialism, have produced increasing and intolerable inequalities, environmental devastation, emptying of democratic systems, putting at risk the very foundations of human and civil co-habitation and the rights of the new generations.

It is therefore necessary to change the world. In this new chapter of the Report on Global Rights we present and tell ten cases, experiences - ranging from Italy, to Europe, to the world - or even concrete suggestions that show us how it could actually be possible.

The common thread is that of a research that starts from one own territory and one own relationships. Together, it is the awareness that the threads that recognise themselves and intertwine give shape and strength to the network. A form that is a link and at the same time support, reciprocity. We could also say hope.

Certainly, everywhere in different ways, groups of people, almost always far from the attention of the big media, have stopped delegating change or seeking leaders and, despite inevitable limitations and contradictions, show that it is
possible to “open breaches in the walls”, here and now.

THE COMMUNITY WELFARE OF MANCHESTER HOME

People before profit

At the entrance to the Manchester Home Care office, a large coloured sign warns: Putting people before profit. For this social cooperative specialized in social assistance and in local welfare services of Wythenshawe (the largest neighborhood in Manchester, known to be separated from the city by a band of countryside), this is much more than a slogan with which to decolonize imagination.

Every day the 800 worker-members of the cooperative try to give meaning to the word self-management, every day they carry out a service unthinkable just a while back as that of “community nurses”, every day they reject the logic of profit even challenging the multinational health.

To understand the importance of the work of this cooperative, it is necessary to look at the territorial, national and international context in which it moves and peek into its daily life, an important training ground for democracy and social change.

In Europe, a massive privatization and shift of public services to the private sector has developed since the Thatcher era (an action supported by progressive governments like Tony Blair’s) but also because of the latest austerity measures. At the beginning of 2017 at least twenty hospitals in England declared the black alert.

The industrialization of health

The destruction of welfare is actually only part of a huge and complex problem. The growing role of multinationals in this sector, the total dependence of patients from medical institutions in the treatment processes, the idea that the body is an assemblage of organs to repair-eliminate-replace like the spare parts of a motor vehicle (Calabria, 2014), the elimination of fragility, the separation of health from the environmental and social context in which individuals live, the idea that health is something that is bought and not done together, the super-specialization of medicine and its marriage with the god profit (Cacciari, 2013) have in fact transformed the meaning of concepts such as medicine, health and care.

What to do? Difficult to find immediate solutions, it is certainly necessary to break with the dictatorship of the industrialization of health and to experiment many different ways. Claiming welfare services is not necessary, certainly not enough.

It happens in Manchester

In England, for example, while all this has caused widespread discontent in broad
At the beginning there was an eviction

The story of Baobab experience was born after the eviction in May 2015 of the settlement of migrants, mostly coming from the Horn of Africa, but also Roma, between the districts of Pietralata and Ponte Mammolo; settlement known because of the sudden visit of Pope Bergoglio in February 2015.

In the weeks that followed, the migrants were welcomed by the Baobab Center in via Cupa, a few meters away from Tiburtina Station, with a canteen capable of preparing over two hundred meals. Spontaneously, Baobab becomes within a few days the only center in Europe self-managed by migrants and non-migrants, able to accommodate about four hundred people every day, including several children.

The response of the district and, more generally, of Rome, is surprising: many pass through Cupa every day to offer their contribution, who bring clothes, games or something to eat, who to give time.

At the end of 2015, while the first cold, the evictions begin. To continue to nurture that experience of self-management and solidarity from below that has spread throughout the city the association Baobab experience was created, which in 2016 is to manage thousands of “transit migrants” (i.e. destined mostly in countries of Northern Europe, in Germany or in any case in cities other than Rome), within the center of via Cupa. The group of volunteers in Baobab, different in age and political and cultural sensitivity, despite the lack of an office and funds, continues to give a dignified welcome, supported by medical and legal associations and the network established with different social realities and individual citizens. Self-management from the bottom concerns the psychological support, health care, legal assistance, clothes, food, but also moments of culture and entertainment.

17,311 names

Successful and participated was also the initiative of the three days of meetings and festival, “Thinking Migrant” promoted by Baobab in May 2017. The most awaited event was that with Cédric Herrou, the peasant who disobeyed French laws by hosting hundreds of refugees in his home, just after the border with Ventimiglia: with Baobab he talked of criminalization of solidarity and civil disobedience.

