



Report of Activities 2004

Public Services International



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Introduction

2004 was the year the ILO found that 50% of the world's workers were living below the poverty line of \$US 2 per day. It was also the year the ICFTU decided to form a new and enlarged international federation, so that workers might speak with more unity than ever before. The threats and the opportunities of globalisation continue to grow.

This report illustrates some of the problems our affiliated unions have faced around the world, and shows how PSI is helping to address these. The position of the labour movement is clear enough. In this time of globalisation, developing the movement's capacity for international work is a necessity. Carrying this work out through global federations is more cost effective than doing it unilaterally. But how does a global federation report back to the members? How do we build a direct link between our international work and the day-to-day struggles of public sector workers? Without this, our mandate is tenuous.

The Annual Report was originally intended as part of a series of publications to meet this need. It was to be a core document which set out what we had achieved for our affiliates. It was to inform them about our activities; to be more accountable; and to offer them a source of material which they could use to show members they were getting value for their money at the global level, as well as the local one.

When unions face financial difficulty, however, spending on international work often gets reviewed. Is this because we have failed to convey the value of our work to the members? If so, how do we remedy the situation? Affiliate membership of PSI is continuing to climb -- more and more unions are joining us -- but we do not have the sense that solidarity is growing at the same pace.

It would seem that the Annual Report is not serving its purpose. We seldom get any reaction to these documents, nor do we get suggestions as to how we might change them in order to satisfy the needs of our member organisations. It is clear that we need to find other ways to report on our work.

PSI is currently reviewing all publications, including the Annual Report and our flagship publication FOCUS. We must stop preaching to the choir. A new communications strategy currently in development will seek to address an exponentially larger audience, in a much more targeted fashion. We have begun a complete renewal of the PSI website, and this is helping us to develop a more interactive mode of communication -- with public sector workers as well as their unions.

The year ahead looks to be no less challenging than the year just past. Will we succeed in implementing this new strategy? We will let you be the judges of that.

Hans Engelberts
PSI General Secretary

International work

PSI STEERING COMMITTEE

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The PSI Steering Committee met in May 2004 and discussed a number of issues related to the PSI Programme of Action, and adopted resolutions on the British Columbia Health Workers' Strike, the crisis in Haiti, support for Sintraemcali in Colombia, the Thai campaign against privatisation, contacts with public service trade unions in Iraq, the mission to Palestine and Israel, and conflict in the Darfur provinces of Sudan. The Finance Report 2003 and Budget 2004 were approved. Proposals on membership and secretariat matters were also adopted.

PSI EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board met in Geneva in December. A very extensive and wide-ranging discussion took place on the future of the international trade union movement in preparation for the forthcoming ICFTU Congress in Japan. Regional working groups discussed how to approach sectoral work in the future. A report on the outcome of the workshops was later adopted. A revised co-operation agreement between PSI-EPSU was adopted, and the presidential teams of both organisations were asked to look at the long-term relationship. A discussion took place on the leadership transition and the Secretariat was asked to prepare a paper for the next Steering Committee meeting. The finance report 2003 and budget for 2005 were approved. Regional reports and reports on the programme of action were approved. A resolution on Iraq and another on Palestine and Israel were adopted.

PSI CONGRESS

Several meetings were held with Austrian affiliates to plan the centennial Congress in Vienna, the capital of one of the founding PSI member countries. PSI was founded in 1907. The Austrian affiliates and other founding member countries – Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland – held initial discussions about a history of public services project, the results of which will be launched at Congress. The Austrian affiliates have asked Dr Andreas Höferl and Prof. Friedrich Keller to work on this project. Both are

recognised labour and social democratic historians: Fritz has a large number of publications on these topics to his name and Andreas has just finished a major study of 15 public services in all 25 EU member states. They understand that PSI wants a succinct political work, one which looks at the development of public services and the challenges/experiences faced in developing, defending and improving them, leading to a base from which to continue doing so, rather than a long, academic dissertation. It should be something that says: Read me – I can help you in your union's work. There will, of course, be some PSI historical material. The secretariat will approach affiliates for material in 2005.

GLOBAL UNION RESEARCH NETWORK

For a number of years, the global unions group has been discussing the fact that there is no co-ordinated global locus of union-oriented research and/or researchers. In January, a number of GUFs (including PSI), the ICFTU, TUAC and ILO staff met in Turin, Italy, to establish the Global Unions Research Network (GURN). This has now become a quite active network, setting up a website (www.gurn.info) and creating a number of discussion forums. Unions affiliated to PSI can join this network and can contribute to any of the multiple web-page topics now being operated. This has also been used to promote a union-oriented communication and discussion website and associated software to promote exchanges amongst unions – Solicomm at www.solicomm.net - and to host web pages for unions in developing countries.

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU)

PSI sent a delegation of four to the ICFTU World Congress in December 2004. The Congress was held in Miyazaki, Japan, under the theme: "Globalising solidarity – building a global union movement for the future". Congress addressed a wide range of issues confronting working people in the era of globalization, with a strong focus on developing structures and work methods which push forward the trade union agenda and put social concerns at the centre of international decision-making.

Policies and action plans on global economic issues, international labour standards, equality, multinational enterprises, employment, peace and security and a range of other issues were finalised, along with plans for trade union action to combat HIV-AIDS and eliminate child labour.

A special session dealt with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The last day saw the adoption of the resolution on the creation of a new international trade union confederation. “We want to build a new international that reflects the vision of the world we want to have, a world of decency, justice, opportunity and equality” said Sharan Burrow, the newly-elected president. Ms Burrow is the first woman to hold the position.

GLOBAL UNION FEDERATIONS

Much of the discussion in the various global union meetings (see www.global-unions.org/), as well as the general conference in January, a special meeting in April and November, and the interim meeting in June, concentrated on global union co-operation, working processes and future developments. Reports were given on joint work with respect to the World Summit on the Information Society, IMF/World Bank, OECD, HIV/AIDS, the Global Reporting Initiative, World Social Forum and World Economic Forum. Special meetings took place with respect to the ILO and Education. The PSI/EI cooperation has continued, with some new initiatives being taken.

Public sector workers and their work

INTRODUCTION

PSI's work on public sector issues in 2004 fell into eight main areas:

- General public sector work, under the supervision of the Public Sector Working Group (PSWG);
- Public utilities work, under the guidance of a Utilities Advisory Group (UAG), which is a sub-committee of the PSWG;
- Health services work, supervised by the Health Services Task Force (HSTF);
- Work on trade-related public sector issues, especially work on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations Confer-

ence on Trade and Development (UNCTAD);

- Work on other International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and related activities on globalisation matters;
- The Quality Public Services Campaign (QPS), also being supervised by the PSWG;
- New work with the ILO's Socio-Economic Security Branch on the impacts of liberalisation in public services;
- New work with the Global reporting Initiative (GRI).

Much of this work is reported in the various channels noted in the table of 2004 PSI events found on the PSI website and will not be repeated in what follows here. Lists of PSWG and HSTF members, respectively, are available from the PSI secretariat upon request and/or from the PSI website.

GENERAL PUBLIC SECTOR WORK

The PSI's Public Sector Working Group (PSWG) met twice in 2004, in March and October (the minutes were circulated to all affiliates). In dealing with its programme of work from 2002 to 2007, it focused on:

- The Quality Public Services campaign
- Work on public utilities
- PSI activities at the World Social Forum and World Economic Forum
- OECD work
- Further development of a policy paper on the concept of Public-Public Partnerships
- The beginning of some work on security issues in terms of: the measures that governments were taking (genuine or otherwise) to deal with security concerns; the way that “security concerns” were being used to cut other, mainly social, budgets; and the rights, safety and working conditions of those workers dealing with security issues
- A study on the liberalisation of public services being conducted by PSI and the Socio-Economic Security Programme of the ILO. This is further reported below
- The impact of demographic changes on services, on users, on workers and on unions
- Trade Agreements and public services
- Reform and improvement of the public services – a major new paper on which the PSWG is working, based on the assumption that public sector workers have a vested interest in improving both public services and the very nature of work
- The continuation of general anti-privatisation work as appropriate

- Ways of helping affiliates to share resources, knowledge, experience, etc.
- Identifying regional and sub-regional work of interest to the PSWG.

PSI continued to work, mainly through the Trade Unions Advisory Committee (TUAC), on Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) work in the Public Governance Directorate (GOV). The work with GOV mainly involves regulatory reform. In 2004, the Public Governance Committee (PGC) started a major review of regulatory reform in Russia – the first non-member state it has reviewed. This work always involves the affiliates in the countries under review. PSI has access to the draft reports and is able, with affiliate input, to influence the final shape of these reports, which can have major policy implications in the countries under review.

There is an annual TUAC-PGC Consultation at which the TUAC delegation is largely composed of PSI affiliates. The 2004 Consultation is reported elsewhere but dealt with the following issues:

- The new PGC mandate
- Public sector modernisation
- Work on OECD-China relations
- PSI's Quality Public Services work
- Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) – see below
- The PGC 2005-2006 Work Programme

TUAC and PSI spent much time lobbying on the adoption of two OECD instruments of concern for public sector unions:

- New Principles of Corporate Governance for Private Corporations, a matter for our members who work in privatised organisations; and
- Draft Guidelines on the Governance of State-Owned Assets. (The final version will be on the OECD website at www.oecd.org)

PSI IN HEALTH

PSI's health work is directed by the Health Services Task Force (HSTF) and the Executive Board. The HSTF met in September 2004. The meeting was well attended by regional representatives but it was recognised that not all of those representatives had the opportunity to report back to their regional and sub-regional constituencies. The meeting covered the following issues, the majority of which had been identified as the key areas of work leading up to the 2007 Congress:

Globalisation work

An update of the study of global trends in the health services was presented by Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU). This

covered policy developments at the World Bank, changes in the health care strategy of the International Finance Corporation, and changing relationships between healthcare multinational companies and governments in Europe and South East Asia.

