

Marsico: “Border closed following a robbery; Switzerland should explain”

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The political reactions continue after **the Swiss authorities closed the border crossing in Ponte Tresa**, on 5 December, causing a traffic hold-up and inconvenience for hundreds cross-border workers.

This afternoon, the Forza Italia Regional Councillor, **Luca Marsico**, filed a motion to be discussed in Lombardy Regional Council, which reconstructs the event, and calls for the Council to intervene, at the State authorities, to prevent similar situations from happening again.

Here there is the whole text of the motion:

Given that:

On 5 December 2016, a regrettable episode occurred at the border crossing in Lavena Ponte Tresa; this border with Switzerland, was closed, because two unidentified men attempted a robbery at the Raiffeisen Bank in Molinazzo di Monteggio, in Canton Ticino;

the attempted robbery occurred at about 4.30 p.m., in the above-mentioned town, approximately one and a half kilometres from the Cremenaga crossing. The immediate reaction of the employees made the criminals give up, forcing them to flee in a grey Fiat Uno, which had an Italian number plate;

during the night, a few hours after the attempted crime, the car used to flee was found by officers from

the police station in Cremenaga, a few metres from the border crossing, which, together with the one in Lavena Ponte Tresa, was also closed that night;

the closure of the borders out of Switzerland, during the rush hour, when cross-border workers return home, created considerable inconvenience for them and for others. Indeed, long lines of thousands of people unable to return home after a day at work, formed at the crossings. This situation lasted for about two hours, and therefore delayed thousands of cross-border workers, who tried to find information on what was happening, on their smartphones and on the social networks.

Considering that:

the reaction on the part of Switzerland created considerable inconvenience, not only to the cross-border workers, but also to everyone just going across the border;

Switzerland, together with other European states, is part of the Schengen area, in which countries do not carry out systematic checks at their internal borders (that is, at the borders between two Schengen states) anymore;

adherence of this State to the EU does, however, have some restrictions, as a result of which, at the above-mentioned borders, custom controls remain, preceded or accompanied by an identity check (a check of documents, or a search in the computer system) for reasons of domestic security or for well-founded suspicions based on information obtained from the computer system relating to potential threats to public safety or presumed cases of cross-border crime;

it would have been possible to carry out a detailed check, but without stopping entirely the crossing of people, who were returning home after work;

the event described certainly cannot be described as one of the more serious criminal episodes that have occurred recently, such that it justified unilateral closure of the borders without, incidentally, informing the Italian authorities present at the same crossing.

In light of the above, **the Regional Council and councillor in charge** are asked to call on the Italian State to hear the requests of the Italian cross-border workers concerning what happened, and then ask Switzerland to explain how an event with such important social impact could happen, and to find a shared and, therefore, regulated approach to any future, similar episodes.

di Translated by Agostino & Bonomi (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)