



## Beware: Regulating for deregulation!



The WTO is now considering rules about domestic regulation which could force governments (at all levels) to

remove regulations that are either "unnecessarily burdensome", "not relevant", "not reasonable", and/or "not objective". Many such regulations, passed by democratic governments and processes, will become violations of GATS restrictions. If governments do not set up a process to enable foreign interests to intervene in a country's domestic regulatory process, that too will be a violation! Even regulations that treat foreign service suppliers the same as domestic suppliers may be found to be in violation. This has very important implications for the public sector. On the PSI website you will find the full background to this, as well as some model letters which we urge you to send to local governments, your trade minister, and to the Chair of the WTO negotiations on this issue. See <http://www.world-psi.org/wto>

## ICFTU survey of union rights



The ICFTU has reported that last year 115 trade unionists were murdered for defending workers' rights. A further 1,600 were assaulted, 9,000 arrested, 10,000 sacked for union involvement, and 1,700

detained. Latin America remain the most perilous region for union activity. 70 Colombian unionists paid the ultimate price for standing up for fundamental rights at work. Other countries under the spotlight include Iraq, Iran, El Salvador, Djibouti, China, Cambodia, Guatemala, Zimbabwe and Burma. Some Arabian Gulf countries continue to ban trade unions altogether, while others, including North Korea, have government-controlled "official trade unions". In Australia, the government has deprived the country's workforce of the most fundamental protections. For the full report (En, Fr, Es, De) see: [www.icftu.org/survey/](http://www.icftu.org/survey/) For audio/video material on the survey see: [http://www.icftusurvey.org/audio\\_video/en/](http://www.icftusurvey.org/audio_video/en/)

## 95<sup>th</sup> ILO Conference



The 95<sup>th</sup> ILO Conference was held in Geneva from 31<sup>st</sup> May to 16 June. Among other things, the Conference adopted new measures on occupational safety and health, the employment relationship, flexible working arrangements, and asbestos. PSI delivered an address on behalf of public sector workers, which is available [here](#). A summary of the proceedings and links for more information is available (in En, Fr, Es) [here](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2006/35.htm): [www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2006/35.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2006/35.htm)

## Agreement on Colombia

In the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards, the Colombian delegation succeeded in securing a tripartite agreement for the ILO to be permanently represented in Colombia. For two decades workers have been protesting against violations of Conventions 98 and 87, and demanding an end to victimisation and murder of trade union leaders. The main points of the agreement are here: <http://www.world-psi.org/colombia>

## Atypical work becoming typical

Today's world of work is characterized by the "atypical and unpredictable" nature of working time, and the increase in weekend and night work, said another new report launched at the Conference. "Decent working time: New trends, new issues" is based on existing international labour standards and research on working time trends and development, focusing on industrialized countries. It proposes that "decent working time" policies should make sure that working time arrangements are healthy, "family friendly", promote gender equality, advance enterprise competitiveness and facilitate worker choice and influence over their hours of work. For links to the document (En, Fr, Es) see: [www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2006/28.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2006/28.htm)

## 95<sup>th</sup> ILO Conference

### Equal pay panel

A workers' panel discussed equal pay for work of equal value. Nathalie Imboden (Union Syndicale Suisse) reported that a monthly difference of US\$650 exists between men and women performing the same tasks in the clock industry. 60% of this is due to persisting discrimination (see: [www.sgb.ch/fr/f-home.htm](http://www.sgb.ch/fr/f-home.htm)). Alina Rantsolase (COSATU) showed the complexity of the issue in South Africa, where sexual and racial discrimination, low wages, high unemployment, and labour force flexibility affect women in a disproportionate manner. Sophie Taylor (UNISON) explained that in the UK women still earn an average of 17.1% less than men. Though they may perform the same tasks, a janitor (often a man) will earn more than a cleaner (usually a woman). See: [www.unison.org.uk/equalpay/index.asp](http://www.unison.org.uk/equalpay/index.asp). Barb Byers from the Canadian Labour Congress said that women there only makes 71% of men's pay. The panelists stressed the need for more women to become actively involved, demanding an increase in women's wages, more transparency in wage determination, valorization of women's work, and better social support for families.

### Changing work patterns

"Changing patterns in the world of work", a report launched at the conference, describes recent trends and future prospects in "an emerging global labour market". Among its findings:

- The services sector grew from 34.4% of global employment in 1995 to nearly 39% in 2005. The industrial sector has a 21% share.
- The global workforce is growing rapidly. Today, over 3 billion are working or looking for work. This is expected to grow by 430 million by 2015, with almost all the new entrants coming from developing countries.
- The impact of HIV/AIDS is increasingly decisive. It is expected to cause losses of about US\$270 billion by the year 2020, in the 41 countries hardest hit. Women constitute 40% of the labour force. From 1991 to 2005 the female workforce increased from under 1 billion to 1.22 billion.

