

Crisis talks after Prodi quits

Italian President Giorgio Napolitano is holding crisis talks following the resignation of Prime Minister Romano Prodi after just 10 months in office. Prodi, who won the narrowest election in Italy's post-war history last year, quit after several of his centre-left coalition partners opposed a crucial foreign policy vote

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

1. Prodi to form new government or go to parliament with present cabinet for confidence vote
2. Another Minister could be asked to form caretaker government
3. Parliament dissolved, new elections called

BALANCE OF POWER

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Prodi
348 seats
18 parties



Berlusconi
281 seats
18 parties

SENATE

Prodi
158 seats



Berlusconi
156 seats

TEN MONTHS IN POWER

Apr 2006: Prodi wins election by narrowest margin in Italian history. Opponent **Silvio Berlusconi** alleges fraud and refuses to concede defeat

Aug: Commits up to 3,000 troops to new UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon, claiming renewed international respect for Italy's foreign policy

Sep: Deficit-cutting budget meets resistance on left. With little in way of structural reform, Italy's credit-worthiness cut, but European Commission still forecasts it will bring deficit inside EU's 3% ceiling for first time since 2002

Jan 2007: Coalition infighting over planned expansion of U.S. military base in Vicenza – approved in Senate only with opposition support – and refinancing of Italy's military mission in Afghanistan – from which three leftist ministers abstain

Feb: Government approves bill granting rights to unwed and gay couples, angering Catholic coalition allies. Leaders of leftist coalition parties attend protest against Vicenza base. Loses Senate vote on foreign policy – a major test of government support – forcing Prodi to resign