



DIALOGUE

THE GLOBALIZATION OF INDIFFERENCE

As winter sets in, the war in Ukraine is making the plight of millions increasingly dire, while in the powder keg that is present-day Iran, repression is steadily undermining people's freedom and security. Against this backdrop, affirms the 2022 Censis Report, Italians feel resigned and averse to take action. But why not put our moral responsibility to challenge globalization and injustice back at the center?

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Gloomy and resigned: this is the portrait of Italians that emerged from the 2022 Censis Report, which describes an increasingly poor, aged population anxious about the present and the future alike, and averse to change. Yet even as discontent over social inequality grows, there is no taking to the streets, no collective mobilization; rather than taking action, Italians are turning inwards. Many are no longer even bothering to vote: this year's abstention rate was the highest in the history of our Republic.

Added to the gloom and resignation is an increasing indifference to injustice, crime and the horrors all around us, whether they be the countless migrants drowning close to our shores, or the increasingly dire plight of millions in war-ravaged Ukraine as winter sets in. Indeed, after the failure of its so-called "special military operation", the Kremlin is now waging war directly against civilians, attempting to destroy Ukraine's energy infrastructure to make it even harder for its people to survive the bitter winter season. The WHO has sounded the alarm over the crisis generated by this ongoing assault: "With half of Ukraine's energy infrastructure either damaged or destroyed and continuing attacks on health care, millions of lives remain under threat".



"None of us can ignore our moral responsibility to challenge the 'globalization of indifference' that all too often looks the other way in the face of tragic situations of injustice calling for an immediate humanitarian response".

(Pope Francis)

Then there are the barbaric attacks on women and executions in Iran, which has become a veritable powder keg. Three months have passed since 16 September 2022, when the country's "morality police" beat to death a 22-year-old Iranian-Kurdish woman, Mahsa Amini, after arresting her for allegedly breaching the country's requirement for women to cover their hair with a hijab. Since then, there have been hundreds of demonstrations against the absurd laws of Ayatollah Khamenei's theocracy, which has responded with a bloody crackdown, hunting down and arresting more than 30,000 young women and men and killing at least 500, including 70 minors, either out in the streets or in jail. Factory workers have gone on strike and shopping malls, bazaars, cafes and restaurants have shut down in many cities, yet the savagery of the "law enforcers" continues. Two individuals have been hung and Amnesty International reports that at least 28 more young people currently risk the death penalty. Hana, another young Kurdish woman recently released from an Iranian detention center, has spoken about being systematically beaten and raped there along with 40 other women. Even the Ayatollah's granddaughter, Farideh Muradkhani, is under arrest for her support of the late Mahsa Amini.

Last 20 November at an ARCI club on the outskirts of Florence, accompanied by my children and grandchildren, I attended a dinner in solidarity with Iranian women who reside in Florence, but remain in close contact with their families and communities. Listening to testimonies by three of them was heart-wrenching, as was seeing the words on their sweatshirts, the battle cry now resounding across Iran: "Woman. Life. Freedom." (*Zan, Zendegi, Azadi*).