The report is available in English French and Spanish from:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc95/reports.htm> (report 1c)

### Democracy and public finances



The Public Services International Research Unit has produced a paper on how groups can exert greater

influence over public spending. **Democracy and Public Finances** contains an outline on taxation systems and levels of tax etc, then uses a series of case studies to show different approaches that groups have adopted. Developing more effective ways of influencing public spending is an essential part of the campaign for quality public services. The paper is available from the PSI Resource Bank at <http://www.world-psi.org/bank>

### Nurses file class actions in U.S.



Nurses backed by the biggest U.S. health-care union on Tuesday filed four class-action lawsuits against about 20 unionized and non-unionized hospital systems in four cities. The lawsuits claim the

hospitals regularly discussed nurses' wages in an effort to coordinate and suppress pay. Information from the [SEIU](#) led to the lawsuits, and lawyers for the plaintiffs interviewed dozens of current and former hospital employees, including some at the executive level.

### Challenging the World Bank & IMF



The ICFTU has released a new guide for unionists wanting to challenge the programmes and policies of international finance institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the IMF.

**Challenging the IFIs** provides information and advice on how to put forward alternatives. It explains IFI procedures in detail, and highlights opportunities for intervention in:

- \* Poverty reduction strategy papers
- \* World Bank country strategies
- \* IMF country reports
- \* Investment projects

With step-by-step instructions for preparing consultations, researching alternatives, presenting proposals to IFI representatives, and following up on meetings, the guide dispels the myth that challenging IFIs is impossible. See:

<http://www.icftu.org/www/PDF/IFIEN.pdf>

### We need your help



PSI is seeking examples of trade union/employer partnership approaches in public utilities. Such strategies go by different names around the world (social dialogue; new unionism; labor-management cooperation; transformational unionism; co-determination; offensive cooperation; the Polder model...), and these differ according to the national setting. In essence, what we are looking for is experiences (anecdotes, analysis, etc) from trade unions who have taken a collective, proactive approach towards solving problems in their sector, at workplace or industry level, and especially in cooperation with management. This is in contrast to an approach based on simply reacting to an employer-led agenda. If you have an example of partnership in action in public utilities, please contact Rolf Hanssen ([rolv.hanssen@world-psi.org](mailto:rolv.hanssen@world-psi.org))

## Happy birthday SASK!



The Solidarity Centre of the Finnish trade union movement ([SASK](#)) celebrates their 20th anniversary this year. SASK was established by unions in Finland to channel funds for union development projects. These funds come from both unions and the Finnish government, and are channeled through the global unions and other organisations that work with unions. PSI affiliates have benefited from this solidarity for more than ten years, and SASK and our Finnish affiliates are currently supporting projects in Indonesia, Thailand, South and South-East Asia, Southern Africa, Brazil, the Andean region and Central America. SASK celebrated with a seminar on Impact Assessment and a jubilee dinner at Murikka, the union training college of the Finnish Metal Workers Union. PSI attended the celebrations along with other partners from around the world. Congratulations and thanks to SASK for 20 years of solidarity which has significantly impacted on union development!

## India sends call centre jobs to UK



Writing for the [New Zealand Herald](#), Julia Kollewe reports that after years of snatching call centre and data processing jobs from Britain, Indian companies are moving onshore, or "near-shore" as they call it, to create jobs in the UK. The Indian call centre company, ICICI OneSource, will open two call centres in Northern Ireland, creating 1,000 jobs over the next couple of years. India's outsourcing industry has seen meteoric growth this century, as businesses moved large chunks of their customer service and processing operations to the subcontinent. ICICI was attracted to Northern Ireland because of its highly skilled workforce and relatively cheap property. It views its launch in Northern Ireland as the second wave of outsourcing, in which UK businesses are using Indian firms within Britain rather than moving jobs offshore. Meanwhile, Africa will see the fastest growth in the number of call centre workers of any region between now and the end of the decade, according to Datamonitor.

## LGBT workers web pages



The PSI's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers web pages are now live in English and French, with a Spanish language version due shortly. See:  
[www.world-psi.org/lgbt](http://www.world-psi.org/lgbt) (English)  
[www.world-psi.org/frlgbt](http://www.world-psi.org/frlgbt) (French)  
If you wish to contribute please contact [equality@world-psi.org](mailto:equality@world-psi.org).

