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World Day for Decent Work 7 October

 <http://www.world-psi.org/images/wddw.gif>

7 October is the World Day for Decent Work (WDDW), organised by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

PSI and other global union federations have chosen to use

the day to highlight the growth in precarious work and the resulting erosion of workers' and trade unions' rights.

Activities include a joint global unions press conference to be held in Istanbul on 2nd October; action by Colombian affiliates in reaction to a government decision to rescind a bill which would have extended employment rights and protections to temporary workers; and a regional activity led by the Guatemala electricity workers' union.

The International Metalworkers' Federation has planned a global week of action against precarious work on 3-10 October. PSI is pleased to support this action and has associated with the IMF and the other Global Unions. Please click on the following links to download

- [the campaign poster](#) (low resolution)
- [the campaign leaflet](#).

Additional language versions of the poster and leaflet, as well as a high-resolution version of the poster, suitable for printing, are available on the IMF website:

<http://www.imfmetal.org/index.cfm?c=20592&l=2>

UN Leadership Forum on Climate Change


 Image

PSI General Secretary Peter Waldorff was in New York to participate in the UN Leadership Forum on Climate Change on 22 September. PSI will also be present at the UN conference on climate change, COP15, to be held in Copenhagen on 7-18 December 2009.

PSI has published a [statement on climate change](#) that urges governments to agree in Copenhagen on an ambitious and equitable agreement that would

keep global temperature rise to below 2°C. PSI endorses greenhouse gas emission reduction of 30% by 2020 for developed nations, and urges them to provide support to developing countries to help them to deal with the consequences of climate change. PSI recognises that a major strengthening of public services is essential in order to contribute to fair and efficient climate policies.

New PSI Deputy General Secretary

 Image

We have the pleasure to welcome Alexandre Kamarotos as the new PSI Deputy General Secretary. Alexandre is 46 years old and is of Greek/French nationality. Over the past 16 years, he has been working for the UN, for different NGOs in the field of sustainable development and humanitarian aid and development. He has held senior management positions in “Enfants du Monde – Droits de l’Homme” and in “Médecins du Monde – International”. Since 2004 Alexandre has been managing large European Union programmes in France and Italy. He has very strong experience in international affairs, a long experience in international high-level management, he has knowledge in strategic planning and a wide expertise in the public sector. Alexandre Kamarotos will officially start work on 1st October.

Canadian unions say NO to the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement

 Image

The Conservative government of Canada has tried for the second time to force a vote in parliament to implement the Canada Colombia Free Trade Agreement (CCFTA). However, pressure from opposition parties and civil society resulted in the government withdrawing the bill from the Parliamentary order paper. PSI affiliates in Canada (CUPE, NUPGE, PSAC), together with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, have been leaders in the fight against the agreement and remain on alert as it is expected that the agreement will be brought back yet again. The Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement was not written to protect labour and human rights. It is more than a “trade” agreement. It is a trade and investment agreement underpinned by tacit Canadian support for a security agenda that defends the extractive industries, the drug cartels, and

the internal security forces of Colombia.

Authentic democracy and the respect for human rights are not the direct outcome of free trade. If human rights and the security of the person are not upheld, neither are the democratic rights of millions of Colombians. Since January 2007, there have been 115 trade unionists murdered. Colombia has four million internal refugees. This bilateral agreement is likely to intensify Colombia’s refugee crisis because the investment provisions will further open up Colombian territories to foreign investment in the resource extraction sectors.

The Canadian labour movement has asked Canadian parliamentarians to reject the Canada-

Colombia agreement at least until a comprehensive, independent Human Rights Impact Assessment is completed, its findings broadly circulated and acted upon, and until the provisions of the investment chapter are withdrawn.

[Click here](#) to download the brief on the CCFTA recently published by the Canadian Labour Congress.

A Million Voices for Change

 Image

UNISON has launched a campaign highlighting the importance of public services for helping people through the recession and laying the foundations for our economic recovery. This has become even more urgent as hostile politicians and commentators seek to use the crisis as the occasion for more privatisation and cuts.

The campaign is called "A Million Voices for Change" and the core messages and objectives are set out on the UNISON website here <http://www.unison.org.uk/million/>.

The website also contains a wealth of information on the campaign, including a large range of printed resources. You can also send your own message to the campaign, and add your voice to the Million Voices for Change.

Swiss public sector workers demonstrate to protect their income

 Image

30,000 Swiss workers demonstrated in the capital Bern on 19 September in favour of a raise in salaries, or at least against salary decreases.

