



## **2017 Caribbean Sub-regional Advisory Committee (SUBRAC) Meeting**

**Thursday, February 16 and Friday, February 17**

**Hotel Four Seasons  
Kingston, Jamaica**

## **Meeting documents**

**2017 Caribbean SUBRAC  
Revised Draft Agenda – Thursday February 16**

**9:00 am NETWORKING**

- 9:15 am** **Call to order, Titulars**  
**Welcome, representative from host affiliates**  
**Introduction of top table(s)**  
**Adoption of Agenda, Announcements**  
**Remarks, Rosa Pavanelli, PSI general secretary**  
**Introduction of attendees**  
**Minutes of the 2016 meeting**  
– Adoption and confirmation of minutes

**10:30 am NETWORKING BREAK**

- 11:00 am** **Matters arising** (items not otherwise covered in the agenda)

*Update and follow-up from points raised at the 2016 meeting*

- 11:30 am** **Work in progress on the Implementation of the Programme of Action 2013 - 2017**

- 12:35 pm** **Emerging Issues**

**1:00 pm LUNCH**

- 2:30 pm** **30<sup>th</sup> World Congress 2017**  
*Sis Rosa Pavanelli, Bro Wayne Jones, Sis Jillian Bartlett*

*An overview of preparations and plans for the 30<sup>th</sup> World Congress, including important deadlines.*

*Sessions later in the afternoon will provide opportunities for small group discussions that will incorporate the views and recommendations of affiliates on the contents of the draft PoA 2018 – 2022, as well as the proposed constitutional amendments.*

- 3:30 pm** **Small group discussions and consultations on sectoral and thematic issues, the draft Programme of Action (PoA) 2018 to 2022 and proposed amendments to the Constitution**

*Discussion leaders will engage sectoral and thematic small groups in discussions and consultations linking the draft PoA to the realities in the sub-region. SUBRAC members will also review the proposed amendments to the constitution and the guidelines for submission of resolutions to congress.*

**5:30 pm END OF DAY ONE**

*There will be no formal afternoon break. SUBRAC members are free to get coffee, tea, juice, water at their leisure.*

## Revised Draft Agenda – Friday February 17

**9:00 am NETWORKING**

**9:15 am Report backs from small group discussions and consultations**  
*We invite SUBRAC members to present their recommendations and views on the draft PoA and comments on the proposed constitutional amendments.*

**10:15 am Report of SUBWOC meeting**

**Report from Young Workers' Caucus**

**10:45 am NETWORKING BREAK**

**11:05 am Conclusions from report backs**

**Noon Can there be an enabling environment for the LGBTQI community in the Caribbean? What is the role of trade unions?**

*Maria Fontenelle, Advocacy and Communications Officer, United and Strong Inc, St Lucia; Linda Mienzer, Bermuda PSU*

**1:00 pm LUNCH**

**2:15 pm Matters relating to the [International Labour Organisation \(ILO\)](#), other Global Union Federations (GUFs) and regional labour organisations**

*Sis Paula Robinson, ILO Caribbean; Bro Thomas Letang, DPSU; Sis Jillian Bartlett, NUGFW TT; Bro Roland Ignacio, ABVO Curaçao*

*We invite SUBRAC members to carefully note the priorities and work programmes of these regional and global organisations.*

*The discussion will highlight key spaces in which PSI affiliates can promote quality public services and PSI's key messages on tax justice, public-public partnerships, gender responsive public services, and other strategic priorities.*

**3:30 pm The Future of Public Services in the Caribbean**

*Bro Wayne Jones, Sis Sandra Massiah*

*We invite SUBRAC members to deliberate on their vision for public services in the Caribbean.*

*We also invite members to discuss, recommend and endorse various actions.*

**4:45 pm Closing Remarks**

**5:00 pm END OF SUBRAC 2017**

*There will be no formal afternoon break. SUBRAC members are free to get coffee, tea, juice, water at their leisure.*

**T**he Public Services International (PSI) celebrates its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. This is also a congress year. In the months prior to congress, affiliates have the opportunity to assess and plan; appraise our legitimacy as a global trade union; and, above all, reflect on how to increase the relevance of our activities in an increasingly adverse world context. The world is constantly changing – and not necessarily all for the better. In this difficult scenario, the Public Services International and its affiliates worldwide have been able to raise a number of key issues in global spaces. By engaging with key activists, influencers and decision-makers, and by bringing strong arguments to support our position, we can and have been successful. We can do so much more. We put people over profit. It is our time to lead.

