



USITF Newsletter #15, Week of 9th – 15th May, 2016
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Welcome to another edition of the weekly USITF newsletter, “**Italian Politics This Week**,” a snapshot on past week’s major events, complete with news and analyses from national and international sources.

Egypt meets Italian authorities’ requests in Regeni’s case: Italian and Egyptian officials met on Sunday to further investigate into the murder of Giulio Regeni, the Italian PhD student who was found dead in Cairo on 3 February. According to Italian prosecutors, requests from Rome were “[largely](#)” met during the meeting, after receiving the phone records of 8 out of the 13 people Italian authorities were interested in and the testimonies from various people. In the last week, Italian prosecutors found files [written in Arabic](#) in Regeni’s computer, but denied these were relevant to the investigation. Despite cooperation with Egyptian authorities, Rome chief prosecutor Giuseppe Pignatone [said](#) on Tuesday "I don't know. It has to be clear that the investigations are being led by Egyptian authorities and police. We are collaborating as much as possible," about the possibility of finding the truth in the case.

Police arrests three suspected of planning attacks: Italian police [arrested](#) three people on Tuesday as a part of an investigation into a cell which is believed was planning attacks in Rome and London. The cell was made up of five people residents near the southern city of Bari, in the Puglia region. Two of them are reportedly in Afghanistan at the moment. Three suspect out of five have been accused of international terrorism, while two of aiding illegal immigration. The five men had all [obtained](#) rights to stay in Italy. Bari prosecutor Giuseppe Volpe [told](#) a press conference on Tuesday: “We have absolutely no evidence pointing to an imminent attack in Italy,” although he added the group was certainly preparing for an attack. One of the apprehended man, Hakim Nasiri, was [released](#) on Thursday.

Italy joins rest of Europe allowing gay civil unions: Italian parliament [approved](#) on Wednesday same sex civil unions and gave some rights to unmarried heterosexual couples. The bill is strongly opposed by Catholics, while the gay community argues it is too timid. "There is still a long way to go for full equality but this is an excellent starting point," said Gabriele Piazzoni, president of gay rights group Arcigay. The major points of the deal can be found [here](#). Some centre-right lawmakers [said](#) on Thursday that they will try to call for a referendum to scrap the bill. After the vote, Renzi said: "The negative attitude of the Catholic hierarchy and part of the Catholic world was to be expected," adding “I am a Catholic but I do politics as a lay person: I swore on the Constitution and not on the Gospel. But I respect everyone."

M5S closing the gap with PD: according to a weekly Ixe' poll for RAI public broadcaster, at the moment there is only [2.2%](#) difference in support between the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement (M5S) (28,2%) and Premier Matteo Renzi's ruling centre-left Democratic Party (PD) (30,4%). The results of the poll are slightly in contrast with [another poll](#) commissioned by current affairs program

Piazza Pulita, which indicates that 28,4% of Italians would now vote for M5S in a national election, compared to with 28% for the PD, suggesting that the M5S would win national elections if they were held in the coming weeks. In the meantime, [Carlo Calenda](#) was appointed as the new Industry Minister, replacing Federica Guidi.