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### **When waste replaces the old plague ...**

Italy and, more broadly, the whole of Europe are threatened by a health disaster due to the criminal management of waste. This is one of the messages that was launched on Tuesday, April 21 at the European Parliament in Brussels, by experts taking stock of the dangers targeting Europeans who do not know they are living on a bomb, namely the heap of industrial waste.

*"I'm tired of celebrating funerals of children of three, nine, fourteen years old, of hearing the bells ring ..."* With these words full of discouragement Dom Maurizio **Patriciello**, parish priest in Caivano, told the tragedy which is taking place in the "Land of fires", this part of Campania where unscrupulous manufacturers have for a long time buried deadly waste. *"I prefer to pay a fine that sort my garbage,"* confessed to him one day one of these environmental criminals.

The medical diagnosis was confirmed by Dr. Antonio **Marfella** for whom now this incredible mass of waste leads in Italy, but also, indirectly, in the whole European Union to a situation comparable to the great plagues of yesteryear. In Campania, the youngest region of Italy, this oncologist from Naples perceives the early stages of a unprecedented wave by 2020 of cancer and other diseases related to changes in genetic matrices that are clearly attributable to the action of industrial waste.

The scourge is now fully European and even outright worldwide, explained Roberto **Rossi**, magistrate, because unscrupulous manufacturers are now relayed by waste traffickers. For Claudia **Salvestrini**, Director of PolieCo, an Italian Interministerial consortium interested in the recycling of waste plastics, "écocriminels" now carry them to African and Asian countries, to China for example, where they are recycled in a rough way by workers who are reduced to the status of slaves. These poorly recycled products, always harmful, are afterwards found in European stores, for example, in baby's bottles ....

During this seminar on Tuesday, April 21, chaired by Mr. **Caputo** from the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats and organized with the support of PolieCo and the association Cultura contro camorra, all agreed on the necessity to firmly address the waste trafficking problem by working to contain it. But, through the speeches of its two representatives, the European Commission also observed that, if all Member States are aware of the problem, all do not seem willing to engage on this issue.