In the summer of 2017, in a few weeks, Baobab also collects 17,311 signatures for an appeal. 17,311 names, as many as the people who died at sea since 2015, according to figures from the International Organization for Migration: women, men and children to whom Europe does not guarantee in fact salvation and rights.

Nobody would have imagined that in Rome a group of citizens could house forty thousand “transit migrants” in a year two steps away from Tiburtina train station.
Dying of the ‘non-emergency’ drugs

The Abel Group you founded has had its main and original engagement fronts in the issues of drug addiction, but also of prison and child issues and prostitution. Half a century on, the problems that many young people, seem to be the same. With one, fundamental difference: today we talk a lot less, media and politics are much more inattentive. Is that so?

Undoubtedly the phenomenon of the use of drugs in Italy - but the question applies in general - has never disappeared: it has perhaps changed in the methods of recruitment and in the type of substance consumed, but has seen a substantial continuity.

Fortunately, it has become less lethal, after the peaks of the eighties and nineties: from 470 deaths in 1999 it progressively dropped to 280 in 2005, to 154 in 2010 to 101 in 2015 and to 266 in 2016. But if we look at European figures, where the trend of growth is more marked, the drama of the problem is even greater: in 2015 the dead were 8,441, increasing for the third year in a row. So people still die, but this is no longer news.

Drugs are no longer an emergency, not least because recruitment and even trafficking have become less visible, less on the road, less directly connected to petty crime phenomena, at least in common perception. The question of drugs, in short, seems normalized. Yet, it continues to be heavily penalized. Suffice it to look at the latest figures: in 2016, the number of people reported to the prefectures for illicit drug consumption increased again: from 27,718 to 32,687, with an increase of minors (+ 237.15%), which should worry and make us asking questions.

Since 1990, the year in which the iervolino-Vassalli law came into force, there have been 1,164,158 people reported for possession of...
drugs for personal use, of which 72.57% for derivatives of cannabis. By 31 December 2016, 17,733 people were detained for violating article 73, which punishes the production, trafficking and possession of illicit drugs, to which we have to add 5,868 people detained for art. 74, i.e. association aimed at illicit trafficking.

Almost half of the inmates are in prison for violating the drug law. Numbers that should make us think, that speak of crowded courts and overcrowded cells. Especially since we are talking about mostly consumers and small dealers, not big traffickers. Of the 54,653 inmates, 14,157 are drug addicts, 25.9% of the total!

Meanwhile, the great business of Italian and international mafias continues almost undisturbed, ending up also polluting the legal economy: we think that, according to a conservative estimate, in 2013 the value of the illicit drug economy: we think that, according to a conservative estimate, in 2013 the value of the illicit drug trade amounted to 24 billion of Euro. This is a real emergency, which requires comprehensive strategies at supranational level, and not just at repressive level. Just as it is necessary to invest on the educational and cultural level within schools, families, places of youth aggregation. And by giving back the due support to networks of communities and associations that have been forgotten for too long.

Another historical front of the Abel Group, and yours as well, since you were the first president of LILIA, was that of AIDS, which exploded in the early eighties. Another problem hidden and removed today? As for addictions, social and institutional attention has long been turned off even on AIDS, and guiltily. We have moved from the alarmism of thirty years ago, often mishandled and translated into messages that have alienated people on the basis of drug use or sexual inclination, to the silence and disinterest of today.

Of course, mortality, thanks to the latest generation of drugs, has drastically been reduced. But the need for serious and scientific information on risky behavior, on health education, on targeted and effective prevention also seems to have been turned off. Sexually transmitted infections are prevalent today; however, we need to know that these sometimes lead to irresponsible behavior influenced by the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol, which brings us back to the educational dimension and to information, not of the summary and terrorist type, but serious and calibrated to the targets, youth and non-youth, we work on.

Consider then - as said above - that the return, still limited, of intravenous heroin, would require to not weaken the services of risk reduction and damage that have contributed so much to curb the HIV epidemic, health care to protect not only those who take drugs, but the whole population. Instead we see, in the last Annual Report to the Parliament on Drug Addiction in 2017, that what should be considered the “fourth pillar” of drug policy, damage reduction, has disappeared.

