

# GZ.I Galiza International



## Massive Galizan National Day Demonstration: A Show of Force by the BNG

*'Galiza Alive. Sovereignty and Work'* was the slogan chosen by the BNG for this year's Galizan National Day demonstration held as usual on 25 July, reflecting the fact that nationalism is a dynamic force, with a show of force on the part of BNG capable of rallying the masses to fight for Galizan sovereignty and for whom national sovereignty is essential in order to be able to build a fairer society which responds to the true needs of the Galizan people.

15,000 people took to the streets in the demonstration which ended in the traditional rally in the main Quintana Square.

With her sights set on the forthcoming Galizan elections Ana Pontón, the BNG's National Spokesperson and Presidential Candidate for the Galizan Government, defended the need for Galiza to rely on political

organisations of its own acting in the interests of Galiza without answering to any outside forces. "I realise that these are difficult times which call for confidence and unity and the ability to acknowledge mistakes and to hold out a hand to all nationalists. But whatever the difficulties, the truth of the situation remains the same. With every day that passes, I am ever more convinced that we need political organisations of our own, because if our people is not able to organise independently then we will never achieve self-determination", she assured the crowd.

In a passionate speech underpinned by an important political message, Ana Pontón stressed the strength of the BNG as the expression of the will of the Galizan people to exist as a nation, emphasising that our nationalist Front is "not just a fad, a ploy or a gimmick created by the mass media. The BNG is rooted and

grew to maturity in this country and we have an alternative project for Galiza!”.

The nationalist leader called upon the membership of the BNG set to work “immediately” on the Galizan elections set for late September “to fill the ballot boxes with votes for the BNG, to get rid of Feijóo [the current President] and turn this country around”, adding that “A real change for Galiza means a nationalist project, not just a copy-paste sham scripted in Madrid: a project based on self-government which recognises that real capacity to decide for ourselves is the key to raising a modern nation built on progress and well-being”. She went on to warn against the same old centralism represented by the two-party system: “It has nothing to offer us, neither in its hackneyed old version nor its trendy new guise, because we know of old that the Spanish two-party system does not represent us”.

Once again the demonstration organised by the BNG was attended by international delegations in an



expression of solidarity: EH-Bildu and PNV (Basque Country), BNV, CUP, ERC, Més (Catalan Countries), the Portuguese Communist Party and the Left Bloc (Portugal), PFLP (Palestine), Chunta (Aragon), IzCa (Castile), Plaid Cymru (Wales), UDB (Brittany), Polisario Front (Western Sahara), EFA and the Consulate of Venezuela.

## An Alternative to Capitalist Europa



The *Festival* held from 24-25 July is a key part of the activities organised around Galizan National Day, with thousands of people flocking to the concerts, food stands, craft stalls, book releases and debates.

One of the events involved a round-table entitled ‘There is an alternative to Capitalist Europa’ where several of the BNG’s sister organisations expressed their views on an EU at the service of capitalism, imposing measures which go against the interests of the majority of society and prevent nations from exercising their right to self-determination.

The speakers were Montse Prado (Galizan MP and member of the BNG Executive), Marian Beitialarrangoitia (Basque MP for EH-Bildu), Ferrán Civit (Catalan MP for ERC), Ricardo Galhardo (member of Bureau of the Porto Section of the Portuguese Communist Party) and David Grosclaude (representing the Occitan Party and vice-president of EFA).



## Support for the Brazilian people against the coup

In light of the decision in May to initiate impeachment proceedings against the Brazilian President, Dilma Rousseff, the BNG issued a statement in support of the Brazilian people and its solidarity with Dilma Rousseff, the PT, the PCdoB and all of the social organisations that uphold democracy in Brazil, publicly denouncing the coup and circulating information in Galiza regarding the true situation in Brazil and the mobilisations underway there.

## Defending refugees: Against the EU-Turkey Agreement

In response to the humanitarian crisis and the arrival of tens of thousands of refugees to southern Europe, the BNG has made its position clear against the policy of the Spanish State and the rest of the EU member states by tabling various parliamentary initiatives, informative meetings around Galiza and the presence of representatives of our organisation at several refugees camps in order to see first-hand the situation on the ground and to demonstrate our solidarity.

