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Europe-wide anti-capitalist campaign for European elections takes off

- News from around the world -

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At a rally in Oporto, Portugal on 8th May, Miguel Portas, Alda Sousa, Francisco Louça and Olivier Besancenot presented the common proposals of the Left Bloc (Bloco do Esquerda, BE) and the New Anti-capitalist Party (Nouveau Parti Anti-capitaliste, NPA) against the crisis and European Union policies. “The capitalists must pay for the crisis” is one of the themes common to the two campaigns.

In Portugal this means campaigning for an end to banking secrecy and to force the bankers to pay for the failed banks. Olivier Besancenot explained the NPA’s proposal to fuse all banks into a single public banking and financial service under popular control.

All the speakers detailed their proposals about job cuts and redundancies, for wage rises and for the levelling up of social rights to the best standard.

The rallies the next day in Barcelona and Madrid were the first campaign meetings for the Anti-capitalist Left (Izquierda Anticapitalista, IA). There were almost 500 members and sympathisers present in Barcelona and more than 700 in Madrid.

Unlike the Left Bloc which already has significant parliamentary and institution representation (8 national MPs and 1 Euro MP), Izquierda Anticapitalista is standing in elections for the first time. It collected more than 18 000 electors’ signatures and 80 from elected representatives in its campaign to get on the ballot. There is already a dynamic campaign: meetings have taken place throughout the Spanish state, support committees are being organised in many new areas, and there is a lot of media coverage. Many personalities from the social and trade-union movements have openly supported the campaign, as have the French group Manu Chao and the British film-maker Ken Loach.

This campaign centres on “Ten Proposals” which were presented by Esther Vivas, spokesperson for the campaign – the two top candidates on the list are women - , which take up the themes of the Action Plan of the European anti-capitalist left, which oppose the bosses’ and governments’ policies which have already made more than 4 million people unemployed, 8000 more each day.

These meetings have shown that there is a new generation of activists emerging, and that an anti-capitalist pole in Europe, particularly faced with the current crisis, is possible, necessary and indispensable.