



Redesigning the country.

Work, knowledge, rights, freedom

1. When the XIV Congress of CGIL was held, the country's situation (economic, work and employment) appeared as a dense package of difficulties and problems, as well as opportunities to be seized. Four years later, the situation is that of a deep crisis: Today, Italy as a country is more disunited, more divided, more uncertain; it is the Sick Man of Europe.

The XV Congress of CGIL wants to come to terms, first and foremost, with the seriousness and depth of the country in order to formulate a proposal and a design for its reconstruction, for its civil and moral rebirth, starting from the core value of labour as an alternative to the focus on market.

Globalisation and Europe's role

2. A proposal of this magnitude could not get off the ground if the prevailing idea in Europe and worldwide were not one of development marked by quality and constrained by the essential human rights of jobs and environmental sustainability.

New interdependencies and differences run the risk of turning into exasperated conflicts among countries, continents, and male and female workers, if not into a culture of terrorism and war, unless they are re-established on the basis of mutual recognition, and if we do not unmask the failure of the liberalist political culture foisted upon us by the decisions of the World Bank, WMF, WTO and the multinationals.

Social and environmental provisions in international trade are not enough. We need to design and build a different model of development and globalisation.

3. The political culture on which the European social model is based is today marking time, even in Europe, under the strain of the economic situation. However, Europe can do a great deal in all decision-making areas for the future of the international community if only it is able to go forward with building its own political and institutional dimension by exploiting the characteristics of its own social model. In an interdependent world, rights can be defended only if they are extended.

On the constitutional treaty, CGIL has focused on the most positive aspect, the inclusion of the Charter of Nice, without however remaining silent on the treaty's contradictions and limits: the failure to repudiate war, and citizenship of residence for immigrants, that third party that risks negating the affirmations of the Charter of Nice.

4. CGIL has played and still plays a major role in the peace movement, tying its commitment to the nexus between the affirmation of peace, repudiation of

war, and the possibility of defending, promoting and extending labour and environmental rights.

Repudiation of violence and terrorism is a fundamental commitment for the union. Terrorism, which is never justified, easily takes root in the midst of misery, poverty and war. Coexistence and dialogue among cultures is the real response to insecurity and to the clash of civilisations.

A country increasingly in crisis

5. Not all of the country's problems can be attributed to the policies of the Central-Right government. But if we carefully examine the policies it carries forth, we find mistakes made and responsibilities to be attributed, and ultimately we can identify the seriousness of this crisis with the failed policies of the Berlusconi government. From economic policy – the exact opposite of what it should have been – to the failure to intervene against price speculation after entry into the Euro; from destabilisation of the job market through meddling with article 18 and Law 30 to the Bossi-Fini bill that denies migrants the fundamental rights of citizenship, to Minister Moratti's laws on schools.

These choices led to an attempt to deny recognition of the role of the union and social representation, to abandon an ethic of rules, to refuse to respect the role of independent institutions and local governments. Right up to the plan for constitutional counter-reform.

6. Directly contributing to these mistakes was the management of Confindustria, but more generally the enterprise system, which incautiously backed the government in its search for social conflict. The new leadership at Confindustria tried to get out of this climate, reaching major agreements with CGIL CISL UIL at the local level throughout the country.

The latest events in Italian capitalism confirm this two-fold pathology: the tendency to move towards protected monopolies; the use of indebtedness as leverage to promote raids on areas of business that are increasingly restricted but offer high rates of profitability.

CGIL is throwing out a challenge to Confindustria: development of the labour resource, investments in knowledge, support for employment through selective, targeted public policies as the core of an alternative strategy to competition based on reduced costs and reduced rights.

CGIL's role

7. The XV Congress recognises the extraordinary capacity of CGIL, its members, militants and cadres in supporting analysis, criticism, proposals, mobilisation and struggle capable of corresponding to the dynamics of real processes, thus making it possible to open the way to change and to an alternative to the failed policies of the Centre-Right.

With its strike in February 2003, the CGIL, before others, clearly indicated to the country the risk of industrial decline, offering proposals to avoid its consequences.

March 23, 2002, marked the highest expression of the political subjectivity of labour and of its central nature in society. For CGIL, it is essential to keep the two major issues of that day in the forefront, for the future as well: the defence of rights and the link between rights and freedom.

