



Closing document

Unanimous proposal of the political committee

The XXIII national Fiom Congress takes on board the result of the members' vote. Their opinion defines the basic objectives and the political mandate of the organisation. The Congress adopts the operational guidelines and the proposals contained in the introductory paper. This being so, the XXIII Congress adopts the following guidelines, in order to translate into facts the united management of Fiom, while respecting the different internal positions:

1. Fighting for peace and against war remains a priority for the whole organisation. Mobilisation for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq and for the end of the military occupation of that country must go on, and must involve workers more and more. The decision to drag Italy into war is the most serious responsibility of the current government. This patent violation of article 11 of the Constitution constitutes an attack on the very basis of our Republic, that must be remedied. This is why Fiom, who has been an active member of the peace movement and said no to the wars in Kosovo and in Afghanistan, continues to fight to restore constitutional legality. Fiom rejects the policy of the current US administration that, with its pre-emptive war practice stretched to the extreme violation of human rights with the torture of Iraqi prisoners, has jeopardised international legality and undermined the role of the United Nations. Terrorism is the enemy of workers, democracy and the liberation of peoples, but waging war is not the way to fight it, quite the contrary, it ends up fomenting it. Rejection of war, refusal and condemnation of all forms of terrorism, are an integral part of the identity of Fiom, as is solidarity towards the victims as well. The peace initiative as well as the battle for human rights, for the respect of international law and of all peoples' right to make their own choices autonomously are and will always be the founding element of the metalworkers' actions. Our commitment to peace also means taking part in the mobilization to put an end to the many forgotten wars that deny peoples their rights and freedoms and destroy millions of lives in Asia, Africa and Latin America; this therefore means continuing to take part in the main global anti-liberalistic movements fighting for the establishment of different relations between North and South based on social justice and a global redistribution of wealth. This is why Fiom also deems it necessary to build an international trade union movement based on solidarity and the quest for alternative economic and social choices.

International and human rights are constantly violated by the Israeli army in the occupied Palestinian territories, when it besieges villages, bombs civilians, perpetrates political assassinations, builds the "separation" wall and annexes further territories, despite the condemnation of the United Nations Assembly. The Palestinian people has a right to live in an independent state, along side the state of Israel, under conditions of peace and security for both. Fiom rejects and condemns the terrorist suicide attempts that strike Israeli civilians and that produce defenceless victims thus seriously damaging the Palestinian people's struggle and

the Israeli movement for peace. Fiom condemns the Israeli government's policy and supports the request to send an international interposition force to protect the civilian population and to put an end to a policy that threatens the entire Middle-East and the international situation as a whole.

2. The enlargement of the European Union strongly affirms the need to assert the democratic and social principles of the European model throughout the continent. The European constitution must include a formal rejection of war as a solution to international controversies. All the democratic powers of the Union must be strengthened by ensuring that European citizens have power over their institutions. The European social model must be defended and developed as an alternative to the "American" one and therefore full sovereignty over economic policy must be given back to the democratic institutions, at all levels. This being the basis, in order to foster a socially fair growth in the whole of Europe, the parameters and the rules of Maastricht must be revised. A new Maastricht must be defined with the introduction of social and development parameters that bind government policies and that are aimed at supporting the growth and the extension of the European social model. This is another reason why it is necessary to build a true, strong and democratic European trade union movement.

3. The industrial and economic crisis of the country that has dramatic repercussions in particular in areas with a more frail development, the Mezzogiorno above all, has been worsened by the liberalistic, authoritarian and also inconclusive political choices made by the government. Fiom considers it indispensable to react to all this with a general mobilisation aimed at changing radically the course of economic policy, at safeguarding industry and employment and at developing the Mezzogiorno.

Indeed what is necessary is a rapid change in the basic guidelines that govern the economy and therefore the disastrous measures, in force or planned by the Berlusconi government must be rejected. We must fight off the tax counter-reform, halt the school counter-reform, reject the delegation of power for pension issues, fail federalism that challenges the unity of our country while also increasing costs and patronage in the management of public bodies. On the contrary a drastic change in industrial policy is needed in order to favour investment in quality and research. The large industrial groups must be saved and social expenditure must be revisited and increased. To counter the drop in purchasing power and the reduction in the share of national income spent on employment issues, wealth must be redistributed and directed towards employment and pensions through appropriate social and tax policies. On this basis and with this aim, Fiom asks the confederations to quickly plan a general strike of all sectors, whose immediate objective will be to call into question the economic choices of the government.