The Syndicat des services publics (SSP), a PSI affiliate, also calls for the reduction of working time, longer paid leave, creation of more jobs and an increase in annuities and similar bonuses.

The Deputy General Secretary of the SSP, Judith Bucher, said, "Over the last few years, national, regional and local government departments have seen a

strong rise in income. However, instead of creating reserves, many of them have preferred to offer the gift of tax reductions to companies and speculators, to the rich and the super-rich."

The rally was held in the context of a historic economic crisis for Switzerland. The research centre of Zurich (KOF) foresees an unemployment rate of 6% for 2010, against a probable maximum of 4.5% this year. The present numbers of 150,831 unemployed will likely go beyond 200,000 in 2010. In parallel, the GDP will go down by 3.3% this year and 0.6% in 2010.

See the union website here: www.ssp-vpod.ch.

Global Unions statement to IFI meetings



Please find attached the [statement](#), prepared jointly by the ITUC, the Global Union Federations and TUAC, for the 2009 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. These meetings will be held in Istanbul on 6 and 7 October 2009.

The statement proposes that the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) must emphasize the creation of decent work as the key to economic recovery. In its latest assessment of employment trends, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) determined that the global number of unemployed could be as much as 59 million higher in 2009 than in the pre-recession year 2007. It is evident that workers around the world, who are not to blame for the global economic crisis, continue to shoulder the greatest burden.

We ask you to call on your government to endorse the propositions contained in the statement. The ITUC has published a [model letter](#) that you may find useful to accompany the statement when you send it to the government. Please keep PSI informed of your actions and any response you receive.

Young Workers: A Lost Decade



In the past 10 years, the lives of young workers in the US have changed dramatically. Since 1999, more of them now have lower-paying jobs, if they can get a job at all; health care is a rare luxury and retirement security is something for their parents, not them. In fact, many—younger than 35—still live at home with their parents because they can't afford to be on their own. These are the findings of a new report, "Young Workers: A Lost Decade." Conducted in July 2009 by Peter D. Hart Research Associates for the AFL-CIO and Working America, the nationwide survey of 1,156 people follows up on a similar survey the AFL-CIO conducted in 1999. The deterioration of young workers' economic situation in those 10 years is alarming.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka summed up the report's findings this way: "We're calling the report "A Lost Decade" because we're seeing 10 years of opportunity lost as young workers across the board are struggling to keep their heads above water and often not succeeding. They've put off

adulthood—put off having kids, put off education—and a full 34 percent of workers under 35 live with their parents for financial reasons."

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said, "Young workers in particular must be given the tools to lead the next generation to prosperity. The national survey we're releasing today shows just how broken our economy is for our young people...and what's at stake if we don't fix it."

According to the report, more than half of young workers say employees are more successful

getting problems resolved as a group rather than as individuals, and employees who have a union are better off than employees in similar jobs who do not.

Read more here: <http://blog.aflcio.org/2009/09/01/young-workers-a-lost-decade/>

Download the full report here:

http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/laborday/upload/laborday2009_report.pdf

Finnish Workers in state-owned enterprises STOP on 11 September



Image

Employees of state-owned enterprises stopped work for six hours on 11 September 2009. Destia's, Raskone's, Labtium's and Finavia's employees, members of PSI affiliate JHL, stopped work in protest against the proposed selling of company shares. Destia and Labtium as well as the majority shares of Raskone are the first in line. Finavia will be incorporated at the beginning of 2010. In JHL's opinion the sale will, at worst, endanger the maintenance of the country's basic infrastructure, and in

the worst-case scenario cause natural resource know-how and national defence maintenance operations to be steered into the hands of foreign listed companies.


In any case the intention to sell is short-sighted politics: a quick way of procuring money to fill up the hole left by tax concessions, and also an indication that the State is trying to wriggle its way out of its basic responsibilities as an owner.

The work stoppage involves:

- Destia's workplaces around Finland, including ferries
- airports
- Labtium's workplaces in Rovaniemi, Kuopio, Sodankylä, Raahe, Espoo and Outokumpu
- Raskone's repair workshops around Finland

For more details see the JHL website: <http://www.jhl.fi/uutinen/5449>

Indonesia: PLN Union rejects new electricity law

 Image

The Indonesian House of Representatives again passed its new controversial electricity law on 8 September, to allow the free market economy to come into play in the power sector and to fully privatise power generation, distribution and supply. Over 2000 workers, members of the PLN union, took part in a rally to reject the law. The former electricity law (No. 20/2002) was annulled by the Indonesia Constitutional Court with their landmark decision of December 2004. In its judgment, the Court made reference to international experiences that privatisation of electricity has failed in other countries and quality public services

in electricity need to be provided through the public sector.

