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France

# National Conference of the NPA: a campaign faced with the crisis of the system

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**The national conference of the NPA brought together 240 delegates, elected by the 3,100 members who had voted in 92 local aggregate meetings. The purpose of the conference was to decide the NPA's approach to the upcoming elections, presidential and legislative. The vote of the members gave a majority of 50.4 per cent to Motion A, thus deciding to launch our presidential campaign without putting our candidature in parentheses.**

[[https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/png/20090411135655\\_Logo\\_NPA.png](https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/png/20090411135655_Logo_NPA.png)]

On Saturday, the first debate began around our approach to the elections. The principal divergence between the delegates of Position A and those of Position B (40 per cent of the delegates) related to the strategy of the NPA towards the Left Front. Position C (5.8 per cent of the delegates) considered that the approach proposed by Position A has was not sufficiently revolutionary.

## The general profile of the campaign

The discussions on Saturday afternoon centred on the profile and the main lines of our campaign. As a result of these discussions, broad agreement took shape around the idea that our campaign should respond to the crisis of the capitalist system and its consequences for the population and the working class. This crisis, which is at the same time economic, financial, social, environmental, energy and food, has disastrous effects. Faced the with governments of both right and left which orchestrate the austerity plans in the service of the ruling classes, the need to give our social camp the confidence that is necessary to fight back is a common preoccupation. But differences have arisen on the way that this campaign should be conducted. Some comrades of Position B are afraid that there will be a "workerist and sectarian" campaign and the comrades of Position C are worried that there will be a campaign which would not refer sufficiently to measures of a break with capitalism.

On Saturday evening, our comrade Philippe Poutou was designated as presidential candidate of the NPA by 122 For, 50 Against, 11 Abstentions and 47 NPPV (did not take part in the vote). [1] Some comrades in particular were opposed because they considered it regrettable that our candidate is not a woman, in particular one of our two spokespersons. But a majority considered that the social and political profile of Philippe illustrated best the project of our organization during this crisis period of capitalism and made it possible to unite the party.

## The launching of the campaign

On Sunday, the discussions in workshops made it possible to deepen the various axes of our campaign ? : working conditions, sharing out of work, jobs and precarious work, wages, ecology, discriminations, cancellation of the debt, youth... As an anti-capitalist organization, we want to link the defence of the demands that arise in the daily life of the population to the discussion on how to win them, by the mobilization of the working class, in order to organize society according to other interests than those of the capitalists.

At the beginning of the morning session, a discussion also took place on the urgency of succeeding, all together, in overcoming the barrier of 500 sponsorships of elected representatives that the law imposes on us. This is the immediate task, the most urgent thing for everyone. At the conclusion of the national conference, a declaration was adopted, with 62 per cent of delegates voting in favour [2], in order to unite the organization around its campaign.

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Position B wished to make a public statement putting forward the basic disagreements and is calling for the constitution of a public current next October [3].

After this national conference, the challenge is now to put the internal discussions in the background, to unite the NPA and to turn the party outwards, towards struggles and towards the electoral campaign which must give coherence to our interventions, by linking them to our project of society.

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[1] In May 2011, Olivier Besancenot best-known spokesperson of the NPA and presidential candidate in 2002 and 2007 for the LCR, decided not to be the candidate in 2012. His letter informing members of his decision was published in *International Viewpoint* [here](#).

[2] This declaration is published in *International Viewpoint* [here](#).

[3] The statement by Position B is published [here](#).