4. Fiom is working hard to thwart and prevent the consolidation of this right wing government's legislation governing employment and workers' rights. Negotiations must therefore be conducted, the objective being the non-application of the laws passed by the government that govern the labour market, working hours and immigration. At the same time Fiom reiterates the request it made to the opposition political forces to include in their priority programs the total abrogation of Law 30 and of the Bossi-Fini Law, as well as of all forms of harassment and reduction of immigrants' rights. Similarly Fiom asks that the Law on trade union representation and democracy be passed.

5. Fiom is committed to achieving the broadest mobilisation of its sector in defence of the industrial system and employment. The priority is to defend what is left of the system of large corporations in Italy, starting with Fiat, and here our full support goes to the struggle underway in Turin and in all the other industrial plants of the group. All strategic sectors and large corporations must be safeguarded while the average company size must be increased thanks to investments and appropriate industrial policies. Policies that foster investments in the industrial sector must also tackle the issue of environmental compatibility. What is needed is an investment project that makes industrial businesses compatible with the territory, the environment and with the health of the citizens. This project must improve the industrial system and prevent degradation and re-localisation in countries to be exploited and devastated from the point of view of rights and environment. Control over multinational policies and fighting against industrial delocalisation is an integral part of safeguarding the development of the industrial system, and here it is indispensable to retain sectors that have a strong social impact, such as transport and energy. Fiom says no to Finmeccanica concentrating only on the

military sector and to the sale of its non-military activities and for the same reasons, Fiom says no to the privatisation of Fincantieri. On the contrary, it is necessary to increase public intervention in the industrial sector as the other European governments are doing, France and Germany in the lead. To this end, Fiom has decided to see whether Fim and Uilm are willing to initiate a true industrial dispute with Finmeccanica and the government. The market is unable to defend the industrial setup alone and therefore what is needed is interventions at various levels of industrial policy aimed at guaranteeing the defence and the development of the Italian industrial system. In order to achieve this aim, what is needed is a new networks and infrastructure policy that, following the unsuccessful privatisation experiences, brings the major networks, from energy to telecommunications, under the responsibility and the control of public institutions. This is necessary also to define clear guidelines for the policy governing investments in these strategic sectors. Banks and the financial system must be made answerable for the industrial restructuring processes. The financial system already has a decisive say in the choices made by the industrial system. All possible speculation must be avoided, the weight of finance on companies requires a change in the responsibility shouldered by all the financial actors. They must be made directly accountable for the restructuring programmes and they must be involved in confrontations with trade union organisations.

Further job cuts, plant closures and lay-offs must be avoided. Fiom's suggestion to the other metalworkers' trade union organisations is to hold a metalworkers' day for the defence and the development of the industrial system, for development in the Mezzogiorno and for the growth of employment.

6. The major battles in the Mezzogiorno plants, from Termini Merese to Melfi, are a fundamental sign for the category and for the country as a whole. The workers and the population of the South refuse rights and wage restrictions, they want a development that is based on equality and on the same social conditions enjoyed in the richer parts of the Country. The enormous value of these battles lies precisely in the fact that they refuse to play the right to work against workers' rights. Thus Fiom is committed to always insisting on the growth of the Mezzogiorno being a fundamental factor for the development of the Country. This is why Fiom decided to implement the industrial and economic policies that have been gradually developed by the organisation and the movements fighting for rights and employment that have developed in the Mezzogiorno.

7. The main battle being waged by Fiom is to re-conquer the national Contract and wider bargaining powers in the work place. Fiom will not give up striving for a contract covering working conditions and wages that overcomes the damage done by separate agreements. This indefeasible objective is now being pursued thanks to a series of measures and battles, but it remains the fundamental point for the action of this sector. Extending and intensifying action for pre-contracts, developing well-structured negotiations, renewing the contractual biennium may all be fundamental steps towards reaching the central objective. This structured strategy to re-conquer the Contract is what the whole next stage will be focused on until a new national contract covering working conditions and wages is achieved, which meets with the approval of all workers and represents the repair of breaks and damage of the past. As for the next contractual biennium, Fiom has set itself the objective of recovering the considerable loss in workers purchasing power and increasing wages in real terms.

