

PSI World News 08-2004

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PREPARING FOR UNCTAD IX

UNCTAD, the UN Conference for Trade and Development, will meet June 13-18, 2004, in São Paulo, Brazil, to set the organization's priorities for the next four years. Civil society (CSO) campaigning for fair trade policies are now preparing for the UNCTAD XI meeting. PSI's Sub-regional Secretary in Brazil, Jocelio Drummond, and Brazilian affiliates are active components of the Brazilian NGO network which is organising events around four main themes for the meeting: Development strategies in a globalising world economy; Building productive capacity and international competitiveness; Assuring development gains from the international trading system and trade negotiations; and Partnership for development. PSIs Mike Waghorne will be involved in the drafting of a CSO Statement, which will be finalised at a separate NGO meeting on 11-12 June in São Paulo. For more information, email Mike.Waghorne@world-psi.org.

MULTI STAKEHOLDER REVIEW OF PSP IN WATER AND SANITATION

As a follow-up to the Freshwater Conference held in Bonn in 2001, PSI is working in collaboration with several organisations with widely different backgrounds and views on private sector participation (PSP). A working group has been formed of members of those organisations to study PSP in water and sanitation via a six-month Global Water Scoping Process. A Scoping Report was launched in April, and the working group recommended proceeding to a Stakeholder Workshop, at which the findings of the Scoping Report can be discussed and decisions can be taken by a wider range of stakeholders over whether to proceed or not with a multistakeholder review of PSP. The Stakeholder Workshop will be held in Berlin, 23-24 June. Stakeholders are invited to complete a Stakeholder Nomination Form in order to guide the workshop in the selection process. The form should be completed by 13 May. More details, including the reports and the nomination form, are available on <http://www.wateraid.org>. Contact at PSI is David.Boys@world-psi.org.

WORLD BANK REPORT SAYS MOST MDGS WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED

The World Bank has released the first Global Monitoring Report for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Its overall conclusion is that "most MDGs will not be met by most countries". The first goal of halving extreme poverty between 1990 and 2015 will probably be met, thanks to progress in East Asia. However, "sub-Saharan Africa is severely off track" according to the report. Education objectives may be met in some regions, but shortfalls are likely in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. Only a small proportion of countries are likely to achieve the health goals, and many regions risk failure to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS. There are large gaps in access to safe drinking water in sub-Saharan Africa and to sanitation in South Asia. The report points the finger at industrialised countries for failing to deliver on the 'Monterrey consensus' of substantially increasing resource flows to the South. There are contradictions in development policy, "with support provided in one area undercut by actions in another". Unfortunately, the report's recommendations centre on a classic structural adjustment agenda, with little or no emphasis on the need to ensure that growth is widely shared so as to accelerate poverty reduction and attain improved social outcomes. The full 225-page document is available in English on the World Bank's website, with shorter summaries available in English, French and Spanish. See www.worldbank.org/springmeetings.

BITE BACK!

As regular readers of PSI World News will know, PSI is a founding member of the Bite Back! campaign to gather citizens' objection to the WTO GM trade dispute (www.bite-back.org). Bite Back! has gathered objections from over 400 organisations representing 35 million citizens, and 70,000 individuals. However, even more signatures are needed to show the global resistance against this case at the WTO. Here are things you can do:

- Sign the objection online at www.bite-back.org and ask your friends to do the same
- Download and print the objection, collect signatures and send them back to the organisers
- Email the Argentinean Ambassador and ask him to persuade the Government of Argentina to withdraw from the WTO complaint:

http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/global_trade/press_for_change/email_ambassador_argentina/index.html

The deadline for signatures is 21 May. Thank you for your support.

HOW EDUCATION PREVENTS HIV/AIDS

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) has released a report entitled "Learning to Survive: How education for all would save millions of young people from HIV/AIDS". The report cites extensive research carried out in Africa and

Latin America, which shows that there is a direct link between receiving education and HIV/AIDS infection. The report concludes "if all children received a complete primary education, the economic impact of HIV/AIDS could be greatly reduced and around 700,000 cases of HIV in young adults could be prevented each year - 7 million in a decade". See more on www.campaignforeducation.org.

SOLIDAR SILVER ROSE AWARD

The SOLIDAR Silver Rose is an award for outstanding achievement by an individual or organisation in the activities of civil society and in bringing about a fairer and more just society. The award is presented every year in October, and SOLIDAR is now seeking nominations for the 2004 awards. Nominations must be sent before 31 May. For more details and to download nomination forms (available in English and French), see www.solidar.org.

SOUTH AFRICA LEADING THE WAY IN WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION

Thabo Mbeki's newly-appointed cabinet is made up of 43% women. Twelve ministers out of 28 and 10 out of 21 deputy ministers are women. South Africa's Commission for Gender Equality says the President had illustrated a commitment to gender equality and that the policy of promoting women at crucial decision-making levels was being implemented. "All the women appointed have a long history of struggle and we wish them well. We believe in the 50/50 campaign, to have equal representation of women at all levels of decision-making by 2005. This surely is a step in the right direction by the President," said CGE spokesperson Nombuso Shabalala. Well done!

UK REPORT ON OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

A recent report on a UK training scheme has shown shortcomings in the way jobs are presented to young people, with stereotyping of what kinds of jobs are "suitable" for each sex. The Equal Opportunities Commission reports on a survey of 1000 people which indicates that about half of the respondents thought the advice they were given on leaving school was influenced by their sex, showing that there are real barriers preventing young women from choosing jobs in areas traditionally regarded as suitable only for men, like construction, plumbing and engineering. In the survey, 67% of women aged 16 to 24 said they would have considered a wider range of career options if they had been aware of the differences in pay rates for jobs usually done by women and those usually done by men. See the report on www.eoc.org.uk.

WHO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WEBSITE

We have received a request from the World Health Organisation (WHO), which is seeking to be more pro-active in identifying possible sources of candidates for employment opportunities within the organisation, particularly from developing countries but not excluding all other countries. WHO has suggested that PSI and its affiliates may want to include a link on their websites for the WHO e-recruitment site: www.who.int/employment/en. If you want to include a link to your site, contact Tina Andersen andersent@who.int for further details.

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