The PLN union has threatened to call for a national strike if the government implements the new law. Indonesia President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has set up a meeting with the union on 8 October. PLN has a strategic position in the Indonesian electricity generation sector, and they have a significant social, economic and political role. The union will continue to support and protect the interests of the public for accessible and affordable electricity.

Anti-racism committee meets and supports Brazilian projects

Representatives of the Committee to Combat Racism from PSI Americas met on August 25 and 26, in the city of Brasilia. Among the major decisions were:


- the support to the Convention under discussion at the Organization of American States (OAS) against all forms of discrimination
- the implementation in the region of the goals established by the Durban Conference, including its revised version;
- the integration of PSI in the activities developed by INSPIR (Inter-American Trade Union Institute for the Promotion of Racial Equality); and
- the preparation of the III Regional Meeting to Combat Racism, to be held previously to the IAMRECON in October 2010.

*Bill Lucy talking with José Sarney,
President of the Brazilian Senate*

The participants also took the opportunity to manifest their support for the legislation that promotes racial equality, currently under discussion in the Brazilian

Congress. This was welcomed by the President of the Brazilian Senate (photo) and the Vice-President of the House of Representatives. "These new Acts will help Brazil to convert into State policies some of the actions that the Brazilian Government has been developing, and which will have a strong effect as best practices, serving also as an example to many countries in the Americas," said Bill Lucy during the Congress hearings. For more information, contact psiamericas@verizon.net.

NUPGE wants respirators for health care workers

 Image

PSI affiliate National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) in Canada says all health care workers exposed to a pandemic flu virus like H1N1 should be given fit-tested NIOSH approved N95 respirators to protect them on the job.

More than 100,000 of the union's members across Canada are health care workers, including over 70,000 health sciences professionals who deliver diagnostic, clinical, rehabilitation and preventive services.

The recommendation is made by James Clancy, NUPGE president, in a letter to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) dealing with weaknesses in Annex F of the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan (CPIP). "In our view Annex F does not go far enough to protect health care workers in the event of a pandemic influenza outbreak such as the H1N1 virus," Clancy writes. "We believe there is ample current available scientific evidence suggesting that an influenza virus like H1N1 is capable

of being spread through airborne transmission. However, we understand that PHAC's position is that there is not yet a scientific consensus on this issue," he notes.

"We argue, however, that in light of any scientific uncertainty, and given that any consensus is likely to emerge later rather than sooner, that our governments and health care employers have a legal, moral and ethical responsibility to put safety first and provide all potentially exposed health care workers with the highest quality and safest personal protective equipment that is available."


Read the letter here

http://www.nupge.ca/files/publications/MiscPDFs/nupge_pandemic_letter_annex_f_aug09.pdf

Link to NUPGE's "Watch list" <http://www.nupge.ca/taxonomy/term/128>

For more details and advice on H1N1 influenza, read the PSI health blog <http://healthblog.world-psi.org/>.

The ILO Global Jobs Pact and the global economic and financial crisis

 Image

The ITUC has published a circular highlighting the importance of the ILO Jobs Pact in particular given its advocacy of a strong trade union role in all efforts to design and implement national responses to the global economic and financial crisis. The circular provides concrete guidance on how to use and advocate the various aspects of the Pact.

For more information access the [PSI financial crisis blog](#).

Ask the ILO Helpdesk!



Image

Do you have questions about putting decent work principles into practice? Or how to prevent trafficking of migrant labour? Or how to observe labour standards? The ILO Helpdesk can answer these and other questions about the respect of workers' rights.

The ILO has launched a Helpdesk with an aim to provide guidance to unions and companies on questions related to international labour standards, based on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the ILO MNE Declaration, as well as other ILO instruments, tools and guidelines.

To get assistance from the Helpdesk, send your question by email to assistance@ilo.org. Users receive a comprehensive response drawing on the whole range of ILO expertise concerning protection of workers' rights, sustainable enterprise development, conditions of work, social safety nets, and industrial relations.

Please find attached [a flyer](#) with more information on the Helpdesk.

We encourage PSI affiliates to make use of this valuable resource.

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