Since the bitter divisions before and after the Pact for Italy and the separate mechanics' agreement, CGIL has sought within the limits of what is possible and right to resume the search for a unified initiative with CISL and UIL.

CGIL has fought to defend contractual policies, starting with a strong affirmation of the value of the national labour contract and the contractual sovereignty of the unions.

A high proposal and project

8. Italy has truly reached a crossroads: if its choices, values and priorities do not change, the country will end up moving away from Europe and experiencing an endless crisis. The XV Congress of CGIL points to the need for a high project, made of values, choices, content, objectives and tools, determination and civic-minded passion for Italy's reconstruction and rebirth.

There is need for a profound change, based on certain fundamental truths: the core nature of labour and its quality; the objective of a high route to development, based on understanding, innovation, training, sustainability, shifting investments away from profit towards innovation and product research; democratic and participatory development planning as part of a strengthening of welfare, understood as a factor in development and redistribution, and a different fiscal policy; renewed focus on Southern Italy; a strong role for social representation, including the unions and CGIL.

9. The first objective of a policy of change must be the struggle against job uncertainty, which today is the most unbearable plague.

CGIL considers it essential to back up an extraordinary and gradual process of economic and productive reconversion with a solid and stable employment policy. An integral part of this battle is the effort to prevent on-the-job injuries and accidents, and a commitment to formulate new proposals for migrant acceptance and placement policies.

10. If the need is for a real design for the reconstruction of the country's productive bases, the tangible and intangible infrastructures and services, a design of this importance requires an adequate availability of financial resources. For this reason the XV Congress of CGIL is telling the country it needs a new fiscal compact, founded on choices that explicitly assume as essential references a growth in income from jobs and pensions, policies in support of investments and selective transfers to enterprises.

CGIL is proposing a tax exemption on the lowest wages, restitution of fiscal drag, and a rebalancing of taxation among unearned income, assets and income from work.

The nature of this compact assumes two conditions: that budget balancing and redistribution not be carried out in two separate stages, and that the equity

sought be the result of a choice that corrects a policy that has struck at income from work and pensions more than any other form of taxation.

The struggle against under-the-table work is a basic objective as well as a precondition for any possible fiscal compact between labour, companies and the population.

Public responsibility is decisive in achieving a leap forward in many areas: research, availability of training, infrastructure policies, local management, policies to attract investment, sustainable growth.

In this context, innovation and welfare reform and its growing responsibility in social inclusion are a decisive objective for CGIL. Welfare is a lever for growth in investments and employment both.

An autonomous and democratic CGIL

11. Only a CGIL capable of renewing itself, strongly rooted in labour and in its transformations, capable of presiding over the region and guiding its development, capable of being in the field autonomously and with a strong planning framework can truly set for itself the ambitious objective of establishing the central nature of labour and rights.

All this requires a CGIL that is strong because of its internal pluralisms and in its democratic relationship with all worker. For CGIL, the democratic expression of workers remains an irremissibly objective. It must be a democratic vote that validates platforms and agreements; a framework of rules must be created, including through legislation, capable of measuring the representative nature of social forces and, after experimentation within the unions, provide certainty for democratic processes.

12. In this area as in others, CGIL has not managed to find an area of full, unified sharing on the part of CISL and UIL.

The XV Congress reaffirms that pluralism within various cultures and the sensitivity of confederated unionism represents a starting value in the search for synthesis and unified approaches and in reducing the area of dissension.

Ever since it was formed, CGIL has considered union unity to be a strategic choice. And today it is proposing to CISL and UIL that they work together to map out the values of confederated unionism.

13. The year of CGIL's XV Congress is also the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of the General Labour Confederation. CGIL will celebrate it in the grandest possible manner. This centenary is directed above all at young people and the new generations, and to all those who ask themselves what model of society should be constructed. This is the heart of the proposed policy of the XV Congress of CGIL: the design for a new start for the country makes sense and will survive only if it is explicitly aimed at those generations that represent the present but most especially the future, of labour and of the country.