Liberalisation of health services research project

This was part of a major research project being conducted by ILO Socio-Economic Security branch and PSI. Questionnaires will be sent to affiliates to collect information about the impact of liberalization on seven areas of security in the workplace. It was expected that the survey results will be available by the last quarter of 2005. In addition to the survey a number of background papers have been commissioned.

HIV/AIDS

Three main items were covered:

- A new PSI policy paper on responses to HIV/AIDS was introduced which was designed to lay down the direction of PSI's work in this area. A number of comments were made by the HSTF and these were incorporated into the revised paper which went to the Executive Board meeting in December.
- ILO/AIDS presented its work, in particular the preparation for the new WHO/ILO Guidelines for Health Workers on HIV/AIDS. These will be reviewed by a meeting of experts in April 2005.
- The Director of WHO, HIV/AIDS Department, described the background to the 3x5 initiative. This was designed to provide 3 million HIV positive persons with anti-retroviral drugs by the end of 2005. Through antiretroviral therapy it was possible to transform HIV/AIDS from a death sentence to a manageable disease. To be successful it will require a huge mobilisation of resources, including the involvement of health workers.

Migration of health workers

The first phase of the PSI survey on health worker migration had been successfully completed and a report is available. There is also an introductory guide available on the PSI website. PSI has now drawn-up a second phase to the project and two affiliates ABVAKABO and UNISON have agreed to provide support.

The HSTF expressed considerable interest in the work being undertaken on migration, recognising that the movement of health workers from some of the weakest health services in the world created enormous difficulties for the remaining workers and patients. The ILO Sectoral Activi-

ties Branch reported on work on migration that came out of proposals made at the last Joint Meeting on Health Services, October 2002.

Social dialogue in the health services

The ILO has been working on the follow-up to the last Joint Meeting on Health, which included the production of a guideline on Social Dialogue in the Health Sector. The next stage in the process has been to produce an education/training module on social dialogue. (This module will be available in draft form in January 2005).

Violence at work

There was a report on the continuation of the joint project on workplace violence in the health sector. New areas of activity have been developed that include an education and training kit (to be piloted in South Africa in early 2005). There were reports from Bulgaria, where work on violence has been going on for several years following the initial joint project research from the Czech Republic, where a new project has started as a result of an initiative taken by the health workers union.

Health Care Worker - Health and Safety

An ICN/WHO project on preventing needlestick injury and blood-borne pathogens was presented to the meeting. The HSTF recognised the importance of the project, and it was felt that infection from needlestick injury should be considered an occupational illness. In addition there needs to be an awareness-raising programme for nurses and users about hospital waste.

Quality Health Services

The meeting discussed the PSI Quality Public Services campaign in terms of how it could be applied to the health services. A number of recommendations were made, which included getting affiliates to document experience, to work within the framework of a General Agreement on Public Services, to develop a quality health services charter, and recognition of the urgent need to develop materials for developing and transition countries.

Communicating health

There was a discussion about how PSI can better communicate its work on health and social services to the membership and the wider public. The idea was to make the web pages far more interactive than in the past; to facilitate an exchange of information and for affiliates to use it as a way of finding solutions to problems by drawing on others experience.

Worldwide Policy Programme of Health and Social Services

It was recognised that the existing policy document needed to be up-dated and reformulated. There was a general view that the present document contained most of the key issues but more emphasis need to be placed on certain issues that had gained prominence in recent years. The new document should be shorter than the existing one and it should start with a vision statement.

The European Public Service Union (EPSU)

The EPSU representative reported on the work being under taken on health issues at the EU. The main areas of work included the retention of staff, the issues raised by an aging workforce, new skill needs and recruitment from within the EU. Other issues raised included European legislation, the Working Time Directive and patient mobility. It was recognised that there were a number of areas, especially migration, where greater cooperation between EPSU and PSI would benefit health service workers.

PSI AND TRADE ISSUES

The World Trade Organisation (WTO)

The work of the WTO continues to impact on our members, especially those in developing countries. The PSI secretariat regularly attends briefings on WTO developments held at the WTO, or run by Geneva-based NGOs with whom PSI works closely.

NGO Advisory Body

In January, Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi, Director General of the WTO held the second meeting with an NGO advisory group that he has established. PSI is one of the ten invited groups (the ICFTU being the only other union body). A full report of the meeting is available, in English, from Mike.Waghorne@world-psi.org

WTO symposia and coalition work

Because of PSI's high profile on WTO issues, especially the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), we were asked to make presentations at general WTO symposia on GATS, including health worker migration and general issues. On many WTO issues, PSI is very actively involved with two NGO-oriented coalitions: the Our World Is Not For Sale Coalition (OWINFS); and the Stop the GATS attack! coalition. OWINFS is generally opposed to attempts to expand the mandate of the WTO to incorporate more of the corporate globalisation

agenda, especially by bringing investment, competition policy and government procurement under WTO control.

Global Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)

As mentioned above, PSI supports the Stop the GATS Attack! campaign. PSI is recognised as a leading critic of GATS implications for public services, governments' abilities to pass regulations with confidence, on secret and anti-democratic decision-making and for its effects on developing countries. As a consequence, we are often invited to provide speakers for GATS seminars, workshops and conferences for affiliates, other union bodies, the OECD and a number of NGOs. A significant number of these events were held after Cancún as many people tried to come to terms with implications of the collapse of the talks. GATS has two impacts on health services: its general promotion of health services trade, which can be positive or negative; and the impacts of GATS Mode 4 trade, the temporary movement of health workers to provide services in other countries. We have been asked to advise other groups such as the NGO Health Forum or the Peoples' Health Movement on these issues.

Water has also crept up the GATS agenda, with several northern governments, especially the European Union, seeking GATS access to water services. It has now become one of PSI's main campaign focuses in GATS work.

Because PSI is situated in the Geneva area and Education International (EI) is in Brussels, and because PSI and EI have a cooperation agreement, EI has contracted to pay for some of the trade work that Mike Waghorne, PSI Assistant General Secretary, does. Mike does most of PSI's trade work. He also represents EI's GATS interests and does work on GATS and education.

Because of the major role of the European Commission in the GATS negotiations process of what are called 'requests-offers' (in which each member state can ask others to open up very specific services to other member states and/or can respond to the requests from other states), PSI and the EPSU work closely together on WTO issues. The European Economic and Social Committee was asked by Pascal Lamy, the outgoing EC Trade Commissioner, to give an opinion on the position the EU should take on Mode 4 (the temporary movement of natural persons to provide services) in GATS. The Committee has established a study group for this purpose and Mike Waghorne represents the EPSU as an expert for the union side in these discussions. The report is due in mid-2005.

The ICFTU-GUF Trade, Investment and International Labour Standards Network (TILS)

Whilst PSI supports much of the work on workers' rights at the WTO through the TILS network campaigns, it should be recognised that much workers' rights work at the global level is done in our IFI work, reported elsewhere. The TILS meeting held in February was a chance to review all global unions' trade policy work and policy positions after the collapse of the Cancún WTO Ministerial Conference.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

PSI has attended UNCTAD Conferences before, although on a low-level basis. That had been our plan for 2004 until it became clear that the EU and the US were attempting to use the UNCTAD XI Conference in June in São Paulo, Brazil, to gut the organisation and turn it into a WTO subsidiary body. In addition, the CUT in Brazil had been working very closely with the ABONG and REBRIP, the two Brazilian NGO groups coordinating the inputs of civil society at the Brazilian end of things.

Other NGOs in Geneva had also been very active in preparing for this UNCTAD Conference, and had organised the civil society inputs into the three Geneva PrepCom Hearings. They and PSI put together a draft civil society statement which would be put to the Civil Society Forum in São Paulo and, if adopted, be delivered to the UNCTAD opening Plenary. PSI collated this statement and was the chair of the group finalising the statement adopted in Brazil.

Unlike at the WTO, accredited NGOs at UNCTAD get a chance to make inputs at plenary round-table sessions. Of the four slots for civil society, two were allocated to PSI: Bea Edwards, from the PSI Washington office, made a presentation on development issues at which she demolished the arguments of the head of the Inter-American Development Bank. Jocelio Drummond, PSI Sub-Regional Secretary in Brazil, made a presentation on partnership (not just PPPs/PFIs, but inter-government, civil society and institutional partnership as well). The civil society statement had already taken a strong stand on this later issue, condemning 'partnerships' where the private sector took all the profits and shed all the risks.

The main areas of civil society concern were threefold:

- Initial attempts by the EU and US to restrict what the developing countries wanted: policy space to implement agreed policies at a pace and in the manner which suited their own development agenda;

- A confusing debate on policy coherence: many in civil society and some developing countries were calling for a coherence that is wider than just the WTO and the IFIs, with UNCTAD playing the role of school-yard 'prefect' to keep the developing countries up to the mark; but many developing countries also being shy about this because, as a Canadian delegate said: they don't want language that might imply that the ILO or multilateral environmental agreements might be part of such coherence;
- A strong attempt by the EU to build partnerships with the private sector into the texts – but partnerships which were built on voluntary codes of corporate responsibility.

On the first of these, the language at the end was reasonable – especially the concept of really autonomous policy space - except that developing countries attempt to get the WTO and IFIs to have to respect such policy space was defeated. On the second, the language is quite good and is no longer restricted to the WTO and IFIs. On the third, the EU got its way.

Global institutions and issues

Apart from the OECD and WTO work reported above, PSI is actively involved in issues dealt with by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the WB and the IMF. Other bodies have become more important in recent years.

The International Centre for Trade Union Rights

Although, strictly speaking, PSI's work with ICTUR falls within the Winning Workers' Rights programme, the reality is that the close link between this and WTO work means that PSI connections have been through our WTO work. Mike Waghorne is on the Editorial Board of ICTUR's journal, *International Union Rights*.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs)

Each year, the Global Unions group meets with the WB and IMF senior leaders and officers. The meeting covers a number of issues: structural adjustment policies, debt relief, the involvement (or, more often, the non-involvement) of trade unions in country-level discussions by the IFIs with governments and specific project issues. The main emphasis in recent years has been the attempt to get the IFIs to promote the ILO's core labour standards to governments and to encourage them to respect and implement these standards in any work supported by the IFIs. The meeting in 2004 saw some progress in this regard and a number of the IFI main or subsidiary bodies have endorsed these standards to some degree.

