

# Aiò ch'hè ora!

General Assembly of EFA |



*Recapitulative political statement on the main issues discussed in the General Assembly 2016.*

## **Implementing the right to self-determination as a solution to existential questions on the future of Europe.**

The European Free Alliance, European political party created in 1981, that groups more than 45 parties fighting for self-determination of the peoples of Europe, present in 18 Member States of the European Union, held its Annual General Meeting in the city Aiacciu in Corsica from 31 March to 3 April 2016.

This General Assembly was hosted by Partitu di a Nazione Corsa (PNC), founding member of EFA representing the interests of the Corsican nation. PNC joined forces with other nationalist actors in 2010, creating Femu à Corsica. In 2015 they won the Corsican elections joining forces with Corsica Libera. Together they operate under the name "For Corsica- Pè a Corsica". Their slogan was "Come on, It is time! -Aiò ch'hè ora!". The Corsican nation wants an official status for its language, wants recognition for its distinct identity. It assertively claims the right to peace and self-determination, the right to decide on the future of the island. The EFA denounces the centralist-jacobin ignorance of France and calls for Paris to change attitude.

During its General Assembly, the EFA took stock of the progress of self-determination process and defence of peoples and cultures in the European Union, in a context where Anti-European feelings grow and the European des-integration prevails. The institutions of the EU are focused on saving the Euro, Grexit, Brexit, Czexit,... end of Schengen. The EU fails to address the current humanitarian crisis. Thousands of people fleeing war and devastation in Syria are not properly hosted. The EU even starts hollowing out international Conventions on refugees. In the meanwhile terror presents itself more and more at our doorstep. This is a political, humanitarian and social failure of the EU, which causes some to proclaim the end of the EU itself. EFA cannot stand aside while, in times of commemoration of the Great War, the peace project called European Union shipwrecks. While a discourse existed on the evaporation of the nation states, the re-empowering members states push the debate towards the evaporation of the European Union itself. EFA wants a strong Europe but wants #AnotherEUrope!

In Catalonia the years 2015-2017 will be historic, a nation prepares itself for independence, a new State grows to reinforce the European project. In the UK a referendum campaign to stay in the EU will be ran by our 4 member parties underlining their own identity, their support to a wider European co-operation and integration and their attachment to democracy and transparency.

In France as in many centralised member states of the EU, Europe should value the rights of Peoples, Nations and Regions and not just states. EFA opposes to the lack of dialogue from France towards its regions where Paris is even blocking all institutional reforms voted with clear majorities in the Corsican Assemblies and ignores the new reality on the island; where Paris further dilutes the Occitan, Savoyan,

Basque and Catalan regions, refuses to re-unify the 5 historical parts of Brittany and abolishes the Alsatian region; this all very much against Council of Europe charters.

In the UK, our member parties will campaign first for self-determination in the 5<sup>th</sup> of May elections and then on staying in the European Union. A referendum organised on 23 June will be decisive for Europe. Our EFA member parties will campaign to stay in the EU.

EFA denounces that the Spanish central state refuses to acknowledge the principle of self-determination, ignoring and blocking modern democracies that develop within the territory of the Iberian Peninsula; and denounces the Spanish government attitude against peace building and reconciliation in the Basque Country. EFA renews its call to bring political prisoners closer to home.

EFA protests against the way the Italian state continues to hollow out existing autonomy statutes.

EFA worries about Bulgaria and the Greek state, amidst an existential crisis, who continue to discriminate their minorities.

EFA denounces the evolution in Poland towards authoritarian rule. While in Latvia the Russian educational system is under threat. The new government wants to completely abolish all education in the Russian language, this all in an antagonising political climate between Russia and the West.

EFA worries about the lack of active measures in Finland to secure the survival of the Swedish language.

EFA is appalled about the Romanian state fining citizens who took part in an official, democratic and peaceful rally for autonomy.

EFA protests continuing discrimination against minorities in the Slovak republic and centralising tendencies in Austria and the Czech Republic.

EFA continues to focus on the right to self-determination as a universal right as part of human rights. Everywhere in the world, whenever possible, Europe must defend national minorities, the right for peoples to self-determination and the respect for all cultures, identities, languages and all democratic and peaceful political ambitions of all European peoples [from more autonomy to independence]. EFA will exercise its solidarity, more specifically in the European Parliament, with all peoples in their fight for freedom.

#### **Discussions and decisions of the EFA GA:**

- 1] Following the request and proposal of PNC, the **European Free Alliance** decided to hold the 2016 General Assembly in Corsica in order to allow all EFA members to take stock of the new political reality. EFA member parties discover that after Scotland and Catalunya, historic events take place in Corsica. After 50 years of political struggle a truce paved the way to political victory for autonomists and independentists who joined forces December last. This is the moment, in a short mandate till end 2017, to lay the foundations for a situation where the Corsican people take more responsibility into their own hands in order to further shape the Corsican nation and state. EFA supports our member party within the newly created context of cooperation.
- 2] The party Moravané requested EFA for support in important regional elections in October 2016. The new EFA bureau will gather in Brno and an international conference on self-determination will be hosted in the Moravian capital.
- 3] EFA elected a new executive [François Alfonsi, PNC, President; Jordi Solé, ERC, Secretary-General; Lorena Lopez de Lacalle, EA, Treasurer and 9 Vice-Presidents] that in the upcoming mandate of 3 years aims to reinforce EFA as THE only European political party for self-determination. After the conclusion of an ongoing internal study a strategy of enlargement and empowerment will be designed.

- 4) EFA fully supports the ongoing processes of self-determination in Scotland, Catalunya and the Basque Country. EFA continues to support a sustainable peace in the Basque Country
- 5) Our political family embraces new parties. Yorkshire First and the Hungarian Peoples party of Transylvania became full member, Kaszëbsko Jednota became observer member and the Social Democrat Ligue of Vojvodina became associated member.
- 6) EFA adopts the closed budget 2015, the amended budget 2016 and the budget proposal 2017 and the connected activity plans. Higher budgetary possibilities and sound management have to go together with a higher sense of responsibility of all members to generate the needed own resources.
- 7) EFA takes note of the EFAY activities 2015 and 2016 and of the refusal of the European Commission to fund our youth branch. Apart from the political support, the EFAY also requires to make an extra financial effort to reach a better balance and EFA continues its support to EFAY.
- 8) EFA takes note of the activity plan of CMC of 2015 and 2016 and prepares a special publication for 35 years of EFA and 10 years of CMC. EFA will continue to create good synergies to work together with our political foundation and as an example our common media-room in Brussels embodies this co-operation. On this regard, the perception of the EFA family has grown more positive and an increase of visibility thanks to the impeccable work of its political foundation, the CMC, which this year has launched new publications and organized a number of interesting conferences and seminars, getting very positive reviews from outside the EFA family.
- 9) Motions were approved, showing our solidarity with the peace process in the Basque country, the nation building in Palestine, the Sahrawi people. EFA debated the situation of minorities in Europe as well as the border controls and the refugee crisis. A special briefing was given on Kurdistan in view of a high delegation of EFA meeting HDP recently in Ankara. Motions on dual citizenship and on Turkey were passed and also several declarations. An urgency motion was adopted in support of Welsh steel workers who lost their jobs.
- 10) EFA grants the title of EFA honorary members to Eric Defoort, Gustave Alirol and Fabrizio Comencini.

End.

Aiacciu, 2 April 2016.