Assumption 1

The challenge of labour and globalisation: objectives and proposals

The main question for unions today, in this time of globalisation, is how to rebuild a network of social and employment rights at the supranational level. Repudiation of war, violence and terrorism, promotion and expansion of labour rights and environmental rights are indissolubly tied together: peace is the only national survival strategy in a global and interdependent world.

A democratic reform of the UN is needed. A new hierarchy is needed among political institutions (the UN and its agencies) and the financial institutions, which also need reforming (IMF, World Bank and WTO).

In developing countries, the request to expand rights may be perceived as a measure more to protect the conditions of the right countries than as a choice for sustainable development. This requires us to assume direct responsibility for that objective, through national and supranational bargaining, and bargaining with the multinationals.

Effective policies are needed for the development of those countries, starting with complete cancellation of their debt and the activation of resources to support them (Tobin Tax, 0.7% GDP), redirecting allocations for military spending. And we also need to demand application of social and environmental clauses in trade relations.

The European social model, as a possible alternative for global development, needs political Europe to exist in order for it to exist. And political Europe needs a constitution in order to exist.

CGIL has given the European constitutional treaty a positive reading, without hiding limits and contradictions (no repudiation of war, residence citizenship for migrants, inconsistency of the 3rd part with the 1st and 2nd). Today there are two risks that feed one another: the discrepancy between European reality and rhetoric produces disaffection and mistrust; this mistrust is used to drive the social perspective of Europe farther and farther away.

Assumption 2

European and world unions

It is necessary to reformulate a proposal by all progressive forces, political and social, and before that a political ethic as an alternative to the philosophy that is behind the Anglo-Saxon model of development, but equally global. Social representatives must choose the supranational dimension as the testing ground for its effectiveness.

CGIL has expressed a positive opinion on the birth of the new international union headquarters, not simply the sum of CISL International and CMT but a new formation that includes those unions that are not today affiliated with one or the other headquarters. For CGIL, re-establishing a new worldwide union confederation means building a more representative organisation, closer to workers, more unionised, more pluralistic, more inclusive and more unified.

The European Confederation of Unions is today the expression of a union initiative that is inferior to what is needed and to its potentials. We need to

build a true strategic and bargaining autonomy. To do this, we need to strengthen internal democracy.

Assumption 3

Defend the Constitution. Complete the political and institutional transition

The Constitution, which was born out of the Resistance, its founding principles, its values, the central nature that it assigns to labour, all this represents a heritage that CGIL defends and will defend: for this reason it will be participating in the confirming referendum on the Centre-Left's constitutional changes, with the objective of overturning them. For CGIL, even those changes that we consider it useful to make – although it is not possible to act on those parts that mark the constitution's value and identity – cannot be approved by a parliamentary majority alone.

The referendum as instrument must be defended, with a new balance between the number of signatures necessary to activate it and the quorum required.

The bi-polar, open political and institutional process must be completed. This means clarifying the role of political alliances as groups that contribute alternative plans and strategies; of political forces, as irreplaceable components of democratic policy-setting; and of the social forces, as an expression of the representation of interests and contributors of autonomous values. In short, there is a need for more politics in the area of party and social representation, without fear of superimpositions, excesses, and lapses of autonomy.

The duties and functions of the unions must be carried out and developed in the fullness of their own autonomy and in a framework of certain and due, definite and regulated union relations. CGIL has always has as its objective the passage of a law on representation and representativeness.

Assumption 4

Italy and its crisis. CGIL's plan

A new developmental model must be formulated through a new economic and income policy. For this objective, we need to finalise: reconstruction of a basic research cycle in the strategic sectors; identification of major national projects, limited in number but of great strategic value; strengthening of the economic players through measures that support company growth; setting up industrial districts to promote innovation; renewal of industrial relations and development of the contract and wage model; the central nature of the topic of economic democracy; undertaking a radical change in the world of business services; choices in tangible and intangible infrastructures, starting with the South, in schools and training and in welfare.

Public finances need to be brought under control: recovery and development go hand in hand; today we can no longer propose policies that are staggered in time.

