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Corsica

# **Against French colonialism, for the social and democratic demands of the Corsican people**

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Press release of the NPA

**The mobilisation of the Corsican people is intensifying, with a massive mobilisation in Ajaccio, Bastia, Calvi, general assemblies, a very important participation of the youth and in particular of the women's movement.**

**The NPA renews its support for this anti-colonial mobilisation triggered by the assassination attempt against Yvan Colonna but which has much wider roots: low wages, property speculation, unemployment, especially of young women, the contempt for the social, democratic and cultural demands of the Corsican people.**

**We denounce the ferocious repression, ordered by Macron and Darmanin, which has already caused many injuries among the youth.**

**We give our full support to the current mobilisation, in particular the large demonstration of 13 March, which we welcome.**

**We demand an immediate end to repression, the release of all Corsican political prisoners, the immediate lifting of the DPS status for Ferrandi and Alessandri, reconciliation in Corsica, the recognition of bilingualism and the right to self-determination and national sovereignty of the Corsican people.**

*Montreuil, 11 March 2022*

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***The attempt on the life of the imprisoned pro-independence Corsican activist Yvan Colonna in early March has been the trigger for a very strong popular reaction on the island. [1]*** It is the most significant popular movement since that of the social movement on pensions in 2003. It was triggered by the situation faced by political prisoners but has expanded.

This movement is the conjunction of several dimensions. There is the accumulation, especially among young people, of resentment at the French state's denial of the slightest demand, whether cultural, linguistic, or on the situation of prisoners. Secondly, social indicators are at their lowest, with very low wages, wealth gaps exacerbating, a negative impact of tourism on the population, female unemployment and real estate speculation that hinders Corsicans from access to housing. It is a fight against social and colonial exploitation.

## **A mass mobilization**

There is tremendous self-organization of youth and women. Young women are facing up to the forces of repression in Bastia. This new reality follows the construction of a feminist movement over several years. The discontent is huge. On 6 March, 1,500 people gathered before the prefecture in Ajaccio, 800 in Bastia, 500 in Calvi, and these rallies led to very violent clashes.

This is a level of confrontation not seen since the 1980s. The reaction of the state has been to give the Corsican brief to interior minister Gérald Darmanin, which is interpreted as a real provocation. This is also the case regarding the withdrawal of the status of "detainee of particular concern" from Yvan Colonna while he is between life and death.

There will be a demonstration next Sunday in Bastia. The determination of the youth is immense. Trade unions and social movement organizations are being forced to follow suit. The only way out of the conflict is either an extraordinary repression or a response to the movement's demands. The demands put forward are the repatriation of prisoners, a favourable response to the democratic demands of the majority on the island, a recognition of the sovereignty of the Corsican people. For us there is no distinction between democratic and social demands because this movement is actually the expression of the will of the youth to break all their chains.

## **Facing the French state**

Faced with the mobilization, we are seeing a large-scale repression, violence, the use of weapons that have already caused significant damage in France such as flash balls and so on. The appointment of Commander Bertolini, a former secret police officer and chevalier of the Légion d'honneur, shows a possibility that the terrible repression of the 1980s will be repeated. There is a real possibility of a large-scale repressive response.

Among the trade unions, sectoral movements have begun. A teachers' union has filed a strike notice until 31 March, and there are calls to join the mobilizations. The Departmental Union CGT South Corsica, the second biggest union after the Corsican Workers' Union, was at the demonstration in Ajaccio. Discussions are also taking place to eventually lead to an Action of the Isula morta type, a day of mobilization that brings a halt to economic life on the island.

The government is trying to influence the reformist leaderships to curb the mobilization, but the youth believe that the minimalist line of the majority of the assembly is bankrupt, that they are humiliated and provoked, and that it takes a mass struggle to change things.

We demand an immediate end to repression, the immediate repatriation of political prisoners and a political settlement meeting the democratic demands of the Corsican people.

*A Manca*

*10 March 2022*

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[1] RFI, 3 March 2022 "[Corsican nationalist Yvan Colonna in a coma after being attacked by fellow prisoner](#)".