



## The Orphan and young Frankenstein

*Wednesday, July 30, 2008*

**For more than two years, Italy and Turkey fought a ruthless diplomatic battle of the votes to win the right to host the World's Fair. Now it seems all forgotten**

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Do you remember the proverb "victory has a thousand fathers but defeat is an orphan?" Well, Turks may have forgotten about their "orphan," Expo İzmir 2015. But maybe it is better that way. Italy, the victorious, now cannot seem to get its act together for the Milan World's Fair, even though it beat the Turks over four months ago. In fact, it seems to have given birth to a "young Frankenstein," the new executive committee which will guide the construction and realization of a global event entitled "Feed the Planet, Energy for Life."

After Italy's victory: For more than two years, Italy and Turkey fought a ruthless diplomatic battle of votes to win the right to host the World's Fair, the one that brought you the Eiffel Tower in Paris over 100 years ago. Last March, after burying all their political rivalries and using food, football and fashion plus a slick marketing campaign, the Italians won the battle and the Turks sadly flew home. But as soon as Italy won, the shaky alliance of private industry, the municipality of Milan (right-wing) and the government of Italy (then left-wing) dissolved. Worse still the mayor of Milan, Letizia Moratti, and the governor of Lombardy, Roberto Formigoni, both from Berlusconi's party started squabbling. The dispute was so bitter that when it came to visit Expo 2008 in Saragozza, Spain, each of them chartered a private plane to visit the fair separately. The question was and still is: Who is the boss? Where is the boss? Each of the bosses wanted to be in charge. Enter Silvio Berlusconi, freshly elected prime minister of Italy. What did Berlusconi do? He made the table even larger and broadened the steering committee to 16 members including 10 state ministers to make the group directly subservient to the central government. Inside the committee were not only the minister of economy and of tourism but the ministers of defense (!) and of agriculture. The new group has divided the responsibilities this way: Moratti, the mayor, will take care of the fair until it is all over – meaning 2016. There is just one problem. Her term expires in 2011. The governor, on the other hand, will have responsibility for all the infrastructure meaning probably most of the public works estimated at over \$4 billion. But who is the boss? Italy's respected newspaper Sole 24 called the new enlarged committee "a sort of Frankenstein" where everyone and no one is in charge. A further problem is that the current worldwide financial crisis has created a liquidity crunch and Italian banks are no longer that interested in financing.

Still six years to go: The only hope seems to be for Silvio the Savior to come forth with another surprise. For example, he could be switching the next meeting of the G8 nations from Sardinia to his home town Milan in 2009 in order to bring in even more direct government control to the construction and preparations of the World's fair. There is still six years to go. But the immediate effect of the victory has caused uneasiness in Italy. Would it be like this in Turkey if İzmir had won? Perhaps the Turks could have better enjoyed the sweet smell of success amid its political crisis. ....

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