Public enterprise reform

In previous years, PSI had been involved in a partnership with one part of the World Bank: the Public Enterprise Reform and Labour Network (PERLNET). This has now been transformed into a general Bank-union programme on the role of labour in the privatisation process. The combined WB-International Finance Corporation (IFC) unit responsible for this work has now been split into two separate units: one to promote a private sector environment in developing countries; and the other to assist governments in the governance of their public enterprises. The unit(s) of the Bank/IFC have been working on the development of a toolkit for governments on the role of labour in the privatisation process. It is an understatement to say that PSI (and the ITF, with whom we work on these issues) was unhappy with this, but both felt it important to try, with some success, to influence the content of the toolkit such that it became more union-friendly. PSI spoke at the World Bank launch of the Labor Issues in Infrastructure Reform Toolkit, which has been under preparation for over three years. This is a series of modules and a very sophisticated CD-ROM for use by governments and World Bank staff in dealing with the labour aspects of infrastructure privatisation or restructuring. It is an impressive (but pro-privatisation) resource, which will be a 'bible' for many governments, and we believed it important to have pro-union messages included.

Global Unions were given a (not very genuine) opportunity to comment on draft versions of this instrument, and the ICFTU, ITF and PSI submitted a number of written comments, some of which were taken account of in the final version. While the toolkit is based on the idea that privatisation in infrastructure is the best option for developing countries, it also puts forward the strong message that unions must be consulted early on in the reform or privatisation process.

At the launch, PSI made it clear that the trade union movement objected to the fact that the toolkit characterises labour, and notably over-supply of labour, as a principal problem of state-owned infrastructure firms, without mentioning problems such as corruption and mismanagement. We also observed that, despite the strong recommendation to engage in social dialogue with unions at an early stage, any negotiation about the actual decision to privatise was kept off the table. However, on the positive side, the Toolkit puts forward a balanced, sensible and realistic approach for dealing with trade unions. Module 6 contains examples of how early negotiations and full transparency can lead to

“win-win” situations. The web version consists of about 250 pages, with a number of annexes and links to articles, case examples, spreadsheets, sample terms of reference and other supporting materials, plus the CD-ROM. See: http://www.robat.scl.net/content/WORLD_BANK_FINAL/toolkit.html

Public sector reform

In April a PSI delegation, accompanied by Peter Bakvis from the Global Unions Washington Liaison Office, had two sets of meetings at the World Bank. The Bank leadership agreed to create a “focal point” whereby trade unions in public services could obtain adequate information and be properly consulted about World Bank involvement in public service restructuring in their country. The World Bank’s public sector governance department has taken responsibility for this. PSI also has a liaison person whom the Bank can contact.

The decision to create a specific contact point on public service reform for trade unions follows a secondment to the World Bank carried out late in 2003 by John Fryer, a former PSI Executive Committee member from Canada. In his final report, submitted to the Bank and to Bank President Wolfensohn directly, John noted that, in most cases of public service restructuring in which the Bank is involved, unions were not consulted even though Bank policy recommends consultations with “key stakeholders”.

Two World Bank vice-presidents and a number of other Bank officials took part in meetings with the PSI/Global Unions delegation that included Bill Lucy (PSI Vice-President), Jack Howard (AFSCME), Cameron Duncan (PSI’s Inter-Americas Regional Secretary), Mike Waghorne (PSI Assistant General Secretary) and Peter Bakvis. The meetings were held in order to discuss John’s report and agree on practical measures for ensuring that public service unions are properly informed and negotiated with on Bank-sponsored reforms. World Bank Vice-President Gobind Nankani, who is responsible for the Public Sector Governance Department, endorsed the liaison function at the first meeting. The second meeting was with the people who will make this agreement operational.

A number of other decisions were also agreed upon, including the incorporation of information on the necessity to consult unions in the World Bank’s training courses on public service reform, to which PSI representatives will be invited. PSI and the Bank’s Public Sector Governance Department will jointly evaluate some instances where consultations are alleged to have taken

place, in order to draw lessons for future reform programmes and for better quality consultation. They will also work to identify some country-level pilot projects where PSI affiliates, the government and the World Bank could attempt to jointly design and implement a Quality Public Services reform programme.

ILO World Commission

The ILO has established a World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalisation. PSI contributed to general union inputs to this Commission as well as being represented at a two-day session of the Commission that focused on the labour issues in the social dimension of globalisation. The Commission released its report in February 2004. While the report has much in it that supports union views and concerns about the social impacts of globalisation, it does not go as far as we would like in its recommendations on what intergovernmental bodies and governments should do about this. It has, however, been fully debated at the ILO, the UN General Assembly and even at the WTO Symposium held in June. There is a PSI analysis in FOCUS 2/04.

Joint PSI-ILO Socio-Economic Security work

Work commenced in 2004 on an ambitious joint project between PSI and the Socio-Economic Security (SES) Branch of the ILO. This project aims to identify and evaluate the impacts of liberalisation (defined to include a range of policies that go as far as privatisation) in five services: health care, education, criminal care, home care and public employment services. During 2004 we developed a set of comprehensive questionnaires looking at all aspects of security (employment, job, income, health and safety, training and union rights) in each of the services. We also commissioned a number of more academic papers to give some background and trend analysis for the data that the questionnaires will generate. The project will be in its active phase in 2005 and will result in both an ILO conference to discuss the findings and a major publication.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

The GRI is an organisation that emerged from the Rio processes in the early 1990s. It exists (and is supported by a number of UN agencies and governments, as well as by the EU and some foundations) to promote what is called triple bottom-line reporting: encouraging organisations to report on the economic, environmental and social sustainability of their corporate behaviour. This goes well beyond mere financial reporting and is very demanding. It cannot be used by an or-

ganisation unless the whole process is externally and publicly audited according to very tough criteria. Until now, it has been used largely by private sector companies: indeed, that is its main problem – it was designed along private sector models. However, a number of public agencies – municipalities, government departments/ministries and state-owned enterprises in several countries – have expressed an interest in reporting in accordance with the GRI Guidelines. All GRI bodies have trade union representatives on them, so when GRI decided to establish a working group to establish a supplement for public sector agencies to use in reporting, PSI was asked to be a member of the group. By the end of 2004, the group had produced a final draft of the supplement which is on the GRI website (www.globalreporting.org). Public agencies will be able to use it for a year, after which the GRI Board will evaluate and perhaps amend it.

QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES CAMPAIGN

When the Quality Public Services (QPS) campaign was endorsed at Congress in 2002, unions recognised its potential to provide a positive framework within which to campaign for a range of important issues, from basic worker rights in the public sector to fighting privatisation of important services such as health and water. By looking at the big picture (ie why public services matter and how they can be improved) we have created an opportunity to work with civil society, to contribute our voice and influence to a growing international debate, and to win real results.

Successful global campaigns are built on local mobilisation. The campaign priority in 2004 continued to be built on local and national QPS campaigns which address relevant local issues. PSI's role in campaigning has been to facilitate discussion about the QPS strategy, to provide information and education for capacity building, and to support unions in identifying issues, developing strategies and building campaigns.

The result is that there has been growing momentum at local and national levels. Campaign activities are occurring in many forms in many countries, ranging from unions signing framework QPS agreements with governments to major anti-privatisation campaigns. Seminars, education programmes and public forums are being held, often bringing together unions and civil society.

Concurrent with the local and national activity, PSI has been building relationships and recognition with civil society organisations internationally and with key international bodies. The

QPS campaign has become known amongst many NGOs, research organisations and the OECD and World Bank. This is evidenced by the growing number of requests for PSI to participate in related campaigns and activities and to make presentations in different forums.

The QPS web pages (<http://www.world-psi.org/qps>) on PSI's website have been developed to support the campaign. An associated Resource Bank contains new research, information from external sources and union stories and experiences. Other parts of the QPS site provide campaign materials and reports.

These activities have established a strong foundation for the campaign. In 2005 we will build on that foundation with actions that raise the issues in global debates and bring more pressure on governments and international organisations to review their policies and change their practices. The Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), including the UN's Millennium Development Goals, is an ideal opportunity for the Quality Public Services message to be strengthened. Joining the planned "whiteband" actions with a QPS message takes the campaign into national coalitions and actions, and onto the international stage. Linking the call for quality public services to the abolition of poverty, hunger and disease is a proper message, for in reality humanity's hardship and suffering cannot be alleviated without quality public health, education, welfare, water, sanitation and energy services.

UTILITIES

The year 2004 was one of consolidating the strength of the global campaign on water, and increasing the work in the energy sector. The trade unions, and PSI in particular, are clearly recognised as key actors in the implementation of water sector reforms and continue to be identified as the central opponents of privatisation. Yet our voices are no longer alone, as many NGOs have taken up the issue at national and global levels. A number of national campaigns demonstrated the strength of NGO-labour coordination, notably Uruguay, Bolivia and the Philippines.

The United Nations has increased its presence in the sector under the banner of the Millennium Development Goals, and PSI welcomes this. However the privateers are attempting to use the UN, an effort which PSI is countering. In March 2004 Kofi Annan created an advisory board on water, with an over-representation of privateers and a pro-private mandate. PSI and NGOs opposed this direction, and as a result David Boys, PSI Utilities Officer, was appointed to the board

(along with a representative of women and a local authority water manager from Brazil). These three members were able, in the two board meetings, to block the pro-private direction.

A number of governments continue to advocate private management for developing countries, either through ideology, in response to their corporate interests, or as a result of disparaging neo-colonial attitudes. Unions in these countries need to increase pressure on their governments to change these policies. This includes especially governments within the European Union, but also Japan and the United States.