## Non-profit health care often better



For-profit nursing homes and hospitals in the U.S., on average, provide an inferior quality of care compared with their nonprofit peers, according to an extensive review of studies published this month. The systematic analysis of 162 studies found a pattern of differences in cost, quality and accessibility. Non-profit hospitals are also better at keeping costs down, the review found. There is also evidence that non-profits have a "spillover effect" in markets where they co-exist with for-profits, the study said. That is, they "enhance the quality and trustworthiness" of for-profits in a given market. The standard by which non-profits are now judged is too narrow, because it doesn't take into account these other factors, the authors said. See:

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20060620/hl\\_nm/nonprofit\\_study\\_dc\\_4](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20060620/hl_nm/nonprofit_study_dc_4)

## Is your government up to standard?



The World Bank has been working for several years with the OECD in promoting certain corporate governance standards in developing and transition countries. The Bank has now completed corporate governance assessments for 40 countries, ranging from Armenia to Zimbabwe, and posted them on its web site at:

<http://rru.worldbank.org/GovernanceReports>.

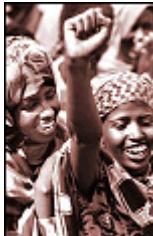
Each country report contains evaluative material on how these rights are being respected. The Bank guidelines are oriented towards business, however there is also a chapter on the role and rights of other stakeholders, mainly workers. This may be useful for PSI affiliates in the countries concerned, should they want to point out any shortcomings to their government.

## Nordic reality vs neo-con ideology



"...Nordic countries have successfully managed to combine social welfare with high income, solid economic growth and macro-economic stability. Standards of corporate governance are also high," says Jeffrey D. Sachs, Professor of Economics and a Special Advisor to the Secretary General of the UN. In his comments to the Danish newspaper Politiken, Sachs draws comparisons with the USA where, for example, 14% of GDP goes on health but they get far less bang for their buck than the Nordic countries, which only spend 11% of GDP on health. "The Nordic experience also refutes neo-conservative claims that a comprehensive welfare state erodes the incentive to work and to save. National savings in Nordic countries average more than 20% of national income, compared with approximately 10% in the USA," says Sachs. See <http://www.norden.org/webb/news/news.asp?id=6155&lang=6>

## Africans opposing corruption



TrustAfrica is a new foundation that promotes peace, economic prosperity, and social justice throughout the continent. Led by Africans and based in Dakar, Senegal, it aims to strengthen an expanding network of nonprofit groups across the continent who are seeking to hold governments accountable. The [New York Times](#) reports that Ford Foundation has committed \$30 million to the group, half of which will finance a permanent endowment, while the rest provides grants to civil society groups. Akwasi Aidoo, the director, says that in a period when Africa is becoming more democratic, some leaders are becoming intolerant of dissent. "The best antidote is to amplify the voices of those for peaceful change," he said. Mr. Aidoo and Ford Foundation's president, Susan V. Berresford, have confirmed that Trust Africa will be an independent foundation governed solely by Africans. See <http://www.trustafrika.org/>

## World Bank watch



Speaking at a conference on Infrastructure and Development, World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz has admitted: "Among the 6.3 billion people in the world today, 1.6 billion do not have access to basic energy services, 500 million of them in sub-Saharan Africa". About 2.6 billion people lack access to water and sanitation services. "We have moved away from a paradigm which once expected the private sector to play the dominant role in infrastructure," he said. Private sector investment in infrastructure in developing countries peaked at about 128 billion dollars in 1997 but by 2003 had more than halved to 58 billion dollars, according to World Bank figures. "It is apparent that the capacity or willingness of the private sector to respond to all the infrastructure needs is limited," said Wolfowitz. In the 1990s there were high hopes that a greater private sector role would provide the roads, water and energy supplies needed to help ease global poverty, Hadi Esfahani, professor at the University of Illinois, told the Conference. "That outcome failed to materialise," he said.