Just as it should be remembered that the three-year conference on drugs, required by the law, has not been convened for eight years: a serious non-compliance that the associations plan to expose even through the judicial authorities.

Drugs issue has ceased to be a media “emergency” and the subject of securitization campaigns also because it has become a “normalized” phenomenon, no longer concerning only or mainly weak and marginal sectors and social figures.

Dependency is the result of an interweaving of different factors: personal fragility, specific effects of the substance, context that determines or facilitates its use. Today consumption is concentrated mainly on three substances: alcohol, tobacco and, as we said, cannabis. Only a minority of consumers take on others, and of this only a part becomes dependent and polypendent.

This is the photography, which suggests that it is improper, today more than yesterday, to read the phenomenon of consumption only through the categories of social unease and individual vulnerability. It can be so in the case of heroin, as its abuse continues to be the result almost always of difficult stories, rough biographies, episodes of suffering, violence, abandonment, material, educational and cultural poverty.

In short, there is an undoubted standardization of consumption, an adaptation to the context, which, however, obviously does not justify carelessness of people and problems that even a “socially compatible” consumption produces, much less it justifies the exclusive use of criminal measure when the consumption goes out of the “ranks” and, through episodes of petty crime, causes social alarm.

So what we have to do, or what we should do? We must give centrality - and allocate resources - to prevention that, especially in these years of economic crisis, has been the main victim of cuts in health and social spending. Some services have been closed and others downsized in their activities.

We know that education has long been in difficult conditions, including with precarious teachers and inadequate or falling down buildings.

Again, it is primarily a cultural problem of awareness and foresight. Prevention is not just for fragile people and their families but for the whole community: prevention means co-responsibility, knowing that your problem is also mine.

It means welcome, recognition, commitment for the common good.
As you point out in your reports, there is one group of interests that have benefited from the refugee crisis, and in particular from the European Union’s investment in ‘securing’ its borders. They are the military and security companies that provide the equipment to border guards, the surveillance technology to monitor frontiers, and the IT infrastructure to track population movements. How much money are we talking about?

It’s hard to determine exact amounts spend on border security and how much the industry is profiting from this. The Overseas Development Institute, a British think tank, in September 2016 made a “conservative estimate [...] that at the very least, €1.7 billion was committed to measures inside Europe from 2014 to 2016 in an effort to reduce [migration] flows”, adding that this “presents only a partial picture of the true cost.” Furthermore “in an attempt to deter refugees from setting off on their journeys”, “since December 2014 €15.3 billion has been spent” in third countries. Again, “a very conservative estimate.” Not all of this is spend on products and services provided by the military and security industry of course. The global border security market has been estimated to be worth €16.7 billion in 2016, by consultancy company Visiongain. Market Research Future predicts this market to grow at a rate of 8% per year until 2021.

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Can you name some of these groups and which services they provide? In my research I identified five companies as the biggest players in Europe’s border security complex. They all provide a spec-
trum of arms, technologies and services. Airbus is a pan-European company, head-quartered in the Netherlands, which produces mainly helicopters and communication technology for border security. It delivered complete border security systems to Romania and Saudi-Arabia, for example.

Leonardo-Finmeccanica is an Italian company, also primarily on the border security market with helicopters. Many EU countries, including Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy and Malta, bought those helicopters with EU funding. Thales and Safran are both from France. Thales produces integrated border security systems, combining things like optronics, sensors and communication networks. It also has radar and ID-management systems on its products list. Safran focuses on biometric identification systems, through its subsidiary Morpho.

Indra is a Spanish technology and consulting firm. It produces border security systems, with maritime traffic control, monitoring and surveillance. Its Integrated System for Surveillance (SIVE) was sold to Spain, Portugal, Latvia and Romania. Indra also sells biometrics-based border control systems.

There is a close link between those providing borders security and their trade in arms especially to the Middle East and North Africa. Can you expand on this? Is the arms business booming?

It’s really cynical to see that the same industry that wins the border security contracts, the same companies that profit from trying to stop refugees coming to Europe, is also fueling the refugee tragedy by selling the equipment for the wars, repression and human rights abuses that force people to flee. During the last decade EU member states have granted over 80 billion euros of arms export licenses to the Middle East and North Africa.

