



PRESS RELEASE

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Italy must put a stop to neo-nazi and neo-fascist events

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and ENAR Italy are deeply concerned by the succession of neo-Nazi and neo-fascist demonstrations and events taking place in Italy in the last weeks. Ahead of a neo-fascist demonstration planned tomorrow, on 22 May, in Milan, we call on the municipality of Milan and the Italian government to take a strong stand against right-wing extremism.

Luciano Scagliotti, ENAR Board member for Italy, said: “We welcome the fact that the head of police in Milan has forbidden this neo-nazi rally ‘for public security reasons’, but more action is required to stop another European neo-nazi convention scheduled to take place in Milan on 29 May. Italian authorities must clearly show their refusal of fascism and racism.”

ENAR and ENAR Italy are also concerned that local and national authorities have generally not taken action to denounce these demonstrations. Although some events were blocked, many others happened under the silence of both the authorities and the media, amounting to complicity with the neo-fascist movement.

Far right groups’ actions are becoming increasingly visible, leading to rising cases of racist violence against minorities in Italy, but also elsewhere in Europe. These groups also increasingly have a transnational dimension, trying to bring together extreme right groups and parties from other EU countries. Their celebration of the Hungarian far right party Jobbik as a model for the rest of Europe is particularly worrying, given the party’s stances against Roma and other minorities.

Particularly in times of economic crisis, the slogans used by these far right groups - against the power of banks, for a fortress Europe, etc. - have disturbing analogies with those of the 1930s Nazis, in a similar context of economic downturn.

Mohammed Aziz, ENAR President, added: “History has taught us the dangers of right-wing extremism. Yet we are now experiencing a rise of the far right across Europe and even mainstream political parties expressing racist sentiments, and it is urgent to do something about it. Politicians and leaders across Europe must firmly condemn the rhetoric of these groups.”

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of European NGOs working to combat racism in all EU member states and represents more than 600 NGOs spread around the European Union. ENAR aims to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and to link local/regional/national and European initiatives.

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