Fiscal pressure cannot be reduced, but the impact of the various taxes must change, shifting the weight from labour and investments towards revenues. CGIL calls for an increase in taxes on financial and real estate income, taxation of luxury items and restoration of the previous inheritance tax. Taxation of individuals should be reviewed, and progressive taxation – today limited to incomes from labour and pensions – should be restored; the deduction system should be revised to solve the problem of the disabled. It is essential that we once again undertake a credible fight against tax evasion and avoidance.

Public policies must maintain a decisive weight in regulating the market and in the economic field, through budget policy, the formulation of regulatory standards, and auditing of natural monopolies.

To deal fully with the topic of development, we need measures to affirm the legality of the functioning of government offices and companies.

Privatisation of industrially significant services (energy, transport, telecommunications, etc.) have not promoted the growth of new economic subjects nor of institutional investors, in some cases concentrating positions of income and power in a few hands. The distortions produced need to be overcome going forward.

Using government involvement to revive the Italian system must involve government offices in two key areas: the system of common assets and welfare, and innovation and research.

The government's work carries four key opportunities: it ensures the fundamental rights of individuals, produces growth, promotes industry, and establishes and protects legality.

A quality training system, based on a universal right to study and offering equal opportunities to all in accessing a good public school, is crucial for a different kind of development. The following choices are essential: compulsory education to age 16, and by the time this legislative period is over, to age 18; the autonomy of schools, universities and research institutions; a lifelong education and training system.

Italy is doing less and less research. We need to quickly bring the ratio between research spending and the GDP up to the European average by increasing investments in university and public research facilities, providing incentives for private research, and promoting groups of smaller businesses.

A new sustainable development policy needs to be locally focused. Not funding raining down but policies of financial and organisational support for integrated local development plans.

Limits on the size of businesses, specialisation in traditional activities, low growth in international markets, delocalisation of companies in mature manufacturing sectors, inadequacy of the system of services, financial and otherwise: these are the points of attack for an industrial policy intended to carry the country out of its crisis.

The country's renewal also involves regional rebalancing. The South needs more public policies or better quality, with the application of significant resources concentrated on: innovation, dissemination and quality of skills, construction of social capital, sustainable infrastructure measures, resumption of efforts to fight Mafia-linked organisations. The need for a new regional union negotiating policy which, together with welfare issues, also deals with

innovation, is part and parcel of an industrial and services policy aimed at constructing conditions favourable to development.

To support the growth of companies most exposed to international competition, a key role is played by tangible infrastructures (ports, airports, roads, railways, networks, energy, aqueducts, telecommunications). We need a plan for the whole country that fills in the gap in the South and overcomes bottlenecks in the North.

Special attention must be paid to the transport system, every branch of which shows signs of critical problems and potential for the country's development. we need rules, financial resources, and plans for action.

A development strategy must be aimed at overturning the "economy of waste" and creating an economy of wellbeing, attentive to the best sustainable use of resources. The country must have an energy policy that fully accepts the constraints of the Kyoto Protocol.

Assumption 5

Solid and stable employment

The world of labour is at the centre of a broad and extraordinary process of rights and protections being trampled and reduced. Bring the world of labour back to unity and demand that it be given a leading and visible role; give voice and greater representation to temporary employment, to the lowest-paid jobs, to marginalised workers: these are the keys to establishing a "new citizenship compact."

Going beyond Law 30 means overturning its philosophy: all those rules that render employment unstable, promote the company's de-organisation and impoverishment, and weaken collective bargaining must be eliminated and replaced by a system of alternative rules and rights.

CGIL is proposing an expanded concept of economic dependence through a redefinition of "economically dependent" worker which will correspond to equalisation of rights and protections and of the costs that the company must bear.

This means making the open-ended employment contract the normal form of work for ordinary business activity, limiting "flexible" contracts to exceptional cases; it means reducing those types of employment that are not open-ended, not only by aiming at progressively stabilising them but also by increasing their cost; it means restoring a direct correlation between effort and commitment on the job and just compensation, and a set of universal rights, thus extending the Charter of Workers' Rights.

Outsourcings, insourcings, contracts, transfers and sales of companies or divisions are to be guided, not endured passively. Beginning with opposing outsourcings motivated solely by savings on the cost of labour, including in the civil service. We need to expand negotiating rights, beginning with rights to information and consultation. Likewise, we need a review of standards on the shareholder-worker.

