

SEA Handling, tensions between workers and trade unions

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There have been **very high tensions, thumped tables, heaved desks, shouts and heavy insults** this morning at the house of union organisations, where about **150 – 200 SEA Handling workers summoned themselves to a meeting**. Astonishment and even a bit of fear rose among the trade unionists that were present in the facility, when they saw that workers were approaching in a very angry mood and ready to demand immediate protest initiatives against the agreement on which CIGL, CISL, UIL, FLAI and UGL are working, as regards the **dispute on the passage of SEA Handling employees** to the new company, Airport Handling. The initiative was started some days ago by a group of workers that have been fighting for a long time through the social network WhatsApp. This morning, about 150 – 200 trade union members have faced up to trade unionists, for whose safety **even the DIGOS** (the Italian police department for general investigations and special operations, Ed.) **have had to intervene in order to hold hearts at bay**. The meeting that workers have summoned themselves to lasted about 3 hours, and dealt with the terms of the negotiations in progress between the workers' representatives and the company.

"SEA employees are very worried," tells one of the occupants, "because **the new airport handling is proposing very heavy sacrifices as regards the rights of the workers**: reduced holidays (12 days at most in the summer and no days off on Christmas and New Year's Day), flexibility on summer rest, flexitime, reduced breaks, 498 redundant workers, workers that had been let off their work who have to undergo a medical examination again, and wage cuts." **The negotiation has not been concluded yet, and it will be handled once again on 15 May, with the new company**. "Disappointment among workers is high, and it's getting more and more difficult to handle, because," as workers explain, "trade unions had promised information and constant meetings, 4 hours of strike, and on the contrary they blocked

everything, thinking that the government's letter to the European Union, in which the matter of reducing the wages of the workers was already being discussed, was enough."

THE SEA HANDLING DISPUTE

Dario Grilanda from CISL was not present at the meeting, but puts the issue on a level that leaves no room for misunderstanding. **"One can either trust trade unions or not,"** he points out, "this morning's action marks deep discomfort that we can't understand. I've worked in an airport for 30 years, and I know what the problems could be, but we should also mention that we've struggled to answer the questions because of this high tension. If the solution to the problem is to stop airports from working, we can't share it. We're carrying out a negotiation that will be concluded within May, and we have to stick to the negotiating table to get some results. **Unarranged actions, would finally lead to serious consequences for the workers themselves.** No agreement will be signed without being submitted to them first: we're ready for a referendum as well."

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