The World Bank continues to promote privatisation, despite mounting evidence of the failure of these policies. Late in 2004, the Bank offered PSI and NGOs access to projects being planned in the water sector. The Bank is asking for input at the design stage of these projects, at the country level. They profess to greater flexibility in their approach.

Our challenges in the coming years are to demonstrate the viability of public ownership and management and to show the positive role that unions can play in the reform and improvement of public water utilities. We urgently need evidence of successful labour-management co-operation and of public-public partnerships. We will also need to meet the challenge from the World Bank, which requires new types of expertise within PSI, delivered at the level of the water utility.

In energy, there is mounting evidence of the failure of the privatisation model. Unions are successfully resisting privatisation, with notable victories in South Korea and Indonesia, where PSI was able to play a strategic role. The campaign in Thailand suffered a major setback when the corrupt Thaksin government engineered a super-majority in national elections. This government is now targeting the energy union and its leadership.

The major industry players also recognise some problems, and a number are pulling back or limiting their expansion plans. The deregulation agenda is slowing, as industry looks for new ways in which to reduce corporate risks and guarantee profits. PSI must consolidate its presence in the energy sector, as many of the issues which threaten jobs, wages and working conditions are actually determined in national and global policy processes, including again with the World Bank, the European Union, the OECD, WTO and some major national groups.

PSI continues to help unions resolve rights and representational problems within multinational corporations, and is working closely with

colleagues in EPSU and the structures of the European Works Councils.

PENSIONS

PSI continues to participate in the work of the ICFTU Committee on Workers Capital, which is now chaired by Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress, and staffed by union-friendly investment professionals from British Columbia. The focus of the committee is heavily oriented towards shareholder activism, especially as applied to corporate campaigns in defence of worker rights and interests.

PSI continues to advocate work in support of public pension plan participants, including the development of investment guidelines relative to privatisation, as well as the creation of alternative finance mechanisms to facilitate investment in public infrastructure without privatisation. The Committee has divided into four working groups, and national unions are welcome to participate. These groups are:

1. Trustee education
2. Corporate and financial market regulatory mechanisms
3. Corporate accountability & investment manager accountability
4. Economically targeted public and private sector investment

PSI is focusing its efforts on the fourth item.

PSI continues to work with national unions on pension fund issues, although resources for this work are limited and coordination among unions is often haphazard. Privatisation of national retirement security systems is increasing, and PSI has urged the ICFTU to take on this work, as it affects all unions and all workers.

Equality, equity and diversity

PSI's Equality, Equity and Diversity programme is seeking to take strategic initiatives through a campaign focus, in order to have an impact and added value in key areas of concern to women workers and equity-seeking groups in the public sector. The programme of action adopted at Congress in 2002 identified four main areas of

action for the next five-year period, which have also been discussed at the sub-regional, regional and international women's committees, helping to create a coherent and integrated approach to equality and equity issues.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

There is now general acceptance among PSI affiliates of the gender parity principle in PSI delegations, education and training events and in decision-making structures. Monitoring of women's participation continues to play a vital role.

Under the banner of the 50/50 campaign, and modeled on the work being done to increase women's representation in parliament, PSI sub-regional committees and regional committees have been monitoring affiliates' commitments to affirmative action. Many affiliates have now set goals to increase women's participation by the time of the next World Congress in 2007. There have been a number of significant gains.

PSI has sought to improve its statistical information concerning female membership but many affiliates do not provide this information in their annual questionnaire, often for the simple reason that they have no reliable data. PSI is seeking to improve membership information collection for affiliates in developing countries. Currently PSI now has 95 women General Secretaries (or 15%) and 103 women Presidents (or 16.5%). In the case of the 50 biggest affiliates for whom there is data, representing almost 5,000,000 workers, almost two thirds of the membership (63%) is female.

PSI is currently reviewing its whole budgetary process and this should prove an opportunity to improve the overall institutional capacity to carry out a gender impact analysis. To that end, and following discussions with the World Women's Committee, PSI has produced a leaflet called the "Gender equality checklist for running Quality Public Services Campaigns" PSI has also produced a training guide on "Integrating gender into union work: a Practical Guide for Public Sector Trade Unions."

Empowerment of Women

This section of the programme is implemented in close cooperation with PSI's education department (UDIS). While in some countries, a gender component is incorporated into the on-going training programmes, specific women's empowerment programmes are the preferred option. Gender parity has been mainly achieved, although in Asia Pacific and in some sub-regions of Europe, there are still obstacles to overcome.

There is considerable positive feedback from affiliates and PSI staff that participation in gender equality campaigns has been an empowering experience. Women's participation in collective bargaining is still relatively limited and this is an area that has been identified as needing more attention in the future.

Information and Networking

PSI Women is produced three times per year and is now printed in seven languages, with a print run of almost 9,000. The electronic version is sent out to those unions requesting it. There was also a March 8th supplement.

There was a young women workers delegation at the World Social Forum in January 2004 and a PSI delegation at the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March 2004. These meetings provided an opportunity to give PSI's work profile, to build alliances on strategic issues and to form part of the "global lobby" for women's economic justice issues.

PSI continues to work closely with other global unions on equality issues, in particular with Education International. PSI also works with a number of women's networks, notably Women's International Coalition for Economic Justice (WICEJ), the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) and Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) and the International Gender and Trade Network. PSI is also now working with the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, which has recently focused on the impact of health sector reform on the right to health. PSI has also supported the Amnesty International Campaign: "Stop Violence against Women: It's in our hands!"

GENDER EQUALITY CAMPAIGNS

Maternity Protection Campaign

There were 10 ratifications of the ILO Convention 183 by the end of 2004. Apart from Cuba, they are all from Europe and mainly Central and Eastern European countries. While the number of ratifications remains limited, the campaign at national level is sustained, particularly in Africa and Asia Pacific. Many women's committees have carried out workplace surveys and are seeking to improve existing provisions through collective bargaining.

Pay Equity Campaign

During 2004, there has been a substantive increase in the number of affiliates engaged in the pay equity campaign. A regional staff training programme on pay equity was held in March

2004 for the Inter-Americas staff. The PSI Pay Equity Newsletter was launched in March 2004 and it has proven a useful addition. PSI has assisted its affiliate in Barbados with a gender analysis of the civil service job evaluation review and there have been a wide range of training programmes.

Pay Equity Action Week

The Pay Equity Action Week 4-8 October was a successful initiative with events such as debates, radio shows, sponsored walks, taking place in over 70 countries around the world. The health services task force organised a panel discussion on "Achieving pay equity in the health sector" on 4th October and there was a European pay equity conference, co-sponsored by Education International, the European Federation of Public Services Unions and PSI, which took place at the ILO on 7-8 October 2004, with over 100 participants. PSI was instrumental in drafting and lobbying for the pay equity component of the ILO Resolution on Gender Equality, Pay Equity and Maternity Protection adopted at the ILO Conference in 2004 and successfully lobbied for follow-up at the ILO Governing Body in November 2004.

Women health workers and international migration

PSI's programme on women health workers and international migration (1st phase) was designed to analyse the impact of migration on health services in developing countries, to campaign for increased funding for public health services, and to develop a partnership approach between unions in sending and receiving countries. A survey on migration of health workers was conducted by PSI affiliates in 15 countries and a report on the research and a guide to migration issues was published.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

PSI's programme of action on equity and diversity issues has sought to emphasise the inter-relationship between different grounds of discrimination and, at the same time, to focus on specific equity issues where public sector unions can have an impact. A particular concern has been to build effective alliances.

Informal economy workers

PSI has continued its collaboration with Streetnet International. The Self-Employed Women's Union, South Africa, participated in the PSI Brazil conference on social control in April 2004

and shared the experiences of market vendors in lobbying for and participating in urban planning. The Zambian Local Government Union and the Zambian Association of Market Vendors held a series of meetings to develop a common platform of demands for presentation to the local municipalities.

Racism and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Following the Inter-American Conference on Racism and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in Brazil, in October 2003, a booklet with the conference recommendations has been widely circulated. The Conference recommendations provide a range of practical strategies for unions to pursue. Racism is increasingly a priority issue for unions in Europe and the Inter-Americas.

Migrant workers

PSI is also a member of the Steering Committee for the Promotion of the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families and is part of a planning group to form a more permanent Secretariat for the Steering Committee.

Young workers

PSI's programme to promote recruitment and participation of young workers has increased in profile over the last year. In a number of sub-regions, young workers' networks have been established and more unions are now creating their own young workers groups.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered workers

PSI co-sponsored, together with Education International, an international meeting of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered workers in August 2004, and continues to work closely with the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) on issues related to discrimination at the workplace and on legal reforms.

Disabled workers

PSI has continued its membership of GLADNET, the disability rights forum, and has sponsored a seminar to disseminate research from the survey conducted in 2003 on how to promote the rights of disabled workers in the workplace. The seminar took place in Chennai, India, in December, with 42 participants, many of whom were disabled. It was a tripartite meeting attended by trade unions, government officials and employers, and the participants came up with a list of recommendations on the rights of disabled workers.

Winning workers' rights

During 2004 trade union rights work in PSI continued to increase in volume and importance. The rights of public sector workers around the world faced unprecedented challenges and unions found that international support was a vital component in their strategies and campaigns. Trade union rights violations often occur in the context of union opposition to privatisation and denial of their trade union rights, and also because unions have played a key role in exposing cases of management corruption.

LETTERS OF PROTEST AND URGENT ACTION REQUESTS

Both affiliates and the PSI have become more effective in providing support, including:

- Letters of protest to employers and governments;
- Urgent actions through e-mail lists and the website;
- Information in PSI publications and other trade union rights publications;
- Production of information materials; and
- Complaints to the Committee on Freedom of Association or, where appropriate, requests for observations to the Committee on the Application of Standards.