We must act to prevent dumping through the improper use of cooperation and the third sector. We need to take responsibility for the importance of

knowledge and training within the school and university system, accessible to all and of the highest quality. We need to take responsibility for the safety, prevention and wellbeing of workers as the more general scope of a reconstruction of universal rights.

We need to ensure a new universal system of social and protective safety nets, closely integrated with welfare. The use of safety nets must be connected with all active labour policies (training, upgrading, development of skills, use of 0.30 funds). This includes the proposed "inclusion contract," which is closely associated with new forms of income support.

We need to make the struggle against under-the-table work a priority for the country. This is a prerequisite for any possible fiscal compact between labour, business and citizens. This means making an increasingly targeted and effective use of repression, with selective and temporary measures of support for companies demonstrating that they are able to support a return to legality, supporting welfare stabilisation plans for workers and their vocational training.

Assumption 6

Migrant rights

Immigration is a growing and complex phenomenon that includes people fleeing wars and tyranny, trade in women in children, the search for employment and/or improvement in one's conditions. Today some three million foreign citizens reside legally in our country, and many hundreds of thousands more, beyond those awaiting a residence permit, are illegal. CGIL considers the presence of migrants in our country a factor that enriches our society.

The legislation passed by the Centre-Left government has created a defensive "dual right": the Bossi-Fini law is wrong, and the inconsistencies between it and Law 30 in managing the labour market and the residence contract are one more reason to overturn it.

We need a new framework law on immigration that does not dredge up previous legislative principles and tools but rather is characterised by comprehensive and systematic new regulations that sanction: a) creation of a "residence permit for employment search"; b) closure of the temporary residence centres; c) creation of a network of instruments for placement and integration; d) shift to local governments of jurisdiction over renewal of residence permits.

It is also essential to act to achieve: legalisation of the illegal present in Italy; urgent approval of a law on the right of asylum; expansion of voting rights in administrative elections; reform of the law on acquiring Italian citizenship; adequate staffing for consular offices.

The commitment of CGIL, which includes many immigrant workers among its members and delegates, is explicit with regard to contracts. The union initiative must remove obstacles to real equality of treatment.

Assumption 7

An inclusive, efficient and quality social state

In recent years the welfare system has been impoverished and discredited: its resources have been pillaged and through genuine counter-reforms, like the pension enabling act. Everything to ensure that the private sector increases its autonomy, to the point of determining what is left for the public.

CGIL is fighting for a radically different prospect: the universality and claimability of social rights. A modern system of welfare capable of countering precariousness and insecurity, of being a factor in quality development, of responding to the new needs of modern society. Welfare marked by an idea of the non-sectarian state that is able to appreciate differences without the pretext of defining ethical models.

A real increase in the public resources devoted to welfare is urgently needed to make up the gap between Italian social spending and that in the rest of Europe. This is not compatible with reducing fiscal revenue, nor with the idea of the "pour off," i.e., reducing spending on some items to the advantage of others.

The key role of the public system is to be affirmed not only in planning and setting qualitative rules and standards but also in the management of services, starting with health and education.

Objectives and priorities need to be set for a new welfare system.

One priority is to allow young people access to the system of social protection from which many are now excluded. In addition to a policy of income support, we need to allow access to housing, credit, and services. In this area, investing in childhood services is important.

With respect to the welfare system, today the priority is opposing the law approved in 2004, instead strengthening and integrating the reform tools of 1995. For those already on pension (or who will be in future), there needs to be automatic adjustment to actual inflation and a redistribution to pensions of the wealth produce in the country. In addition, complementary welfare, freely chosen by workers, must be integrated with and not replace public welfare. For this we need to guarantee a dignified government pension for workers with unsteady employment histories and low incomes, and for the young, with greater implicit coverage and with recognition of health-care work.

It is also important to make choices capable of utilising the resources of the elderly, with a serious active-old-age policy that provides a network of social and health services and the freedom to continue working after pension rights have accrued.

We need to insist on a society in which services, organisation of urban time and work hours facilitate relations between people and with their families. For women, social policies in support of employability, capable of realising the Lisbon objectives, are essential.

The universal and claimable nature of rights must be reinforced in the social and health system. We again propose the introduction of a measure having characteristics analogous to minimum starting income eliminated by the government.

