

PSI World News

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#### PSI CONDEMNS UN BOMBING IN IRAQ

PSI is appalled by and condemns unreservedly the atrocity committed against UN staff in Baghdad. PSI affiliate FICSA (the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations) organises staff in many UN agencies including the World Food Programme (WFP), which was very active in Iraq. FICSA has issued a statement which PSI fully supports (see our website) and we offer affected FICSA members and their families our condolences and support. International civil servants often serve in difficult and dangerous places. Every year, at least some UN staff lose their lives or are the subject of violent incidents. Their work is often poorly understood and is often not properly supported by UN member states. Indeed, it is important that we all acknowledge the integrity of the UN and its staff and that all member states respect and work within the consensus which makes the UN's operations possible.

#### QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES BOOKLET

PSI will launch a new publication on Quality Public Services in September.. This booklet has been designed to advocate the positive role of quality public services, their history in building better societies, and their importance in alleviating poverty and delivering services to all communities. The launch date of mid-September has been chosen to provide some positive alternatives to trade in services proposals at the WTO meeting in Cancún, and also to the release of the World Bank's World Development Report. PSI is working with a coalition of NGOs developing a media and publicity campaign for the booklet. PSI would welcome affiliates' involvement and assistance with this campaign. Material about the launch will be emailed to unions with email access and you may want to make your own contact with local media at the time, with your own stories and examples. PSI would also like to know about these stories and any media activity you plan (send to [wendy.caird@world-psi.org](mailto:wendy.caird@world-psi.org)). We'll keep you informed as the campaign develops. Please ensure that PSI has been advised of up-to-date email contacts so information reaches you (send email addresses to [comit@world-psi.org](mailto:comit@world-psi.org)).

#### GLOBAL UNIONS STATEMENT TO IMF/WORLD BANK MEETING IN SEPTEMBER

Global Unions (Global Union Federations, the ICFTU and TUAC) have prepared a joint statement for the annual meeting of the IMF and World Bank to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 23-24 September. Affiliates are encouraged to submit the statement to their government before the meeting. The statement on Reforming the IMF and the World Bank to meet the Millennium Development Goals and a model letter for governments are available on the PSI website.

AFGE TAKES US GOVERNMENT TO ILO FOR FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION VIOLATIONS

PSI affiliate the American Federation of Government Employees has filed a complaint with the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association against the US administration.

Current US law authorises the head of any agency to immediately suspend and remove a federal employee if he or she poses a national security risk, and employers are using that law to prevent public employees from organising unions and carrying out collective bargaining. The case will be taken up at the November meeting of the Committee.

#### **ILO AGREES TO INTERVENE TO ASSIST PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS IN TAMIL NADU, INDIA**

Further to the article in PSI World News 13, the ILO has agreed to intervene in the conflict between public sector workers in Tamil Nadu state and the Indian government.

See the PSI website for more information.

#### **DID DEREGULATION CAUSE THE US POWER BLACKOUT?**

On 14 August an unprecedented power failure hit North East America and Canada, with blackouts lasting for several days in some areas. Fifty million people were affected and the Americans and the Canadians have blamed each other. But isn't deregulation at the root of the problem? Electricity can't be stored, and the system needs spare generating and transmission capacity for periods of peak demand. Transmission lines need to be maintained. But privatised companies are driven by profit, and local utility companies have no economic incentive to invest in maintenance. The situation in South East America offers a telling contrast: traditional regulation remains and the population enjoys cheap, dependable electricity.

#### **MASSIVE OPPOSITION TO THE SINGAPORE ISSUES AT THE WTO**

As affiliates will know, PSI, with the other Global Unions and with large numbers of NGOs, has been campaigning against the beginning of negotiations on the so-called 'Singapore' or 'new' issues at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún next month. (These Singapore issues are proposed agreements on investment, competition policy, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation measures). Eleven African countries (Benin, Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) have submitted a proposal for the Cancún Ministerial Conference on these issues, calling for the Ministerial Conference not to start negotiations on the new issues but to develop a better understanding of what is needed in these areas and to assist developing countries to improve their capacity to deal with the policies which would be required to make these issues practicable. The paper explains that the text is drawn from the decisions taken by Ministers at three Ministerial Conferences -- held by the LDCs, the African Union and the ACP Group. The paper was presented on 15 August by the Kenyan Ambassador on behalf of the 11 countries at the WTO Heads of Delegation meeting dealing with the Singapore Issues. Kenya was supported by several developing countries. In fact, the latest count (being kept by a number of NGOs) shows that already at least 68 of the WTO's 146 member states are in opposition to these issues proceeding to a negotiations stage at Cancún.

#### **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE IN THE HEALTH SECTOR**

Workplace violence is a global problem which affects all sectors, but the health sector is at major risk. Violence in this sector may represent a quarter of all violence at work, and more than half of health workers may be affected. PSI and the ILO, International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have, as part of their Joint Programme on Workplace Violence in the Health Sector, published Framework Guidelines for addressing workplace violence in the health sector. This 32-page booklet can be downloaded from <http://www.icn.ch/seworkplace.htm>. The page also has links to related

documents.

#### HIV-AIDS POLICY TOOLKIT FOR LABOUR LEADERS

The US Center for Disease control has developed an online Labor leader's kit providing detailed guidance on HIV/AIDS workplace programmes. It covers workplace policy, worker education, family education and resources. The Labor Leader's Kit includes all the resources unions need to build comprehensive HIV/AIDS workplace programs and to develop policies on HIV/AIDS to educate workers and their families. The kit can be downloaded from

[www.hivatwork.org/tools/labor.htm](http://www.hivatwork.org/tools/labor.htm)

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