The border security market is only a small part of the total global market for the military and security industry. So the growth in this field alone doesn’t make the arms business ‘boom’, but it does add to other developments that give this industry good prospects.

What is your assessment on the European Union policy on migration? Can you exemplify how this policy is one of militarisation? (FRONTEX, Sophia mission etc)

EU policy on migration is on a steady course of boosting and militarising border security, next to increasingly pressuring third countries in acting as border security outposts and in accepting deported refugees.

You claim in your report that “The arms and security industry has successfully captured the 316 million euros funding provided for research in security issues”, can you expand on this and how will this be a real calamity for the future?

This story is larger than just border security, although that has always played an important role in it. Originally security was not a part of the seven years ‘Framework Programmes’, the most important vehicle for EU funding for research and development. In 2003 the European Commission initiated a so-called Group of Personalities on Security Research.

This group included representatives from eight leading military and technology companies as well as from some military and security research institutions. They, of course, advised the EU to start funding security research, to “bridge the gap between civil and traditional defence research”. Since then security research has been incorporated in these Framework Programmes.

Military and security companies, notably the ones that were represented in the Group of Personalities and later advisory boards, such as Airbus and Leonardo-Finmeccanica, were the big winners of this. With some new projects in the current Framework Program, the so-called Horizon 2020, the EU has now spent over 350 million euros on research projects in the field of border security.

Through all of this the industry has been advocating for funding for outright military research as well. It used border security research projects as a stepping stone, putting it forward as examples that already blur or cross the line between (civilian) security and military research. Now the EU has decided, again on the advice of a Group of Personalities which was dominated by representatives of military companies and research institutions, that military research will also be funded from 2021 on. Some smaller pilot projects have already started.

Its influence in shaping the funding policies on security and military research serves as perhaps the clearest example of the successful lobbying of the military and security industry on EU level.

Do you see any group or party within Europe actually standing out and counter this policy? Any alternative discourse and proposal about how to face a reality, migration, which is something we are mostly responsible for?

There’s a lot of criticism of Europe’s migration policies.

What should Europe do to show it is putting lives first?

It should immediately quit the policy and practice of trying to keep refugees out, especially the use of military means for this. Instead, it should provide safe passages for refugees and welcome them to Europe.

Next to that, it should start to work on eliminating the drivers for forced migration. Important steps in this context would be to establish and maintain an embargo on arms sales to the Middle East and North Africa and to end military involvement in this region, changing to a focus on diplomacy, support for democratic opposition forces, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

But it has to go further than that, there’s got to be a fundamental shift in the relation between Europe, or more general the West, and the rest of the world.
Agreement with Canada: an unimaginable convergence until a few months ago has brought together CGIL, Coldiretti, the TTIP Italy Stop Campaign and many realities in a demonstration against CETA in front of Montecitorio: what do you think and which are the consequences? The CETA affair is emblematic of how concrete facts can change consolidated orientations, even to the extent of bringing different political cultures closer together.

The EU agenda on international trade, the political approach that particularly the Commission and the European Union have given in recent years to the issues of international trade, are bringing to light contradictions and possible negative consequences of an idea of trade inspired only and exclusively by the profit of large multinational companies, an approach certainly not based on the size of Italian companies, especially those in the agricultural sector, food and quality food production.

What happened for CETA, therefore, could also occur on other hypotheses of international trade agreements, considering that the European Union is discussing a lot about these. I therefore believe that it can strengthen a collaboration, a relationship between different organizations, but that on the ground of concrete things discover they have common goals and convergent evaluations.

Donald Trump has paradoxically been the movements best ally on the TTIP, but something is wrong. What is questionable in his “America First” agenda, especially for American workers?

From the point of view of trade union and the world of work in America, I think above all about

For a dignified and quality job

what our friends and colleagues of the American AFL-CIO are telling us: Trump is the biggest cheat American workers could have imagined. He relied on the fears of the middle class with respect to the consequences of the crisis, the risk of closure of factories, the process of relocation that this unregulated globalization has partly produced, causing an impoverishment of average and medium-low incomes. Objectively a situation of great uncertainty as well as loss of hope in the future for the American middle class on which Trump focused, using this (real) condition to achieve a great collective mistake.