During 2004 protest letters to government were sent from the Secretariat as follows:

- 6 in Africa and Arab countries: Algeria, Ghana, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria and Sudan
- 6 in Asia Pacific region: Bangladesh, Korea, Nepal and Thailand
- 11 in Inter-Americas region: Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Peru
- 19 in the European region: Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Israel, Moldova, Portugal, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom

Messages of solidarity and some letters of protest are also sent from the regional and sub-regional offices. It is pleasing to note that in both the case of Mauritius and Mozambique, there have been tangible and positive results as a consequence of PSI's intervention.

Urgent action appeals were issued in eight

cases, including Colombia, El Salvador, Korea, Russia and Thailand. The response rate to the PSI appeals continues to increase.

ILO SUPERVISORY MECHANISMS

PSI has been extending its use of the ILO supervisory mechanisms and the technical expertise of the Freedom of Association Branch. There are 15 cases currently on-going before the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association, which have either been directly submitted by the PSI or to which the PSI has been associated. It should be noted that, almost without exception, the comments and decisions of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association have been favourable to the rights of public sector workers.

One of the most recent cases to go before the Committee on Freedom of Association relates to last year's industrial action in Tamilnadu, India, submitted by the Tamilnadu Government Officials Union. Over 2,400 people were arrested and 170,000 summarily dismissed in July 2004, at the time when a coalition of unions agreed to take strike action to protest against unilaterally imposed cuts in pension and other entitlements. While those dismissed were eventually reinstated (though without compensation), when the case was taken to appeal the Supreme Court ruled that "government employees have no fundamental, legal, moral or equitable right to go on strike".

PSI has also associated itself with a number of cases in Canada, in Moldova, and in the case of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) USA.

COLOMBIA CAMPAIGN

While the Colombian government invested substantial resources in a public relations campaign, particularly in Europe, designed to prove that they are seriously tackling human rights issues, the Global Union Federations fully supported the position of unions in Colombia that the situation remains critical. There were 94 trade unionists reported assassinated during 2004, including 16 women. There was also an increase in the assassination and intimidation of relatives of trade unionists. The number of arrests, arbitrary detentions and ransacking of union premises which can be directly attributed to the police and armed forces has also increased. Only three new trade union organisations were recognised in the first six months of the year, and union membership continues to fall. In keeping with its Congress resolution, PSI marked International Human

Rights Day, 10th December 2004, with a special appeal on Colombia, calling for an end to impunity and citing a series of specific cases.

ILO TRADE UNION RIGHTS TRAINING PROGRAMME

In May 2004 the PSI organised a 2-day training programme for its Asia-Pacific staff in conjunction with ACTRAV and the Freedom of Association Branch on the ILO supervisory mechanisms. This enabled the PSI Secretariat and regional staff to upgrade their knowledge and understanding of procedures, and to meet with the relevant ILO staff. Trade union rights training programmes are on-going in South Asia, Colombia and in the Arab countries. During 2004 the ILO, particularly in the Inter-Americas, worked closely on freedom of association issues with the public sector trade unions.

TRADE UNION RIGHTS PUBLICATIONS

In 2004 PSI prepared a guide to the rights of civil servants in selected countries in the European Union. The guide was intended for use in countries outside Europe seeking to extend civil service union rights. PSI regularly receives requests concerning comparative legislation on the civil service, and it is hoped that this will be a useful tool. The text was piloted in a training course on the rights of civil service trade unions in Romania.

The ILO Global Report in 2004 focused on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining, and PSI made some contributions. The report gave particular emphasis to the erosion of public sector bargaining rights in many countries.

ICFTU TRADE UNION AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

PSI participated in this Committee and is seeking to coordinate with the ICFTU on the Colombia campaign and other areas. PSI provides regular updates to the ICFTU as an input into the ICFTU Annual Survey on Trade Union Rights.

Union development and international solidarity (UDIS)

The new focus adopted by Congress in 2002 reflects an important change in PSI's policy. It places the building and strengthening of unions and their capacity to fulfil their mission at the core of all our activities. Education and capacity building, together with other tools such as strategic planning, organising, campaigning and advocacy, constitute an integrated approach to union development. During the past few years, this holistic approach has increasingly been incorporated into project design. Simultaneously projects are more and more including sector-based components and organisational development to strengthen the unions' financial and policy-making capacity. Specific campaigns are also included, not only the global PSI campaigns on quality public services and pay equity, but also on anti-privatisation, defence of trade union rights and HIV/AIDS.

RELATIONS WITH FUNDING ORGANISATIONS

Education officers of global unions and the Nordic-Dutch group of funding organisations met in April in Denmark to review ongoing cooperation and matters of mutual interest. Christine Roos from the PSI's Union Development and International Solidarity (UDIS) department attended the meeting. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) reported on their impact study on the work of sponsoring organisations in the Philippines and Thailand. The meeting reviewed the LFA training workshops at regional level with the participation of global union federation (GUF) staff and sponsors. The objective is to upgrade their skills to design, implement and evaluate training projects. PSI organised two of these workshops. The second Latin American workshop was held in Guatemala with the participation of PSI staff Oscar Rodríguez, Jocélio Drummond and Christine Roos. PSI staff in French-speaking Africa attended the workshop organised in that region, and Indah Budiarti from Indonesia attended the second Asian workshop, and Sandra

Massiah from Barbados and Khadija Mohamed attended the one organised in Kenya. Three CEE sub-regional secretaries participated in the final workshop held in Russia.

A meeting was held with Swedish affiliates and the LO/TCO Council in May to review ongoing and future projects. Southern Cone Sub-regional Secretary Verónica Prado attended these meetings. The Swedish government has imposed a new rule by which national unions must contribute 10% to overall project budgets. A Swedish consultant visited the various GUFs to make an overview of the situation.

SASK and FES visited PSI headquarters in May. UDIS held a special meeting in Helsinki in July with the three sponsors of the Southern African union development programme to review implementation and agree on amendments to the programme.

FES called for a special planning meeting in June to define joint objectives with the GUFs for the next three-year period. PSI visited FES headquarters in Bonn in December to discuss the final project applications.

UDIS staff visited FNV in September, along with George de Roos from AbvaKabo, to discuss ongoing and future projects. They also attended a meeting to review the report on an external evaluation of seven GUF women's projects in Asia Pacific funded by FNV. In spite of the Dutch government's attacks on the public services and the social security system, FNV secured a continuation of funding for the next 4 years.

In terms of sponsor contributions, FNV Mondiaal/AbvaKabo continues to be PSI's largest donor. Their share constituted 44% of total contributions.

In 2004, LO/TCO-Sweden contributed 18% of the total (16% in 2003), SASK/KTV/VAL/TEHY from Finland 16% which includes co-sponsoring with the Nordic Municipal Workers' Federation KNS (12% in 2003) and IMPACT-Ireland 9% (against 11%). Other sponsors are FES-Germany, LO/FTF-Denmark, ACILS-USA, LO-Norway/NTL, and ILO/ACTRAV (Bureau for Workers' Activities).

NEW ACTIVITIES

Africa and Arab countries

- The union development programme in French-speaking Africa (Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Togo) was reviewed at an evaluation and planning workshop in Togo in August. Participants validated project objectives and an application to renew the funding was submitted to, and approved by, FNV and LO/TCO.

- A planning workshop was held for the West Africa project in October and the proposal to continue the project in 2005 is approved by FNV.

Asia Pacific

- The Gender Equality Project will begin a new phase in 2006 for South Asia and South East Asia with an emphasis on the health sector. Two sub regional and one joint sub regional planning workshops were held in 2004 to prepare the new application.
- A new 3-year project for Indonesia was approved by SASK/KTV and KNS that commences in 2005. Two planning workshops were held in Jakarta which included the sponsors. The project focuses on organisational capacity building and campaigns against the privatisation of utilities.

Inter Americas

- New activities in the Inter Americas include a campaign skills training seminar in Caribbean funded by ACTRAV, as well as two major sectoral projects: The public health training, campaigning and research programme in Central America, funded by LO/FTF-Denmark, was initiated in April. The FNV-sponsored municipal workers' project based on international labour standards started in the four sub-regions of Latin America for a three-year period.

Central and Eastern Europe

- An LO/TCO funded project for young workers for Russia and Belarus was initiated.
- UDIS has formulated a strategy to extend the programme for young workers to all of Latin America through separate or co-funding in the various sub-regions. Training and organising activities will continue in Southern Cone in 2005, and planning workshops will be implemented in other sub-regions. It is expected to have young workers' activities in place in the whole region by January 2006.

Regional bodies

18 Africa and Arab countries

The political and social situation in the region was PSI's foremost concern in 2004. In Central Africa the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remained in the limelight as a result of its endemic rebellion, and the very real threat that the country would be divided up between the warring leaders. The climate of tension with Rwanda also remained high. Burundi was in the process of adopting a new constitution; and in the Central African Republic (CAR), some public sector salaries remain unpaid after more than 46 months. In Kenya, the era of a political alternative seems to have left the public disillusioned, with corruption scandals eroding the popularity of the new president and his administration. The sudden increase in fuel prices throughout Africa left much of the population outraged, powerless and disillusioned.

Communications

PSI work in Africa/Arab countries is now being reported on a series of new web pages in English and French. These can all be found, or are linked to, from <http://www.world-psi.org/africa>

PSI Sub-regional Advisory Committee (SUBRAC) for French-speaking Africa

The SUBRAC for French-speaking Africa met from 8 to 10 March 2004 in Kpalimé (Togo), bringing together 25 delegates (12 women and 13 men) from 14 countries in the area. It focused on local socio-economic conditions, and appealed for payment of contributions. A side workshop was also held to present new information technologies to participants in order to familiarize them with the PSI and region's new web pages (<http://www.world-psi.org/africa>).

PSI Sub-regional Advisory Committee (SUBRAC) for English-speaking Africa

The committee met for the first time in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) from 17 to 19 February 2004. The Minister of Labour and Productivity chaired the SUBRAC's opening ceremonies. A workshop

on HIV/AIDS was organised, and the committee committed to mobilizing the participation of affiliates of the sub-region in a broad information and prevention campaign.

