



## PRESS RELEASE – ANVITA<sup>1</sup> :

### Support for Mimmo Lucano facing a disproportionate sentence

On 30 September 2021, the former mayor of Riace (Italy), Mimmo Lucano, was sentenced in the first instance to 13 years and 2 months imprisonment, finding him guilty of "criminal conspiracy to aid illegal immigration, fraud, embezzlement and abuse of office".

While the administrative errors committed are undeniable, the severity of the sentence seems disproportionate. The Locri prosecutor himself was asking for almost half that amount, 7 years and 11 months. While the prosecution claims to want to avoid the political arena (« *This is not the trial to the noble and real objective of the reception* »<sup>2</sup>), we, local authorities and elected members of the National Association of Welcoming Cities and Territories (**ANVITA**), **affirm that this heavy and disproportionate sentence is, on the contrary, political and that it illustrates, once again, a trial of hospitality.**

Our network calls for a wide support to Mimmo Lucano, to his noble fight for the dignified reception of people. The former mayor of Riace has not only welcomed people unconditionally, but has also helped to revitalize his village and to demonstrate that **welcoming is possible, but also profitable for our territories**<sup>3</sup>.

Yesterday Cédric Herroux, Pierre-Alain Mannoni, Martine Landry and so many others in France and elsewhere, today Mimmo Lucano in Italy, **the condemnations against those in solidarity must stop.** The question of hospitality must no longer weigh on a conviction.

**ANVITA condemns all attacks on solidarity, targeting people who have helped and welcomed**, while a European crisis of reception between the members of the European Union has taken hold and still prevents local authorities from welcoming people in vulnerable situations with dignity.

Jeanne Barseghian, Mayor of Strasbourg, co-president

Damien Carême, MEP, co-president

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<sup>1</sup> ANVITA is a French national network of 50 local authorities and 43 elected representatives committed to the charter of unconditional reception. More information on the network, the charter and its members: <https://anvita.fr>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.liberation.fr/international/europe/crise-migratoire-en-italie-le-maire-de-riace-condamne-a-une-lourde-peine-de-prison-20210930\\_ZM2C3R46UBCIFEFOKSUY7QFT6I/](https://www.liberation.fr/international/europe/crise-migratoire-en-italie-le-maire-de-riace-condamne-a-une-lourde-peine-de-prison-20210930_ZM2C3R46UBCIFEFOKSUY7QFT6I/)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/international/260921/mimmo-lucano-il-faut-defendre-cet-autre-monde-possible-face-la-violence-du-populisme?onglet=full>