Most American workers voted for Trump, a person who does not allow the workers of his own holding to join the union, making the most of the opportunities offered by American legislation (which discourages the freedom of union association and hinders the attempt of American unions to enter companies), in a country that has never ratified many of the most important conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO), such as the one on the right to collective bargaining, union representation, the right to strike. In short, he leveraged a situation to exploit society’s fears and insecurities for his own benefit. From the point of view of International trade, his approach is totally nationalistic, but he does not stand up to the dynamics of the global economy: in the economy of today an isolation or a retreat to a self-sufficient condition of the United States is unthinkable and it is not even desired by the big companies and by the economic subjects to which he says he is referring to.

In truth, Trump’s strategy seems to be more a sort of “French fury, Spanish retreat”, which risks to not changing anything. Enough is to think about the possible resumption of a TTIP negotiation, bent this time to the needs of American companies. “America First”, “work must return to America”, are in truth slogans that clash with the reality of the facts.

**Sustainable economy is not only fair international trade, but also decent and just working conditions: how is developing the path on multinationals and human rights that you are following at an international level?**

CGIL has long been attentive to this dimension: there are working groups that actively work both in the context of the International Trade Union Confederation (CSCI) and in the relations between this global level and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). The work of the future and of present time cannot be poor or without quality, unless it is decided that growth should be linked to an ever increasing exploitation of the world of work.

The near future, characterized by programs like Industry 4.0, by a growing digitisation, by a new imminent technological and industrial revolution, by the total or partial replacement of human labor with machines or robots, cannot and must not be based on precarious, exploited, low-paid and without rights work. There is an elaboration on all this, which we share very much, on the part of the United Nations, of the International Labor Organization, where the workers’ representation plays an essential and stimulating role, of prodding the governments and the business representations.

And all this is even more necessary today, that we live in a precarious, atomised world of work even in the countries that should be defined as advanced.

The attack on the right to strike in Europe is once again very strong, so we are discussing a great idea for the future, but in a present context where these rights are attacked and often also denied.

Most American workers voted for Trump, a man who doesn’t allow to his own workers to join the union.
In recent years there is the clear perception that we reached a turning point, almost an epochal shift, at European and Italian level, a surge of xenophobic and racist positions, and of consensus around them, while at the same time, a decline in the culture of human rights itself. Do you agree with this assessment?

For about a decade racism has been ‘cleared’. First there was the classic phrase, “I’m not a racist, but...”, somehow an attempt to keep a moral distance from racism, which was still perceived as evil.

Today, after about a decade, racism has been ‘cleared’, that sentence has lost the “not and the but”, becoming “I am racist, therefore...”. In short, racism and xenophobia have become legitimate. This is a trend that sees an important role of social media, but not only them. It is a semantic change that has something very profound behind it, a change in Italian society and, more generally, in Europe: let’s not forget what for years happened at underground level in countries of Northern Europe, Holland, Denmark, where everything seemed accepted and governed, and in fact an openly racist turn has occurred.

You date this racist turn to ten years ago, why? Because it is then that the prodromes of what we can call the crisis of multiculturalism become evident. The first signs are the effects of the 11 September 2001 attacks, which call into question the political, cultural and social climate that had characterized European societies up to then, of a widespread multicultural approach. First of all, it is the model of multicultural city, the model of social and cultural cohesions that had characterized European societies up to then, of a widespread multicultural approach. First of all, it is the model of multicultural city, the model of social and cultural cohesions that had characterized European societies up to then, of a widespread multicultural approach. First of all, it is the model of multicultural city, the model of social and cultural cohesions that had characterized European societies up to then, of a widespread multicultural approach. First of all, it is the model of multicultural city, the model of social and cultural cohesions that had characterized European societies up to then, of a widespread multicultural approach.

The refugee crisis of 2015 and 2016 has only given rise to a trend that had been underway for some time, making hate speeches that had been hatching for years more pervasive and widespread.
Today it has become legitimate to speak openly against foreigners, whatever the form its difference manifests itself socially. It is clear that this has to do with the political system: it is not from today that we have political parties, such as those of the Italian and European right, which have continuously promoted a racist discourse with all the tools of anti-immigration, anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic propaganda. Let us not forget how much violence there has been in the last decade as to the islamophobic discourse, in which Islam is seen not only as the “external enemy” but also as the “internal” one.