PSI Sub-regional Advisory Committee (SUBRAC) for Arab countries

The SUBRAC for Arab countries met from 24 to 26 February 2004 in Beirut (Lebanon). It proposed a methodology and strategy for improved participation of affiliates in PSI's programme and policy on Quality Public Services. In the Middle East, the tension over the situation in Palestine and Iraq has overshadowed discussions.

PSI Sub-regional Advisory Committee (SUBRAC) for Southern Africa

The committee met in Port Louis (Mauritius) from 14 to 16 April 2004. The SUBRAC drafted recommendations on how to improve implementation of training projects and activities in the sub-region. It focused on the work relationships between the sub-regional offices and affiliates.

African Regional Executive Committee (AFREC)

The Regional Executive Committee met in April 2004 in Dakar, Senegal. AFREC's opening ceremonies were chaired by the representatives of the Mayor of Dakar and by a representative from the Ministry of Labour. AFREC emphasized the need to send a PSI mission in Palestine and voiced its concern over the very tense situation in the Middle East and the widespread climate of insecurity in Iraq. The meeting was pleased with the good working relationship that exists between the offices and persons in charge at the regional levels of Education International (EI) and PSI in Lomé, and would like to see the two regional organisations develop joint activities on the field.

Asia-Pacific

The creation of a South-East Asian sub-regional office in Singapore saw the last step in the decentralisation of activities from the regional office. The office has been established in the Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE) building in Singapore, with effect from January. Regional and sub-regional secretary positions were also filled in South-East and East Asia. The success of the anti-privatisation movement in Korea, Thailand and Indonesia has given the region courage and confidence, and a regional workshop in Thailand led to some major progress in implementing the PSI's program of action.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

The World Social Forum (WSF) was held in Mumbai in January, and was attended by more than 100,000 participants. The PSI delegation consisted of 18 members, and many other PSI members were also present as part of other delegations. PSI ran a stall and distributed leaflets and campaign materials. The highlight for the union movement was a huge march and rally held by the global union federations and the ICFTU. Over 10,000 unionists demonstrated against war, globalisation, and violations of workers' rights.

The Asia-Pacific Regional Executive Committee (APREC) met in April in Kuala Lumpur. PSI reported on a successful reinstatement campaign run by the Tamilnadu Government Officials Union (TNGOU). The meeting also passed resolutions relating to the struggle against privatisation in Thailand's public utilities, and the situation in Nepal. PSI General Secretary Hans Engelberts gave an overview of the Quality Public Services campaign, and Regional Secretary Katsuhiko Sato presented a plan of activities for the year which focused on utilities, quality public services and health services.

The Oceania Sub-regional Advisory Committee (OSRAC) met in Wellington, New Zealand in March. The overall focus for 2004 in Oceania has been developing partnerships between unions in the sub-region, and fostering relationships between the "developing" and "developed" country unions. PSI partnership programmes between the New Zealand Public Services Association (NZPSA), the Samoa PSA (SPSA) and the Cook Islands Workers Association (CIWA) are under way, with results being seen in Samoa, with an increase in the membership. The CIWA partnership commenced in August 2004 with a collective bargaining workshop. Unions in the area have been promoting the "social justice" clauses of the Cotonou Agreement.

Based on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the ITC-ILO/ACTRAV organised a brief training program in the region with an aim to "Build up a Regional Network of ILS Monitors". Having understood the basic principles, the participants have formed a focal point to promote workers' participation in ILS.

The third FES/PSI workshop on strengthening in the voice of the south in international trade union organisations was held in Sri Lanka in October. The workshop identified issues and strategies for strengthening the voice of unions in the forthcoming Asia-Pacific Regional Conference and the centenary PSI Congress. It also

sought to forge south-south cooperation and action-oriented activities at national level.

The SEASRAC meeting was held in March in Singapore. Reports of activities were approved and the action program for 2004 was adopted. A resolution was adopted in relation to privatisation programs in the ASEAN region.

More than 120 participants attended the 4th Annual Theme Conference of the Occupational Health Safety and Environment Institute (OH-SEI), which was held in December in Bangkok. The theme was "Corporate Social Responsibility and Safety & Health at Work". The main objectives of the conference were to introduce an effective vehicle for improving working conditions and the environment; to measure strengths and limitations; and to develop an overview of the OSH situation in Asia.

An Asia-Pacific regional workshop on: "Public Utilities, Quality Public Service and Health and Social Services" was held in Chiang Mai in December. The workshop was part of the regional activity as well as forming a concrete development for PSI sectoral activities.

A coordination meeting on the future strategy of the ITUC was held in July in Jakarta. The meeting brought together 26 officers of the ITUC and ten representatives from six global union federations. The ITUC reported on developments in organisational capacity, which were welcomed. The global unions and ICFTU-APRO reaffirmed their support.

The ICFTU-APRO/GUFs/TUSSOs Coordination Meeting was held in Singapore in November. The objective of the meeting was to exchange information on activities in the region, and to coordinate and promote solidarity support through ICFTU-APRO.

The South Asia SASRAC meeting was held in March in New Delhi. Reports of activities were approved and the action program for 2004 was adopted.

The meeting of the ICFTU-APRO Regional Executive Board was held in October in New Delhi, India. The discussion around a thematic paper for the ICFTU World Congress was controversial, with many of Executive Board members expressing reservations about centralised control of the ICFTU regional organisation. The proposed merger between the ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) was supported.

The East Asia Sub-regional Advisory Committee (EASRAC) met in Ulan Bator, Mongolia in April. Reports of activities were approved and an action programme was adopted.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Korea

An international symposium on strengthening public services and achieving basic labor rights for public service workers was organised in Seoul in October. It focused on privatisation and its impact on public services in the context of globalisation, and on alternative strategies for Korean unions.

The sub-regional office also hosted a Korean tripartite meeting on electricity reform in February.

Pacific Islands

A Pacific Islands Forum secretariat meeting (with regional civil society groups) was held in March.

PSI's Oceania Sub-regional Secretary Mike Ingpen attended the Special Body on Pacific Islands Developing Countries, Eight session, as a preliminary meeting to the sixtieth session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

Mike Ingpen also met with unions from Papua New Guinea in May, followed by unions affiliated to the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), to discuss proposals for a partnership with PNG.

In August PSI, along with Kerry Davies (NZPSA) ran a workshop on collective bargaining in the Cook Islands.

Australia

In July PSI attended the Australian Health Services Union National Executive Committee meeting, regarding proposed affiliation to the PSI.

In December PSI attended the National Council of the CPSU/SPSF, in which a resolution was passed to increase PSI affiliation from 30,000 to 40,000.

Mongolia

A workshop on basic labor rights and organising workers was held in Suhbaatar City in Selenge Prefecture in August. The theme for the workshop was: "Industrial relations and organising unions in the public sector". The workshop was attended by 30 local unionists from the two PSI-affiliated unions in the country.

Japan

PSI-JC and PSI-KC organised a joint seminar in Seoul in November with the theme: "Basic labor rights for public employees and organising atypical workers". Discussion focused on the issue of unions rights, a struggle which is at a critical stage in both Korea and Japan.

The 18th ICFTU World Congress was took place in Miyazaki, Japan, with the participants from 150 countries. The Congress adopted the unification of ICFTU and WCL. President Ylva Thorn, General Secretary Hans Engelberts and 4 regional representatives attended from PSI.

Taiwan, Macao and Hong Kong

PSI representatives Sato and Ito visited affiliated unions in Taiwan, Macao and Hong Kong in August. They discussed problems with each affiliate, especially relating to finances and the issue of China.

A workshop on the Quality Public Services campaign and Occupational Safety and Health was held in Taiwan in November.

India

PSI supported the Tamilnadu Government Officials Union (TNGOU) in lodging a complaint to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association regarding violations of workers rights during a strike. TNGOU was able to negotiate the reinstatement of employees and to restore some of their benefits through direct negotiations with the Chief Minister.

A national convention for the India Power Sector Workers Group and electricity engineers was held in Lucknow in May to discuss a proposed Electricity Bill and its repercussions.

A seminar on Core Labor Standards was held in November, with follow up activities in December. ILO Delhi participated in the seminar.

A study on disabled persons in the public service was held in India, along with a tripartite dissemination seminar. The government of India has recently passed an order reserving four per cent of positions in the administrative services for disabled persons.

A workshop on "Public Employees – Rights of Association & Collective Bargaining" was held in Trichy in November. The aim of the workshop was to create an understanding among the government employees unions regarding ILO Conventions C.87, 98 and 151, and to campaign for their ratification and implementation.

Philippines

Philippines affiliates have formed a Pay Equity Team team. The team organised a conference workshop to investigate the resources necessary to achieve equality at work and to recommend a course of action. In Indonesia a "Walk for Solidarity, Walk for Pay Equity" helped broadcast the campaign.

PSI invited key leaders from Philippines unions to a meeting in Manila, and visited all their

union offices. PSI's organisational structures and guidelines were explained. Like the other countries in the South East Asia, the affiliates of Philippines supported the formation of a National Coordinating Committee (NCC).

The main focus of the "Women Campaign Skills" workshops was to learn how to develop and implement campaign strategies through analysing the existing situation. The participants enjoyed this practical approach and were able to apply the skills to their daily union work.

Thailand

PSI's Thai affiliates have been facing an on-going challenge with their existing government regarding a programme of proposed privatisation. In order to understand their current situation and the problems they were facing, some of the Nordic colleagues and the PSI sub-regional secretary held a meeting with the affiliates and visited two of the union offices and their popular public speaking area.

