

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

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Quality Public Services – Action Now!

Quality public services key to sustainable economic solutions
Landmark international conference brings together
private and public sector workers, government and civil society leaders
Quality Public Services – Action Now! October 12-14, Geneva, Switzerland

Brussels, 1 October 2010 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC Will participate in the QPS Conference in Geneva in October. The financial sector and its boosters are deflecting blame for global financial and economic crises and making public sector workers the primary scapegoats, in countries worldwide. However, trade unions, political and civil society leaders are uniting to counter the financial lobby and rapidly advance sustainable economic solutions that build peaceful, equitable societies.

Answers to the global economic crisis can include things as simple as providing quality public early childhood education. Evidence backing this and other innovative responses to current social challenges will be presented at the landmark Quality Public Services – Action Now! conference, October 12-14 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The 400 international conference participants will contribute to a charter and action plan for a new Council of Global Unions' campaign that promotes investment in quality public services as the best way to protect and create jobs for economic recovery, address poverty and inequity, and build environmentally-sustainable, secure and democratic societies.

Kumi Naidoo, leader of Greenpeace International and co-chair of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, will provide the keynote address. Sharan Burrow, general secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation, Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins, chief executive officer of Green For All (USA), and Richard Samans, managing director of the World Economic Forum, are also among the dozens of prestigious guest speakers.

Stephanie Smith, Child Care Sector Council of Canada executive member, will explain how the province of Quebec's investment in providing universal access to quality public child care has reduced poverty rates by almost half, increased the number of women in the workforce to the highest level in the country, and been recouped immediately in large part through increased taxes collected from working parents.

The current model of globalisation is clearly based on an unsustainable system that socialises losses and privatises gains. Women and young people are especially hard-hit as stable public jobs, education, health and pension supports are sacrificed in order to prop up bank interests. Speakers will also address the need for stronger financial regulations, and progressive taxation policies – including an international financial transaction tax – that are tied to accountable public funding decision-making processes.

Suma Shivarama of the Karnataka State Government Employees' Association (India) will detail how gender equity laws mandating women representatives on village councils in some Indian states has resulted in increased public spending on health care, education, and clean water delivery.

Anne Le Strat, deputy mayor of Paris (France), will discuss how her city decided to reclaim privatised water services and bring them back into public hands this year, to save up to 30 percent in costs.

The Quality Public Services – Action Now! conference is sponsored by the Council of Global Unions, representing more than 176 million working people worldwide.

For the full programme and list of speakers, please see www.QPSconference.org

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The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 301

national affiliates. <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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