Growth of a multi-ethnic society requires new protections, including in health care. Combating vulnerability means declaring war on illiteracy.

We need to fully integrate social and health services, making use of local resources, for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, reaffirming the right to health for all with the elimination of waiting lists and charges. Priority should be given to establishing a national fund for those who are not self-supporting.

It is also necessary to recognise the importance of health-care work with a major investment (which requires recognition in terms of compensation and rights) to make best use of social and health-care workers.

It is the local dimension that confirms our efforts to oppose the constitutional reform now being approved, which shatters the country's unity and the universal nature of its social services. Therefore the state must define rights and their claimability and fund the basic levels.

An effective government role makes it possible to integrate and make good use of the experiences of the private sector, both profit and non-profit, preventing them from being used to restrain the costs of services and as a tool for contract dumping.

It is essential to develop democratic participation by citizens and associations, creating a positive relationship with the volunteer sector, associations, and social coops.

All this makes it necessary to strengthen regional negotiating on social policies capable of representing the interests of users, operators and pensioners.

Assumption 8

Contract policies

First signatory Guglielmo Epifani

Approved by the Steering Committee

Our proposal on contract policies cannot escape the lights and shadows that have characterised results in recent years: net compensation dynamic below inflation; organisation system stagnant over time; return to a substantial increase in levels of lesser professionalism; systematic delay in renewals of national labour contracts; failure to revise the inflation calculating mechanism.

Second-level negotiating over the last decade has mainly been inadequate, with differing results within the categories and between North, Central and South. The most obvious limits involve the organisation of labour and the changes produced by processes of reorganisation, transformation and outsourcing. In this context, wage differences between men and women have increased.

In Italy there has been a shift in wealth towards profits and revenues, and compensation has experienced a drop that has been among the most significant in Europe. Unions must put forth a good contract policy proposal to re-establish negotiating, wage and regulatory authority at all levels of negotiation and for all types of labour.

Our congress is characterised by its focus on the value of labour. we need a new campaign for a renewed contract policy that is acquisitive and not merely defensive, for both compensation and for rights.

CGIL reiterates that the system of contract rules must be unified for all contracts, public and private, and considers it a priority to define roles, duties and functions: for the national contract; for decentralised negotiation; for the link with negotiating policies in Europe; for regional union negotiating.

The national contract remains a universal and essential tool for coming to the defence of and increasing the purchasing power of wages, and for increasing contract wages, and to ensure equal rights throughout the country. We need certain rules, parameters and criteria for contracts, starting with actual inflation, also providing for the use of productivity quotas, so that the various categories, in their autonomy, can define platforms for renewal, to establish wage requests and respond to the need to change regulatory parts and review organisations.

Decentralised negotiation should be expanded and updated, starting with company and group negotiations, in the case of government involvement, examination and study of negotiating at work sites. This negotiating should not be scaled back but rather remains key to giving delegates and workers an effective role in organising labour, health and safety, work conditions, hours, professional recognition, and everything that the national contract requires of work places, and to distribute variable wage increases with quotas to be consolidated.

Local, on-site, district and industry negotiation. Without prejudice to the priority choice at the company level, CGIL, in order to expand decentralised negotiation, believes that national contracts may provide for recourse to this level as well; this should not be in addition to the company level, nor should it be counter to it. CGIL considers it useful in the context of decentralised negotiation to experiment with inter-category contracting, without changing contract ownership.

CGIL considers certified validation of workers binding on all matters relating to both platforms and agreements.

Europe. A contract level must be provided for the supranational dimension of the company. The European Confederation of Unions must play a negotiating role.

A union role in regional and social negotiations. There is a strong need to open up a new phase for union negotiations in the region.

Assumption 8 A

Contract policies

First signatory Gianni Rinaldini

Signed by eleven members of the Steering Committee

Our proposal on contract policies must be rigorous and consistent with a line that assumes the central nature of labour as the fundamental choice for a new social plan.