Europe

In spite of huge differences in living and working conditions, public service workers in both Western and Eastern Europe are facing the painful consequences of globalisation and neo-liberal policies. A number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are experiencing extremely difficult consequences following their transition from centrally-planned to market economies. They are also suffering from the impact of war, nationalist tensions, and political instability. In Western Europe neo-liberal policies seek to marginalise trade unions. The average living standard of workers is decreasing, and unions' influence on the shape of society is becoming weaker. In all European countries there is a serious problem with the decline in union membership. The impact of change on public service workers and the wider communities in Europe is one of insecurity, impoverishment, and unemployment. However the struggle around the quality of public services, although challenged increasingly, remains both a crucial element and precondition for good governance, democratic societies and strong economies.

Building and defending quality public services, fighting privatisation and neo-liberal policies and promoting principles of equality and equity in society are the common concerns of public service unions in Europe. Unions in Central and Eastern Europe, under conditions more complicated than in Western Europe, are striv-

ing to defend workers' interests and to influence politics in their countries. Unions in Western European countries, struggling to defend what has been achieved over decades, have a vital interest in strong labour unions in these neighbouring countries. Both suffer from policies that result in a competitive "race to the bottom", with regard to the living and working conditions of their members.

PSI Europe's activities therefore focus very much on facilitating cooperation between public service unions across the continent -- on bridging gaps for the sake of a joint aim: to achieve and defend quality public services, along with workers' rights and living conditions.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

In 2004 a huge number of activities were carried out by PSI secretaries in Prague, Kiev, Bucharest and Moscow. Cooperation from external partners and support from Western European affiliates was crucial to this. These activities responded to requests of affiliates in CEE as jointly-agreed, mostly during the CEE constituency meetings. The meetings were used as a chance to discuss global and European developments and to agree on projects of cooperation. PSI's new European Secretary Jürgen Buxbaum was introduced to the affiliates, and used the opportunity to become familiar with the many challenges affiliates in CEE countries are facing. Frequent violations of trade union rights in Belarus and other countries were part of the challenges PSI faced in 2004. Fragmentation of the trade union movement in the public sector continued to be a major obstacle for the organisation of a more effective representation and defence of members' interests and to tackle efficiently the mostly under-developed social dialogue in CEE. Due to wage arrears and poor social conditions a number of affiliates were not able to pay the PSI's constitutional minimum fee.

The Central European constituency consists of 48 PSI affiliates in 8 countries, of which four joined the European Union in 2004. While noting economic development in these countries, PSI cannot ignore a sharp rise of inequality and unemployment, particularly among young people. In Poland 39% of under-25s are without a job; in Slovakia it is 27%. Faced with grim economic prospects, thousands have left -- preferring the uncertainties of a new life abroad to pauperisation at home. These migrants compete in Western Europe with local workers, and are often hired on the basis of comparatively low wage expectations.

PSI supported several affiliates' campaigns to protest against governmental cuts in public expenditure, which impact negatively on the quality of public service delivery. Workshops and seminars were organised on privatisation of water; the South East European Energy Treaty (jointly with EPSU); and the health reforms in ex-Yugoslav countries. A women's project in Serbia was introduced by a preparatory seminar. Many of these and other events benefited from participation and active support of PSI affiliates in Finland, Germany, Sweden and the UK.

As in the other constituencies the EU, World Bank and IMF have a strong influence on the 6 countries which make up the PSI South-Eastern European constituency. This region has 49 affiliates. This influence aims at privatisation of public services and so-called flexibility of labour legislation. The situation in Moldova and Turkey is characterized by heavy violations of trade union rights, in Bulgaria average wages still do not exceed € 160, in Azerbaijan, in spite of positive economic development, the minimum salary only amounts to US\$25.00. Against this background PSI intervened in support of several affiliates, leading to some positive results in countries like Romania and Moldova. Further complaints to the ILO on violation of freedom of association are pending.

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

PSI activity in South-Eastern Europe concentrated mainly on longer-term projects with affiliated unions from Albania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Turkey, in cooperation with Abvakabo/FNV, SKTF and Kommunal respectively. The activities included national and regional seminars for health, defence and national administration workers; special activities for women and youth; and a campaign for rights in Moldova, Turkey and Romania. More than 20 seminars and workshops were organised. Participation of men and women had a ratio of three to one, this being particularly due to training activities in Turkey, where men are over-represented in the target groups of the project.

PSI has six affiliates in 4 countries belonging to the constituency of Russia and Central Asia. Whilst Kazakhstan with average salaries of little more than € 200 shows a remarkable improvement in its economy, Tajikistan still suffers from the impact of five years of civil war. Salaries in the health care system are less than US\$16 per month, which does not come close to the minimum cost of living. Great differences in living conditions shape the situation in Kyrgyzstan.

Average salaries of less than US\$50 and an annual inflation rate of more than 100% make life more difficult in the poorer south. This was a major reason for the recent uprising in this Central Asian country. In the Russian Federation life expectancy has fallen from 70 in 1988 to 65.3 in 2002. Yet despite these alarming statistics, public health is not a high priority on the government's agenda. Only about 3% of GDP is spent on health, and a doctor earns less than US\$100 per month.

RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA

PSI activities in Russia and Central Asia focused on youth, gender equality and pay equity, trade union rights and privatisation of public services. In total many more women than men participated in these events.

NORTH EASTERN EUROPE

PSI organises 2 affiliates in 8 countries in North-Eastern Europe. In 2004 four of them joined the European Union. Structural reforms are ongoing in all 8 countries, real income of public service workers did not increase, and their salaries continue to be much lower than in other sectors of economy. Growth was seen in migration flows of public sector workers, especially in the health sector. Low wages deterred young people from looking for jobs in the public sector and forced them to seek employment opportunities abroad.

Thirteen seminars and workshops dealt with trade union rights, organising and recruitment, EU regulations, occupational health and safety, gender equality, labour legislation, social dialogue, and special needs of young workers. The ratio of women to men among the participants was more than two to one.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The European Federation of Public Services Union (EPSU) shares most of its member organisations with PSI, and represents their interests regarding institutions of the European Union. A new detailed cooperation agreement with EPSU, PSI's sister organisation, has been adopted. Talks between the organisations are now going beyond this agreement. The aim is the formation of an integrated organisation of European public service unions. Against the background of the planned merger of ICFTU and WCL, both PSI and EPSU are optimistic that the ongoing cooperation will lead into joint structures within the next years.

European Youth Forum (EYF)

The EYF was built by enthusiastic young people – six women and seven men – from Albania, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Sweden, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. In 2004 they elected a Norwegian woman and a Serbian man as their chair and vice-chair. Many new members of the forum met each other in two workshops organised by PSI in the Czech Republic and Romania. These workshops, with equal participation from Western and Central and Eastern European countries, identified the concerns and interests of young people with regard to better recognition and participation in their unions, as well as in society and the workplace.

Following these experiences the EYF started work on a pan-European network of youth activists and groups, which they are now calling PSI CONNECT (www.world-psi.org/connect). Contacts to young trade unionists in countries like Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Tajikistan were established, and training courses on youth activities and structures in these countries are in preparation. Seminars will be organised and facilitated by EYF members themselves, with PSI providing a budget for activities in 2005. The European Youth Forum gathers much of its inspiration and spirit from a gender balance and healthy exchange of ideas from East and West.

European Women's Committee (EWOC)

In its meeting in April 2004, the EWOC evaluated the work done by PSI and its affiliates on issues of gender equality. Martin Oelz from the ILO gave a presentation on equality legislation in transition and EU accession countries, and its application in practice. PSI sub-regional secretaries reported about their activities and the situation of women in CEE countries, where the under-representation of women in trade union decision making bodies (as well as public institutions) is still worse than in Western countries. The widespread problem of wage arrears affects women in particular, as they also suffer from low wages and a high gender pay gap. The Putin administration in Russia was characterised as unsympathetic to gender equality issues. EWOC encouraged PSI affiliates to conduct gender impact assessments of their policies and budgets, and to use the new PSI publication "Integrating gender equality into trade union work" as a resource in this work.

European Pay Equity Conference

In October 2004 more than 100 participants from

public service and education trade unions met to discuss strategies to achieve equal pay. The conference was jointly organised by PSI, EPSU and Education International, and took place during a week of global action to promote pay equity (part of the PSI's 5-year pay equity campaign).

The average pay gap between men and women in the European Union's public sector is still 12%, although in many countries it is as high as 50%. In various Central and Eastern European countries, public service workers -- the great majority of whom are women -- are often unpaid for months because the public sector is under-resourced. Low pay is also the main cause of the increased migration of women workers, who seek better employment conditions abroad, particularly in the health sector.

The conference was unanimously considered as giving a strong momentum to unions' struggle for equal rights in Europe. The delegates opposed neo-liberal policies and privatisation, which both exacerbate the gender pay gap, and called on governments and social partners to carry out gender-impact assessments of public service privatisation and externalisation policies, and to introduce, as a matter of urgency, the implementation of a list of measures to reduce the gender wage gap.

From their unions they demanded that the objective of equal pay be fully integrated into collective bargaining and union practices, and that women be adequately represented in decision-making structures and senior levels of unions. They expected unions to explicitly promote and defend quality public services. They also appealed to the ILO to implement capacity building programmes for trade union organisations, on pay equity issues, including collective bargaining strategies, and gender equality plans, as well as to develop a manual on conducting job evaluation free of gender bias in cooperation with interested trade unions.

Communications

The Secretariat decided not to publish the PSI Euro-Flash anymore. It was felt that the web site represented a more cost-effective tool for reaching PSI unions and members. As a result PSI in Europe now has web pages in English, French, Spanish and Russian. These can be found at:

- English: <http://www.world-psi.org/europe>
- Français: <http://www.world-psi.org/europefr>
- Español: <http://www.world-psi.org/europa>
- Русский: <http://www.world-psi.org/russian>

The European Youth Forum (PSI CONNECT) has also established a web site in English at: <http://www.world-psi.org/connect>

European Regional Executive Committee (EUREC)

Delegates to EUREC in April 2004 discussed the European Programme of Action, cooperation between PSI and EPSU, policies of international organisations such as the OECD, attempts of influential countries in the WTO to limit the mandate of UNCTAD, membership issues, and serious union rights violations in Belarus and Colombia.

