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PSI World News

PUBLIC SERVICES INTERNATIONAL | March 2010

Turkish court sentences trade unionist Seher Tümer to more than seven years in prison

The Ankara High Criminal Court in Turkey has sentenced trade union leader Seher Tümer to more than seven years in prison, declaring her guilty of belonging to an illegal Kurdish organization, and of “making propaganda” through participation in public demonstrations. Tümer has already spent close to one year in prison. Her lawyers maintain there is no evidence to back these charges. Public Services International contends that Tümer has been targeted for her activities in the labour and women’s movements in Turkey. Continued international solidarity is needed to press for an expedited appeal.

Chile update: investment in public health is essential

After the earthquake and tsunami that affected the south-central region of Chile, the PSI affiliate National Federation of Health Service University Professionals (FENPRUSS) calls on the new government to make the rebuilding of hospitals a priority and to reassess the Health Services Network because “right now, it’s more important than ever to invest in public health.”

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Haiti update

A Public Services International (PSI) working committee is being formed to assist Confédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses des Secteurs Public et Privé (CTSP) members in the rebuilding of their union and communities in Haiti. CTSP has now confirmed that more than 300 of its 6,500 union members perished in the January earthquake. Freelance photographer Natasha Fillion recently took photographs of members and the remains of their union office in Port-au-Prince.

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Euro-Mediterranean conference on migration

Public Services International (PSI) general secretary Peter Waldorff was a keynote speaker at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, 16 March, in Bari, Italy, co-sponsored by local affiliates, PSI and the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU). This important conference brought together representatives of public sector unions from Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Malta, Greece, Cyprus, Tunisia and Algeria, as well as civil society organisations, government agencies and media.

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New public-public partnership (PuP) initiative

Public Services International (PSI) has called on all affiliated unions in the water and sanitation sector to actively participate in the new PuP initiative sponsored by the European Union. The European Commission has released a restricted call for proposals for €40 million in grants for PuPs in water and sanitation services in 72 Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Islands (ACP) countries.

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European Commission turns blind eye to failing public-private partnerships: new report

Countries around the world can draw lessons from the analysis of European public-private partnerships (PPPs) provided in a new report from the Public Service International Research Unit. Peter Waldorff, general secretary of Public Services International (PSI), comments: "PPPs can be seen as another form of offloading debt – and the heavy price is paid by the next generation of citizens."

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International trade union youth campaign launched

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) launched on 23 March a new campaign to connect global trade union work to the recruitment and organising of young people. The new "On the Job for a Better Future" campaign offers provocative videos, social networking features, posters, and a special campaign guide.

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UK: Senior civil servants reject pay freeze

Public Services International (PSI) affiliate the Association of First Division Civil Servants (FDA), the senior public servants' union in the UK, has responded strongly to the government's proposal to freeze the pay of senior staff in the civil service, the military, the judiciary and the health service, alongside the pay of doctors and dentists and salaried National Health Service consultants.

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Global initiatives for a financial transactions tax

In reaction to the international financial crisis, initiatives are multiplying around the world to make a financial transactions tax a reality.

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United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

Thirty women delegates from Public Services International attended the 54th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York, early March, as part of a larger global trade union delegation.

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