In recent years the choices made by the government and by Confindustria have led to a redistribution of income against labour and pensions, leading to

non-permanent employment. In this context CGIL has led a sustained battle in support of income, against Law 30 and for the defence of the national contract. Second-level negotiating over the last decade has mainly been inadequate, albeit with differing results within the categories and among regions. The most obvious limits of our contract initiative involve the organisation of labour and the changes produced by processes of corporate transformation and outsourcing. In this context, wage differences between men and women have increased as have dual contract systems and a worsening of working conditions.

In Italy there has been a shift in wealth produced towards profits and revenues, and compensation has experienced a drop that has been among the most significant in Europe. Unions must put forth a good contract policy proposal to re-establish negotiating, wage and regulatory authority at all levels of negotiation and for all types of labour.

Our congress is characterised by its focus on the value of labour. The liberalist logic subordinates the role of labour and social representation to a mere function with respect to the viewpoint of enterprises and the market. We need a new campaign for a renewed contract policy capable of reunifying labour, that is acquisitive and not merely defensive, for both compensation and for rights.

CGIL reiterates that the system of contract rules must be unified for all and considers it a priority to define roles, duties and functions, the crisis in the current contract system now being obvious. It is not a matter of formulating rules for the next national contract with a framework agreement, but rather of formulating a contract policy and a contract system that will mark industrial relations for some time to come, and hence a role and function of social representation.

The national contract represents the decisive instrument and is to be strengthened, rejecting rules and models that lead to contractual federalism. Purchasing power, the economic situation, productivity shares and distribution of wealth must be the criteria of reference for the national contract. It will be up to the union organisations acting independently to decide how to balance their own demands, without abandoning the objective of redistribution of wealth and increasing real compensation nationwide, including in relation to the most complex social condition, from taxation to the social security system.

The second level of negotiation must be aimed at organisation of labour, the work environment, productivity, quality, and professionalism in the work place. Negotiations cannot be limited to mere negotiation of the output bonus or accepting the relationship between pay rises and corporate financial statements. In second-level negotiations, the values of solidarity, equity, equality, and respect for differences (gender, ethnic, etc.) are to be reaffirmed. Local, on-site, district and industry negotiation. Without prejudice to the priority choice at the company level, CGIL believes that national contracts may provide for recourse to this decentralised level as well; this should not be in addition to the company level, nor should it be counter to it. CGIL considers it useful in the context of decentralised negotiation to experiment with inter-category contracting having the explicit objective of reunifying labour.

CGIL considers the workers' referendum binding on all matters relating to both platforms and agreements.

Europe. A contract level must be provided for the supranational dimension of the company. The European Confederation of Unions must play a negotiating role.

A union role in regional and social negotiations. There is a strong need to open up a new phase for union negotiations in the region, given the weight taken on by choices of regional social policies and policies on sustainability and environmental safety.

Assumption 9

Participation as the strategic key for redesigning the country and the values of unionism, autonomy, and unity

First signatory Guglielmo Epifani

Approved by the Steering Committee

Italian society needs more participation to make democracy strong. We need to re-update all those channels which, years ago, made possible heavy democratic participation, at the institutional, political and social level.

In the work place, democracy and participation are strategic keys for defining new centres of power. In the same way, we need to work on three absolutely distinct fronts: expanding negotiations; completing the election of worker representatives, regional and safety, and making unified union representation more widespread; achieving new forms of participation.

Among unions, we must define forms of democratic participation within the union, for members and for all workers, in the choices the union makes. This intra-union agreement is urgently needed. CGIL confirms its commitment to seek a unified agreement and to specific legislation that can implement that agreement. It is also necessary to ponder the forms of democratic validation of union platforms and of understandings in the area of social negotiations within the region.

More participation and more politics for the unions necessarily mean more unionism. A high concept of unionism becomes real as part of planning that precisely defines its identity and proposed policy. The formation of political and planning alliances that are alternatives to one another in fact makes it all the more essential to formulate a union project through which to participate.

This union unity cannot do without the construction of a common plan. This unsuppressible pluralism among the unions – if it is not adapted to this common search – rather than representing a treasure instead risks being an insurmountable obstacle. For this reason we propose to CISL and UIL that they work together to map out the values of confederated unionism.

Assumption 9 A

Proposal for new rules of democracy and representation to revive the values

of unionism, autonomy and unity

First signatory Gian Paolo Patta

Signed by 26 members of the Steering Committee

Italian society needs more participation to make democracy strong. We need to re-update all those channels which, years ago, made possible heavy democratic participation, at the institutional, political and social level.