8. Fiom confirms its choice of democracy as the guiding element in its activities and as a basis for united relations. Fiom takes on board the proposal in the introductory paper, aimed at Fim and Uilm. This proposal is aimed at reconciling the priority accorded by Fim and Uilm to a democracy-based organisation and representation with the fundamental value Fiom attaches to workers' votes. Defining a single course to be followed by all in cases of contractual disputes that would guarantee the workers' right to a referendum, would open up a new phase in relations between the various trade union organisations. In this new phase, which does not cancel out the differences between organisations in matters pertaining to analysis and strategy, Fiom will continue to strive towards conquering a democratic framework within which to govern these differences thus avoiding separate agreements and guaranteeing that workers have the right to decide.

9. Fiom is working on achieving broad negotiations in the work places so that, following the considerable results obtained in Terni, Melfi and with Fincantieri, negotiations and initiatives concerning issues relating to working conditions, wages and labour law become widespread. It

is necessary to give much more space than in the past to questions relating to health and safety at work. This must be achieved with the workers safety Representatives (RIs), by rejecting the government's counter-reform of Law 626. The legal proceedings for the safeguard of workers' health must be strengthened by Fiom being declared aggrieved party in all proceedings involving serious accidents. But, above all, negotiations must be stepped up at the work place, starting with those about working times and paces. In this context, fighting off the introduction of new production models such as Tmc2 and its derivatives, which increase the intensity of the performance to an unbearable extent, eliminating the indispensable physiological breaks, is a decisive element. It is necessary to develop negotiations on working hours and to fight against unruly flexibility. Improving the actual condition of workers at the work place must be one of the main commitments of the organisation, throughout its activities inside companies. As well as this, a new effort must be made and spread through working places to negotiate professionalism and training in order to have an impact on the organisation of work in the company at all levels.

The expansion of negotiations and the emergence of a new generation of trade union militants and leaders are a sign of renewed worker participation. This renewal takes many different forms, even total production stoppages, democratic mobilisations and relations with the population that increase the general value of the workers' battles. Fiom is working, through an ongoing dialogue with the workers, to revise its contractual practice, its organisational choices, its information instruments in order to foster the growth and the dissemination of a new kind of negotiation and battle. In this context, it is necessary to enhance the new participation and the considerable commitment of women to assert their point of view on the contents of these battles and negotiations.

10. Fiom is committed to achieving further unification in the labour world that will overcome the barriers created by differing contractual legislation. This can be done by constructing platforms aimed at concentrating on disputes that concern whole production sites and chains, which, with the consensus of the workers and the workers safety Representatives concerned, build up concrete forms of inter-sectoral action. Priority must be given to efforts made in the contract work sector, starting with the telecommunications sector, in order to involve the whole production chain in the struggle to defend jobs and workers' rights. This experience will then become a concrete way of testing the first achievements of this new trade union movement.

11. Fiom considers these sets of claims, in particular the ones concerning workers' rights and a democratic way of operation, as objectives that are not only the heritage of the metalworkers' organisation, but also a proposal to be put to the whole CGIL and the entire trade union movement. Fundamental issues such as defending and reinforcing the role of the national Contract covering working conditions and wages, fighting the Berlusconi government's labour legislation, ensuring democracy during conflicts, with the workers' right to decide on platforms and agreements through referenda, are not a Fiom peculiarity, but rather a proposal and a project for all workers and for the trade union movement as a whole.

12. Fiom will make all efforts of an organisational nature to strengthen and develop the contractual activity of the organisation, in particular the training and research indications contained in the introductory paper. Fiom decides to develop further the resistance fund, *Cassa di resistenza*, following the proposals made in the introductory paper. To this end, an annual fee of one euro per member is set as a contribution to the fund within the framework of the discussion with the confederation on channelling fees. Extraordinary contributions and all forms of relations with non-members remain unaltered.

The Congress commits the organisation to preparing a project to reorganise the functions of and the relations between the various bodies, starting with the work already carried out by the organisational policy Commission, to be adopted by a central Committee dedicated to organisational issues.