

## Province has a deficit, Galli rejects accusations and asks for apology from majority

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Ten days after the press conference in which **the majority, led by President Gunnar Vincenzi, reported a deficit of €50 million** on the Province's balance sheet, the opposition groups, who were previous in charge of the Province, have replied to the accusations and **have asked the accusers for an apology**, and called for one resignation.

Today's press conference, which was jointly called by the group "Liberi per la provincia" and the Northern League, with the group leaders **Piero Galparoli** and **Giuseppe Longhin**, together with the representatives of the party secretaries, Matteo Bianchi (Northern League), Marcello Pedroni (Forza Italia) and Ennio Imperatore (UDC), gave **Dario Galli**, the former President and Commissioner of Varese Province, the opportunity to reply.

In response to the majority's accusations concerning the balance sheet, **the opposition group asked three questions on the matter**. The first concerned the role of the auditors and the service of guarantees they provide when approving the balance sheets. "Is it possible that the same auditors approved the balance sheet in November 2014 and then rejected it in March 2015?" The second question was, "Is it possible that Michele Colombo, the chief accountant with the Province, deliberately certified a balance sheet with non-existent revenue?" **And finally**, "Is it possible that the officials in the balance sheet and tax sector, the managers of the various sectors, the Provincial councillors of both the majority and the minority and the State Audit Court itself never realised that they were certifying an illegal balance sheet?"

The former Provincial administrators formulated a possible answer, which was what Dario Galli (*see photo*) said immediately after news of the deficit came out. "What has happened is simply the consequence of a change of the principles that the law establishes on balance sheets; it certainly isn't the fault of the former administrators. It is a technical matter, which cannot be exploited as a political accusation. Moreover, we can implement all the necessary interventions to correct this problem."

Everything revolves around the "active surpluses" that were part of the balance sheet. Paraphrasing the auditors, **President Gunnar Vincenzi** reported that "In the approved balance sheet, among the credit side items, there were presumed credits of the Province which, in fact, do not exist," and this created a deficit. In contrast, Galli responded, saying that it was purely a balance sheet technicality. "On 1 January 2015, the new standardised accounting principles came into force (Leg. Decree No. 118/2011), which provides for an internal audit of the tax on third party liability insurance and of the provincial property registration tax. Thus, only the recording of the figures has changed and it is logical that, if seen only partially, and only from the point of view of revenue, a deficit should appear."

Beyond the technicalities, **the matter also stands out from a more political point of view**. "President Vincenzi and the majority councillors made accusations, thereby making them a political matter," **those present explained**. "We didn't even have a debate, before their public remark, and now they refuse to reply to our objections, with data that demonstrate what they reported." In contrast, Galli published a report by the former chief accountant of the Province, Michele Colombo, which looks at the accounts and explains the matter from a technical point of view.

“The doubt has been raised in the minds of the people that I may have acted fraudulently,” **Dario Galli explained**. “A shadow has been cast over the whole technical apparatus of the Province, that has also spread unjustified concern over the future of its employees. I officially ask the President and the Councillors to call a press conference to apologise, otherwise I will take legal measures to protect myself.”

And a request also came, from the groups on the council, to call an urgent provincial council meeting to discuss the whole matter. In addition to this, the **majority councillor Laura Cavallotti** has been asked, by the Northern League group, to resign as the balance sheet supervisor.

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