## Reminder: GURN papers online



The Global Union Research Network (GURN) has published a complete list of its resource papers (English, French and Spanish). The aim of this network, set up in 2004, is to give unions better access to research carried out within the labour movement, to promote information sharing, and to develop the capacity to make analyses and take part in debates and policy formulation. You can browse the list of GURN publications at: [http://library.fes.de/cgi-bin/populo/gurnpub.pl?db=gurnpub&t\\_dirlink=x&f\\_COM=all](http://library.fes.de/cgi-bin/populo/gurnpub.pl?db=gurnpub&t_dirlink=x&f_COM=all)

## The conservative welfare state



US Economist Dean Baker, co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, has written a new book debunking the idea that conservatives favour the market over government intervention. In actual fact, he argues, conservatives *rely* on "nanny state" policies to ensure the rich get richer, while leaving most Americans worse off. Sound economic policy should harness the market in ways which produce desirable social outcomes – decent wages, good jobs and affordable health care. The book is available for free download at: [www.conservativenannystate.org/](http://www.conservativenannystate.org/). See also <http://www.philly.com/mld/philly/14616603.htm>

## For old times' sake...



The next PSI Congress is our centennial. We have commissioned a book that will be both a PSI history and a history of public services over the last 100 years. However we have very few photos from the earlier half of this period. Can you please look into your archives to see if you have any photos and/or paintings of union leaders from 1907-1957, or posters/paintings/graphics from public events of that time, including strikes and protests. If you have, please send a scanned copy. If this is difficult, could we borrow the piece and do it for you? Please send any contributions to [Mike.Waghorne@world-psi.org](mailto:Mike.Waghorne@world-psi.org) or Peter Hall-Jones, PSI, BP 9, 01211 Ferney-Voltaire Cedex, France. Please indicate whether the material is copyright-free or not. If not, please send relevant details so we can obtain copyright permission.

## Kenya to provide free Aids drugs



Kenya's president has announced that fees will be removed for anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs), which combat the effects of Aids. President Mwai Kibaki said the 100 shilling (\$1; 54p) fee per dose would be waived "with immediate effect" in public hospitals and clinics. Huge stockpiles of ARV drugs are languishing in Kenyan warehouses, some of them past their expiry date. A shortage of trained staff, and understanding about the potency of these drugs along with a lack of testing facilities to enable blood readings to be taken regularly, have been blamed for the wastage. See: [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5040240.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5040240.stm)

## Failing the ethics test



Norway's Ministry of Finance has excluded Wal-Mart Stores Inc. from the Norwegian Government Pension Fund, in line with a recommendation from its Council on Ethics. The Council cited serious and systematic violations of human and labour rights. Some of the others excluded are: Boeing Co, Honeywell International Inc, Freeport, and Lockheed Martin. For a list of excluded companies and details of why, see: [http://odin.dep.no/fin/english/topics/pension\\_fund/p10002777/screening/excluded/bn.html](http://odin.dep.no/fin/english/topics/pension_fund/p10002777/screening/excluded/bn.html)

For more on the Council on Ethics (including its guidelines) see: <http://odin.dep.no/etikkradet/>

## Protest over wage fixing



On June 15, 3,000 Japanese public service workers held a rally in Tokyo to protest against the Koizumi administration's corruption of the wage determination system. Japanese public workers do not possess the right to bargain collectively, the right to reach collective agreement, or the right to strike. To compensate for this, a system of "Recommendations by the National Personnel Authority" was introduced, supposedly to ensure increases in base pay to match wages in the private sector, based on the reported public-private wage gap of the year. Samples for the survey to determine the private wage standard have been conducted in companies with over 100 employees or offices with over 50 staff members. Japanese PSI affiliates launched a protest against the recommendations made in August, and the decision reached at the November Cabinet meeting.

## Korean government attacks rally



On 25th May riot police attacked a demonstration of the Korean Government Employees Union (KGEU). 107 KGEU members were arrested, 4 detained, and several injured. Among those beaten was KGEU's General Secretary, KIM Jeong Soo, and Secretary of Public Relations, CHOI Nak Sam. Both had to be taken to hospital as a result. Although the rally was peaceful, and was legally notified in advance, riot police also blocked participants from joining. The KGEU has resolved to file lawsuits against the police. Video from the rally is available here: [mms://move.cast.or.kr/cham/power/06/060525\\_ej\\_gong.wmv](mms://move.cast.or.kr/cham/power/06/060525_ej_gong.wmv)

## Peoples' Trade Agreements



Bolivia is turning protests into proposals and constructing a trade policy based on principles of solidarity, complementarity and co-existence with the environment. "We depend on a global market, but we want a market that is just and based on solidarity, not just profits for a few," says Maria Victoria Fernandez, President of Bolivia's Women Workers Association. The first paragraph of the People's Trade Agreement (PTA) states that it: "...understands trade and investment not as ends in themselves but as a means towards development. Consequently its aim is not total liberalization of markets and the shrinking of States but rather creating benefits for all peoples." This is more than just a different set of rules; this is a different game. PTAs were signed in May between Bolivia, Venezuela and Cuba. See: <http://www.boliviasonderana.org/blog/English>

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