Many observers of these phenomena highlight the relationship between progressive impoverishment and greater social insecurity of some groups of native Europeans and the new racist wave. How do you assess this link?

It is an important aspect, but not in the sense of a simple, direct and univocal relation between the two phenomena, rather according to a complex map, which has different declinations at local, political and cultural level. Of course, the global crisis has been a determining factor, especially in the classes most exposed to its consequences, the most popular, low and medium-low, who have lived and experienced social resentment that finds its recipients in refugees and migrants; a strong social resentment which was then artfully fed by electoral consent, but which found in these indigenous Italian groups, socially vulnerable and deprived, a very fertile humus. We have seen this, for example, in the suburbs of Rome, where racist incidents took place, but are first of all a symptom of a profound discomfort that ends up identifying the migrant as guilty of all the evils affecting these sections of the population weakened by the crisis. So a link is there, even if I believe that to theorize a war among poor is an oversimplification, perhaps we can speak of war between the penultimate and the last of the social hierarchy.

But it must be said - and it is strange that we talk and discuss so little about this - that these groups of Italians share, for example, the same housing situation, and even the same levels of exclusion lived by many migrant families, and precisely because they share this they try to distance or differentiate themselves, blaming foreigners for their discomfort. The fact is that this social resentment does not translate into a struggle to claim rights, nor is there a political force that reads it and interprets it as such. Instead there is a fragmentation, and within this fragmentation the sharing of violated rights in the workplace or the neighbourhood, gives way to competition and with it to racism.

After the famous glorious thirty years and the end of the great narratives, we find ourselves in a society where there is no longer a political practice that knows how to create collective strategies, and this is a crucial factor when analysing what is happening.

The scenario we live in depends also on the collapse of the role of politics, in short, of its failure ...

It does. When we talk about the failure of multiculturalism and the legitimacy of xenophobia we talk about the failure of politics and above all of left politics. The left has not been able to unify, around a strategy of movement, the claim for fundamental rights which, coincidentally, concern both the penultimate and the last. Without a political project and a social perspective, what wins is resentment and fragmentation. It is not an Italian problem, it is an European problem: the so called “post-democratic condition”.

The point is there.

For the suburbs, the risk of getting to a break of the scenario we live in depends also on the collapse of the role of politics, in short, of its failure ...

In Italy, to date, there are no traces, not even in the urban suburbs, of a similar identity process due to exclusion, comparable to that of the Paris suburbs; but it is obvious that if in the big cities, above all, there is no short-term activity for social inclusion and integration policies, the risk is that we can find ourselves in situations of social conflict similar to the French, Belgian or English ones.

We are in a transition phase, today we do not perceive a risk in the suburbs like in France, but if we continue to not intervene and not produce effective policies on the quality of living, on services, and do not design a different role for the suburbs, the risk of getting to a breaking point is there.
Ten years ago the subprime mortgage crisis broke out in the United States. From a global financial point of view, have we finally emerged from it, as many international organizations claim?

From that crisis we probably have. But we must understand the use of words. If emerging from the crisis means a return to the growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), we have emerged from the crisis that broke out 10 years ago. If it means overcoming pre-crisis GDP levels, Italy is not yet out of that crisis. The same applies to investments, which in our country have experienced a real collapse. Italy is one of the countries that has suffered the most from this crisis.

A more general discussion should be made. Post-crisis recovery rates are very disappointing in all the advanced capitalist countries: even in the face of exceptionally expansive monetary policies, both in the United States and in Japan as well as in the European Union, post-crisis average growth has been very low, much lower than that following previous crises. So much so that some US scholars have begun to speak of “secular stagnation”, that is, condemnation to very low growth rates over a long period of time, as a hypothesis for the near and less near future. In my opinion this situation can be explained in a very simple way: in 2007 a development model - based on finance and on debt (private in particular) - that supported (but we should say “drugged”) the growth from the ’80s onwards. The world establishment has not been able to resign itself to the end of that model, and has tried in every way to put it back on its feet.

