

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3150/09
by Giusto Catania (GUE/NGL)
to the Commission

Subject: Productive development and employment protection for Atitech in Naples, a firm with a crucial role in the maintenance and safety of CAI Alitalia aircraft

The Commission-approved launch of the new airline, CAI, has not made the future of Atitech, the lead firm in the Alitalia aircraft maintenance sector, any clearer. Alitalia accounted for 80% of Atitech's turnover.

Atitech employs 650 workers and technicians specialising in aircraft maintenance, with satellite industries in the Naples area employing a further 450 people. CAI had pledged to continue using Atitech and the Italian Government had promised that Finmeccanica and Fintecnica, both state-owned firms, would be investigated as future majority shareholders so that the professional skills and jobs that have ensured Alitalia's flight safety over the years and now do so for CAI – skills that are the envy of all Europe – would be protected. These pledges have now been disregarded. Having dropped the routes served by the MD80s (to be replaced by 2011), CAI announced on 13 April 2009 that it wished to sever its links with Atitech, cutting maintenance of long-haul aircraft to the minimum or diverting it elsewhere, partly to Singapore. The government has not kept any of its promises, not even the one to find new outlets for the business' skills. The Campania Regional Council has now called for an urgent meeting.

Specialist know-how in aircraft maintenance and working order is not just vital to aircraft operating safety, it is also essential in reducing consumption and for climate mitigation goals.

The Commission is preparing to pass, with Parliament's agreement, measures that will help airlines retain their rights over slots even where these are not fully used owing to the fallout from the crisis.

Said measures will only help one of the parties exposed to the air traffic crisis whilst, for others, the break up of Alitalia with no heed paid to the future of air safety means that the crisis is affecting them even more than it was already doing.

The Commission has monitored and backed this business restructuring process. How does it now intend urging, first, the Italian Government to stand by the pledges it made to employees and firms, and, second, CAI Alitalia to continue upholding high standards of maintenance quality and safety?

Further, with regard to the proposed anti-crisis measures, how does the Commission perceive and plan to ensure a productive future for sectors of the aeronautical industry that are vital to aircraft reliability and which the airlines themselves cannot do without?