Elizabeth Goodson of ILO ACTRAV informed the meeting that the ILO had decided to set up a commission of inquiry following complaints to the ILO by Belarussian unions, ICFTU and PSI. The European Commission responded to complaints by ICFTU, ETUC and WCL about violation of freedom of association in Belarus, interference in internal trade union matters by the Lukashenko government and repression of trade unionists. They have initiated an investigation that might have serious consequences for Belarus.

As guest of the meeting, Luis Hernandez from Colombia, President of the Trade Union of Municipal Workers of Cali, reported that over 3,000 trade unionists have been assassinated since 1986. His union is often treated as a terrorist organisation, although it has built much public support for its campaign against privatisation, corruption and persecution. The delegates adopted a resolution to be sent to the European Commission, which will be investigating the situation in Colombia and reporting back to the EU and the European Parliament.

Due to the huge geographical size and the big number of affiliates EUREC approved the actual practice of PSI to work in North-East and South-East Europe in the basis of two separate constituencies. EUREC approved proposals for expulsion for the Trade Union of Defence Industry and Allied Workers, Azerbaijan, and the Trade Union of Energy Workers, Kazakhstan, and agreed on the affiliation of three unions from Estonia, France and Romania.

Inter-America

In November PSI held the Inter-American Regional Conference (IAMRECON) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The theme of the Conference was “Unite, Mobilize, Organise for Quality Public Services”, and the agenda featured panels on sectoral issues, pay equity and the Quality Public Services campaign. The IAMRECON brought together 185 delegates and observers, 49% of whom were women, to set policy and develop regional plans.

PSI also sponsored a Regional Women’s Workshop and a Young Workers’ Workshop in Rio, just prior to the main Conference. Conclusions from the workshops and panels were presented to the plenary session of the IAMRECON, and delegates approved resolutions on the defence of human and labor rights in Colombia, and on the PSI plan of action: Equality, Equity and Diversity.

The recommendations of the young workers’ workshop included a call for affiliates to include in their statutes provisions to allow young workers’ participation in their structures, ensuring at least 30% participation of young workers in their training activities and internal events, while taking into account PSI’s gender policy. The workshop further recommended the creation of PSI Young Workers Committees at national, sub-regional and regional level, which should be incorporated into the PSI Regional Constitution.

QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES CAMPAIGN

The Quality Public Services (QPS) campaign coordinator Wendy Caird led a discussion at the April 2004 meeting of the IAMREC on regional initiatives associated with the campaign, such as PSAC-Canada’s new “People Behind the Services” campaign; CUPE-Canada’s “Campaign to Rebuild Communities”; FENTAP-Peru’s campaign for quality public water services; and joint efforts by AFGE, AFSCME and SEIU in the United States to defend their members’ rights to union representation in federal government agencies. She also reported on initiatives by Brazilian affiliates to encourage their government to establish affirmative action hiring policies in the public service.

PSI held a QPS seminar for Brazilian affiliates in April 2004, seeking to identify the best examples of community and worker participation in delivery of public services. Affiliates in the Caribbean established a QPS campaign committee and agreed on a QPS campaign launch. Affiliates in Costa Rica formed a National Civic Commission in Defense of Public Services, in order to fight government moves to privatise health and public utility services.

GLOBALISATION

Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)

PSI affiliates in the US and in Central America have actively resisted the negotiations for a Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) between the US and five Central American countries. CAFTA will undermine workers’ rights in all of these nations. The details of these activities

were published in: “Central American Unions Reject CAFTA” in the PSI’s FOCUS magazine in 2004. Affiliates have also been involved in national coalitions fighting against the current bilateral trade negotiations between the US and three Andean countries. In Chile, affiliates have joined the Social Forum for Chilean Integration (Foro Social de Integración Chilena), working to increase participation of popular and trade union organisations in debates on trade and integration.

Free Trade Area of the Americas and the WTO

PSI is recognised as a leading critic of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), as well as the World Trade Organisation’s (WTO) impact on public services, the government’s ability to regulate, anti-democratic decision-making processes, and the potential effects of such trade deals on Latin America and the Caribbean. In December PSI published a major report – Divide and Conquer: U.S. Trade Strategy and Public Services in the Americas – which shows how the FTAA and GATS agreements dramatically reduce the sovereignty of governments and their ability to regulate in the public interest.

IFI Monitoring Project

The International Financial Institutions (IFI) Project cooperated with the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center and the Center for Justice and International Law in programming for the first time a special thematic session on labor rights in Central America at the Inter-American Human Rights Commission of the Organisation of American States (OAS) in 2004. At the session, the Commission members decided unanimously that labor rights violations fall under their jurisdiction and agreed to hear future cases.

In 2004 IFI work in Washington with the US Congress intensified as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) prepares to request a capital replenishment. At the same time, work has continued in the region, focusing on water sector loans from the World Bank and the IDB in Peru. The network of PSI judicial services unions in Central America monitored IDB judicial reform projects and criticized the negative impacts of these loans.

WORKERS’ RIGHTS

PSI attention remains focused on the tragic situation of public sector trade unionists in Colombia, where the Colombian National Trade Union School – ENS – reported that 94 trade unionists were assassinated by right-wing paramilitaries during 2004. Sixteen of the victims were women.

Canadian affiliates hosted a delegation of three Colombian public sector unionists in May 2004. In a series of public meetings and rallies they gave a first hand account of the difficult situation in their country. The IAMRECON passed a resolution on the campaign for the defence of human rights and against impunity in Colombia, among other concerns condemning the Colombian government’s decision to deny entry in November to four international trade union leaders, including PSI Regional Secretary Cam Duncan.

In December the Secretariat also organised a letter-writing campaign to mark International Human Rights Day, and to call for an end to impunity in Colombia. Support from the PSI Colombia solidarity fund was provided to 123 dismissed municipal workers in Florida Blanca and Cali Colombia, members of affiliates Sintraemcali, Sinalserpub and FUTECH.

In 2004 PSI began working with ILO AC-TRAV on a comparative study of labor rights and collective bargaining in the public sector of nine Latin American countries. The goal of the study – available from the PSI Regional Office – is to identify practices which limit public sector worker rights. The next phase of the project will be to develop a process of social dialogue with governments – using the results of the study – to promote full collective bargaining rights for all public service workers. The government asked PSI Brazilian affiliates to participate in a tripartite commission to debate the trade union rights of public workers. Finnish affiliates assisted in providing training in collective bargaining to affiliates in Brazil.

PAY EQUITY CAMPAIGN

PSI sponsored trainings for affiliates in Barbados, Colombia and Brazil on developing the pay equity campaign and conducting job evaluations free from gender bias. During Pay Equity Action Week in October 2004, affiliates sponsored public forums involving service users and human rights organisations. They lobbied their parliament with petitions, media releases, and through tripartite dialogue.

Along with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Universidad Andina, PSI published a booklet – Mujer andina, vida y salario: Distintas miradas a la equidad salarial (Andean women, life and salary: Different views on pay equity) – containing research reports on pay inequality prepared by the PSI Women’s Committees in each of the Andean countries. In addition, the Women’s Committee in Brazil published the PSI study: Women and Men: Pay Differences in the

Public Service, which shows that, on average, women are paid 16% less than men in the public service, although they make up about 62% of the public sector work force. The PSI Anti-Racism Commission of Brazilian affiliates helped the Brazilian ILO office to create a working group to discuss racial and ethnic discrimination in the workplace.

Union development and solidarity

New PSI union development projects which began in 2004 included a three-year FNV-sponsored project in Latin America on trade union rights in the municipal sector; trade union development workshops for Caribbean affiliates (sponsored by the ILO); and a training program for health unions in Central America sponsored by the Danish trade union center, LO/FTF.

Appendices

A full version of this report, including the following appendices, can be downloaded from <http://www.world-psi.org/annualreport2004>.

Alternatively we can email you the report (contact communications@world-psi.org) or post you a copy (see contact details on back cover).

The Appendices for 2004 include:

- PSI membership figures for the 2003-2004 period.
- Financial report for the year ending 31 December 2004
- Sponsored PSI union development activities for 2004
- PSI Activities – breakdown of expenditure
- Publications
- Staff changes
- Obituaries
- List of Acronyms

Public Services International (PSI) is the global union federation for public sector trade unions. PSI represents some 650 affiliated trade unions in 150 countries. Together, these unions organise more than 20 million public sector workers, providing services in central government, health and social care, municipal and community services, and public utilities.

PSI campaigns for the interests of public sector workers. Since 1907, when it was founded, PSI has co-ordinated public sector struggles for workers' rights, social and economic justice, and efficient and accessible public services.

PSI presents the public sector case at the International Labour Organisation and other United Nations bodies, the World Bank and the regional development banks, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation, the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development and many others.

PSI works closely with affiliated unions to protect and extend workers' rights, including the freedom to join a union, to bargain collectively and other rights including gender equality, equity and diversity.

PSI campaigns to improve the quality of public services. This involves working closely with international unions organisations, national governments, consumer lobbies, community organisations and NGOs.

PSI solidarity and union development projects help affiliated unions by providing training and capacity-building support on the ground, especially in countries where trade unions are fighting for recognition.

PSI wants...

- Quality public services for all
- Union rights for all public service workers
- Gender equality & employment equity for all
- Public alternatives to privatisation of services
- A strong and united trade union movement
- Social justice in the workplace
- Poverty reduction and debt relief

PSI's international office is next to Geneva on the French-Swiss border. PSI has regional bases in Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, India, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, New Zealand, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Togo, Ukraine and the USA.

PSI affiliates meet at Congress every five years to develop a programme of action which forms the basis for all PSI work. The Congress also elects an Executive Board.

PSI has active women's committees at global, regional and sub-regional levels, and all decision-making structures are based on gender parity.

PSI works closely together with ICFTU - the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions - and other union federations, in particular EI, the Education International, and the European Federation of Public Service Unions.

PSI works in six official languages: English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Swedish.



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