But this is an attempt destined to have rising costs and falling yields: as evidenced by the fact that increasingly large quantities of liquidity introduced by central banks into the system have resulted in very modest economic growth rates. Moreover, the benefits of these liquidity injections were distributed in a very unfair manner: much went to earners of financial income, very little to labor. Finally, the risks deriving from the repetition of that model are evident: creation of new financial bubbles and consequent...
The crisis spread to Europe in a short time. And it was dealt with in a different and not univocal way by the continental institutions and by the governments of the various countries. In Italy it was first denied, then came the famous ECB letter that imposed draconian measures and reforms. Austerity was the common denominator. Today can we make a balance of the measures and policies taken in those years? This balance is a failure. In particular for our country. And not so much because it was dealt with late, but because it was tackled with the wrong measures. In particular, the draconian measures requested by the ECB (which gave us a practical example of what the independence of the central bank from governments means: it means that governments depend on the central bank), and then implemented by the Monti government, have been pro-cyclical measures: not only did the State not intervene with public spending to give some breath with investments to aggregate demand, which had fallen due to the collapse of private demand; it did worse: it made a budget squeeze, reducing investments, cutting pensions (Fornero law) and increasing taxes.

Allow me a personal note: in December 2011, in the newly installed Monti government, I finished writing the first edition of Titanic Europa, a book dedicated to the history of the crisis. In that book I was very critical of the maneuvers announced by the Monti government, predicting a dramatic drop in domestic demand and consumption, with the result of a compression, also very pronounced, of the gross domestic product. And I added: “It is hardly necessary to repeat that the decline in our country’s gross domestic product will worsen the debt-to-GDP ratio and therefore will make Italy take another step into the Greek tunnel” (Titanic Europa. La crisis che non ci hanno raccontato, first ed. January 2012, pp. 107 and 108).

Unfortunately, it went exactly like this: during the Monti government the crisis deepened, the economic recovery has turned into another severe decline in gross domestic product, three quarters of all industrial production lost in these years of crisis have been destroyed and, last but not least, the debt has grown. By 13 percent, to be precise. Austerity has transformed an already serious crisis into the worst crisis in times of peace by the unification of Italy. Here there are serious responsibilities both at European level and at our country level.

The institutions that run the European Union, and in particular the eurozone, have the responsibility to have first made the Greek crisis explode (which would have been manageable with much lower costs if addressed in time) thus creating a domino effect that struck many countries in the eurozone, then to have imposed on these countries meaningless measures of public finances, which have only exacerbated the crisis, simultaneously transferring the weight from banks (in particular French and German banks) to European taxpayers (in fact loans to Greece of the European Stability Mechanism - the so-called ESM - have allowed those banks to bring their loans back home without too much damage).

As for our governments, they have the grave guilt of having accepted an unacceptable blackmail: pro-cyclical and counter-productive policies in exchange for possible intervention by the ECB in the rescue of government bonds at risk of speculation. This blackmail should have been sent back to the sender.

Will the much-vaunted growth prospects affect employment and wages? At the moment our growth is linked in particular to the world cycle, which drives our exports. Some benefits in terms of employment will be seen, but we must not forget that, ten years after the beginning of this crisis, we are still 1.1 billion hours worked less than then: a figure that corresponds to a 5 percent less of employed people.

As for wages, it is very difficult for them to grow up in a context in which everything has been tried to weaken the negotiating power of workers (see the Jobs Act). It’s very difficult to see salaries growing in a context in which everything has been tried to weaken the negotiating power of workers (see the Jobs Act).
REPORT ON GLOBAL RIGHTS

The image shows a group of people sitting on the roof of a car at night, carrying various items. The scene appears to be part of a report on global rights.
INTERVIEWEES’ BIOGRAPHIES

Luigi Ciotti: born in 1945 is the promoter of the group of social commitment that takes the name of “Gruppo Abele”. In 1972 he was ordained a priest and in 1974 he opened the first reception community. In 1982 he contributed to the establishment of the National Coordination of the Reception Communities. In 1986 he committed himself to the foundation of the Italian League for the Fight against AIDS (LILA). In 1995 he founded “Libera”, a reference point of over 160 organizations committed against mafias, corruption and social justice, with branches in Europe and the world. A journalist, since 1998 he has written about “La Stampa”, “Avvenire”, “La Repubblica”, “Il manifesto”, “Famiglia Cristiana”. Among his latest books, La speranza non è in vendita (Giunti, 2011), Un prêtre contre la mafia (Bayard, 2015), L’eresia della verità (Edizioni Gruppo Abele, 2016) He received several honorary degrees: on July 1st 1998 from the University of Bologna, in Educational Sciences; on June 15th, 2006 from the University of Foggia, in Jurisprudence; December 4, 2014 from the University of Milan, in Communications Sciences.