In the work place, democracy and participation are strategic keys for defining new centres of power. In the same way, we need to work on three absolutely distinct fronts: expanding negotiations; completing the election of worker representatives, regional and safety, and making unified union representation more widespread; achieving new forms of participation.

CGIL reconfirms the need for a law on representation, representativeness and union democracy and intends to seek, with CISL and UIL, an agreement on the contents of the law, as happened previously with public employment. CGIL will in any case put forth five proposals, to be carried out in part legislatively and in part by agreement among the unions, involving election of unified union structures in all work places, precise rules for presenting platforms, negotiating delegations, voting on agreements, use of referendums. In any case, until the law has been won, CGIL will consider these principles binding and will apply them to its own members.

Art. 18 of the Worker Charter should be extended to companies with fewer than 16 employees.

More participation and more politics for the unions necessarily mean more unionism. A high concept of unionism becomes real as part of planning that precisely defines its identity and proposed policy. The formation of political and planning alliances that are alternatives to one another in fact makes it all the more essential to formulate a union project through which to participate.

This union unity cannot do without the construction of a common plan. This unsuppressible pluralism among the unions – if it is not adapted to this common search – rather than representing a treasure instead risks being an insurmountable obstacle. For this reason we propose to CISL and UIL that they work together to map out the values of confederated unionism.

Assumption 9B

Participation as the strategic key for redesigning the country and the values of unionism, autonomy, and unity

First signatory Gianni Rinaldini

Signed by 11 members of the Steering Committee

Italian society needs more participation to make democracy strong. We need to re-update all those channels which, years ago, made possible heavy democratic participation, at the institutional, political and social level.

In the work place, democracy and participation are strategic keys for defining new centres of power in favour of workers. The key nature and expansion of

rights for all workers, decided by the last Congress, represents the horizon of our initiative for the reunification of labour. CGIL supports the need for legislation that affirms the election of company union representatives on a proportional basis and the validation of platforms and agreements as a democratic right of workers. For CGIL, this is an essential part of its own contract practice at all levels. The legislative rules today current in public employment are an important point of reference, which needs to be completed by the referendum tool. In this context, it is necessary to define with other union organisations forms of a unified democratic process.

More participation and more politics for the unions necessarily mean more unionism. A high concept of unionism becomes real as part of planning that precisely defines its identity and proposed policy. This planning also represents a condition for the autonomy of unions. Planning and democracy are at the basis of the choice of autonomy as political and cultural independence. In its relationship with political power, the union must have adversary governments, but it cannot have friendly governments to which it can delegate its own functions.

This union unity cannot do without the construction of a common plan. This insuppressibly pluralism among the unions – if it is not adapted to this common search – rather than representing a treasure instead risks being an insurmountable obstacle. For this reason we propose to CISL and UIL that they work together to map out the values of confederated unionism.

Assumption 10

A democratic and representative CGIL

CGIL has grown in recent years. The XV Congress can undertake a serious reflection on problems and limits facing it, beginning with the development of proselytism.

The Congress's reflection must first of all deal with the ongoing difficulties which the organisation has in calling itself an organisation of men and women. We need to rethink an organisational structure that dates from the years of Fordism. While confirming the horizontal and vertical structure, we must make the organisation stronger and achieve a strategic and functional repositioning to intercept what is new in the world of labour. Along with this, we must also affirm a new regional focus.

Today there are millions of migrant workers in Italy. Their representation in CGIL must go hand in hand with – or better yet, precede – the formulation of policies of acceptance and citizenship.

The participation of young people in the life and management of CGIL is absolutely inadequate. We need to seek solutions that avoid producing a second generation gap.

Democracy in CGIL is based on multiple pluralisms – starting with the value of differences of gender – and on a system of rules that guarantee its full legitimacy and flexibility. It is a matter of deciding how to strengthen our internal democracy and better respond to the problems of representation, participation, and unity of the confederation. There are three problems to be

analysed and openly discussed at the Congress: selection of leadership groups; the function of guarantor of pluralism entrusted to the secretary general; even distribution of resources.