On 16 April we organised a series of symbolic events in the main towns and cities around Galiza demanding the immediate repeal of the agreement between Turkey and the EU and an asylum policy to provide for the thousands of people forced into Europe, fleeing wars and misery, escaping from the self-same wars caused by the imperialist policy carried out with the blessing of the EU and the USA.



### No to NATO! No to TTIP!

The BNG held a rally to express its opposition to the XXI Forum of the US-Spain Council held in the capital of Galiza in June. By protesting in front of the building where the Summit was held we publicly reaffirmed our opposition to the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and CETA (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement) free trade agreements being negotiated in secret between the EU and North America (USA and Canada). Were they to be approved, these treaties would have dire consequences for the Galizian working classes, pandering to the profits of the multinationals rather than serving the public interest and would mark an unprecedented setback for our basic economic, social and environmental rights.

At the protest we also clearly stated that Galizian nationalism is in favour of world peace, respect for the sovereignty of the peoples of the world and of the peaceful, democratic and just resolution of international conflicts, reiterating the BNG's opposition to NATO, militarism and US-led imperialist interventions which lead to war, destruction and the terrible tragedy of displaced people and refugees we are seeing today.

## Solidarity with the Sahara

### Morocco Bars a Galizian Delegation from Entering the Sahara

A Galizian delegation made up of members of the Galizian Parliament and the Association SOGAPS, including a representative of the BNG, was barred from entering Laayoune in May. The delegation hoped to see for itself the situation of the Sahrawi people living in the Western Saharan territories illegally occupied by Morocco for 40 years. Upon their return to Galiza, the BNG once more denounced Morocco and the complicity of the Spanish State regarding the on-going denial of the rights of the Sahrawi people.

### The BNG Attends the XV Congress of the Polisario Front

The BNG was represented by Montse Prado, coordinator for the International Department, at the XV Extraordinary Congress of the Polisario Front held in Dakhla in July, visiting the Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria. As well as meetings with various Sahrawi organisations, she also



spoke with Brahim Ghali, the newly elected General Secretary of Polisario Front and President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, reaffirming the solidarity of Galizian nationalism with their struggle for independence and the building of a state in their own land.



## Support for Catalan Independence

The BNG firmly condemned the decision of the Constitutional Court to suspend the constituent process towards independence passed by the majority of the Catalan Parliament. We also reiterated our full support for the political organisations working towards Catalan independence, especially CUP and ERC, as well as the political leaders threatened with criminal proceedings .

BNG demands the same for the different peoples of the State as it does for Galiza and which is unthinkable within the Spanish legal framework, namely the recognition of our right to decide for ourselves and to set our own democratic, sovereign constituent processes in motion. We refuse to acknowledge the democratic legitimacy of the institutions born out of the sham reform of the Franco dictatorship, enshrined in the Constitution of 1978.

## The BNG Reiterates its Opposition the UE, Calling for a Social and Truly Democratic Europa of the Peoples

Following the results of the BREXIT referendum held in the UK on 23 June, the National Executive of the BNG released a detailed statement stating that the results reopen the debate on the way the EU functions and essentially stemmed from a profound democratic criticism of EU policy which has effectively destroyed social cohesion, favouring the interests of financial capital and large corporations with the EU working in the dark and in a highly undemocratic way.

The BNG recalled that it has always maintained a critical stance regarding the economic and social model defended by the European Union, from its opposition to Spanish membership of the European Economic Community and the Maastricht Treaty to supporting a No vote in the referendum on the European Constitution which was also defeated in the referendum in France, another State central to the European Union.

The thread running through European construction is the fact that it serves the economic interests of big corporations and oligopolies with negative results for the majority of society. It has had dire consequences for Galiza, ranging from the dismantling of our key productive sectors and the loss of jobs to making it impossible for us to take full advantage of our economic potential, effectively stunting any kind of economic development geared to the real needs and possibilities of the country.

As an alternative to the EU which has been clearly damaging for Galiza, preventing us from achieving improved levels of development and welfare, the BNG has always supported a Europa based on the democratic will of the nations and peoples which comprise it: a social and truly democratic Europe. And we believe that this position is gaining ground today and is more relevant than ever.

Regardless of the reasons behind individual votes, the Executive of the BNG believe that the BREXIT result will reopen a vital debate on several key issues today, such as the desire for national sovereignty and the response to political and humanitarian crises, e.g. refugees.



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