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Roberto Ciccarelli: Journalist, works on philosophical and politica-juridical issues. He is a researcher in various Italian universities, such as Napoli orientale, Salerno, Roma Tre, Genova. He has written on law and politics in Spinoza (Potenza e beatitudine. Il diritto nel pensiero di Baruch Spinoza, Carocci, 2003 and immanenza e politica in Spinoza, Aracne, 2006), history of citizenship in the marxist tradition (Introduzione critica, Aracne, 2005). Publications: Immanenza, Filosofia, diritto e politica della vita dal XIX al XX secolo, The Mulino, 2008); Il Quinto Stato. Perché il lavoro indipendente è il nostro futuro. Precari, autonomi, free lance per una nuova società (with Giuseppe Allegri, Ponte alle Grazie editore, 2013); La furia dei cervelli (with Giuseppe Allegri, Manifestolibri, 2011).

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Susanna Ronconi: works on training, supervision and assessment in the social policies field, services to people and work with local communities, in particular adiction and health promotion. An expert in self-help methods, peer support and peer education and on the approach to individual and community empowerment. She does social research through the autobiogra phy collaboration. She is member of the Scientific Committee of Forum Droghie. Since 2016 she is the Italian delegate to the Civil Society Forum on Drugs, European Commission. In 2008-2009 she coordinated the research “in precario equilibrio. Vulnerabilità sociali e rischio povertà”, by Osservatorio delle povertà and of the risorse Cari tas diocesana Torino (Edizioni Gruppo Abele, 2009). In 2010 she signed the research La percezione dei consumatori di cocaina circa l’uso controllato e incontrollato–Una ricerca qualitativa to Torino, published in: Cocaina. Luso controllato (editor Grazia Zuffa, Edizioni Gruppo Abele, 2010). In 2011 she edited Molti modi di essere uniche – Percorsi di scrittura di sé per re-invenire l’età matura (with Barbara Mapelli e Lucia Portis, Stripes edizioni).

Sergio Segio: he devised the Report on Global Rights he also coordinates. He worked with Fab bri Rizzoli-Grandi Opere. In 1991 and 1992 was responsible of the desk of the magazine of crimi nology studies “De delitti e delle pene”, edited by Alessandro Baratta. In the ‘90s he promoted and edited the monthly magazines “Narcomafie” e “Fuoriluogo”. Between 1997 and 2001 he devised and edited for Gruppo Abele the volumes of Annuario sociale (Feltrinelli editor). In 2001 he promoted the online news agency “Testimoni di Genova”. He worked on the collective books: Scuola e carcer – Educazione, organizzazione e processi comunicativi (2001, editor Renata Mancuso, Franco Angeli), La Bibbia dei non credenti (2002, editor Francesco Antonioli, Piemme). Since 2003 is director of the Association Società Informazione ONLUS, for which he devised and edited the Report on Global Rights. In 2005 he published Miccia corta (Deriveaprod editori); in 2006 Una via in Prima Linea (Rizzoli). Co-author of Rapporto sullo stato del diritti in Italia Lampedusa non è un’isola (A bono diritto, 2012). Author of the theater pieces Dormono, dormono sulla collina (2008) and Last minute – Cronache dal mondo diseguale (2009). He promoted and is editor of the websites www.dirittiglobali.it, www.globalrights.info. Since 2015, with Orsola Casagrande, founded and directed the online magazine “Global Rights”. He collaborates with il Museo della Memoria Carceraria, for which he devised and made the website www.museodellammemoria-carceraria.it. He has collaborated with the daily “la Repubblica” and is an editorialist of “Vita”. He works for over 20 years with Gruppo Abele. Member of the national board of Nessuno tocchi Caino, he is among the founders of the association UPRE ROMA.

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