This year's sub-regional meetings focus especially on providing the opportunity for affiliates to review and comment on the Draft Programme of Action (PoA) 2018 to 2022 and the Draft Constitutional Amendments, as circulated to affiliates in Congress Circular # 3, dated January 20, 2017 (English version). The PoA and the amendments to the constitution are the two core resolutions from the Executive Board (EB) to congress. Together they set the campaigning agenda for the new congress period. The PSI's global standing is constantly growing. And this reflects positively on all our affiliates. Your affiliation to PSI provides you with access to valuable and vital information and research, technical assistance, it "opens doors" and provides a means to strategically deal with critical matters affecting workers, their families and the entire society in your respective countries.

Through its active involvement in global political issues, the PSI's global standing is constantly increasing. And this is reflected at the regional and sub-regional levels. PSI's sub-regional office and affiliates in the Caribbean are now increasingly being invited to engage in strategic consultations and discussions with a broad range of actors across the sub-region. In particular, the engagement on the implementation of the sustainable development goals in the Caribbean, climate change, regional integration, gender-based violence, the future of public services in the Caribbean and tax justice issues, has opened many doors for activists in the region to acquire new skills and talents, deepen their knowledge, and make key connections in order to influence decision-making at national, sub-regional and regional levels. It also provides the impetus to build stronger unions that better equipped to deal with the increasing challenges and evolving and emerging issues of the times.

Trade union organisations in other sectors of Caribbean economies as well as national and Caribbean-wide civil society organisations are increasingly calling on the sub-regional office to assist in their education programmes on the ills of privatisation; as well as providing information and assistance in developing campaigns against privatisation in all its forms.

The broad twin-challenges of boldly facing the adverse environment in which we live and work, while at the same time dealing with and solving internal challenges and managing internal changes, require a leadership that is bold, well-resourced, forward thinking, innovative, gender-sensitive and emotionally intelligent.<sup>1</sup>

Transformational leadership, effective change management models and a strong focus on the people, recognising and appreciating diversity, are key elements in restoring the values of justice, equality, and solidarity. Trade unions in all aspects of their engagement in societies – freedom of association, collective bargaining, tripartite consultations, evidenced-based arguments, rights-based approaches - have a key role in re-building these values and maintaining democratic systems. The value of public services cannot be over-emphasised in small island developing states.

Capacity building is an integral part of this work. It involves targeted, effective trade union education and training programmes and practices, effective tools and resources, built on the principles of social justice, equality and equity to help develop strong and effective activists. Practical and engaging work that puts into practice the knowledge, skills and attitudes learnt and developed creates the capacity with affiliates to effectively deal with the challenges that they constantly face.

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<sup>1</sup> Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify and manage your own emotions and the emotions of others. It is generally said to include three skills:

1. Emotional awareness, including the ability to identify your own emotions and those of others;
2. The ability to harness emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problems solving;
3. The ability to manage emotions, including the ability to regulate your own emotions, and the ability to cheer up or calm down another person.

## Work in progress on the Implementation of the Programme of Action 2013 - 2017

After the 2012 congress, affiliates in the sub-region reviewed the situation at the local/national and regional levels, linking the strategic priorities to the realities in the sub-region.

The implementation of the **sustainable development goals** in the Caribbean depends heavily on finance; and the push to achieve these goals using PPPs and other forms of privatisation is evident in all countries in the sub-region – some more than others. Therefore, the PSI's fight against all forms of privatisation pushed by neo-liberalism is essential to get at the root of many of our members' grievances, problems, and complaints.

The PSI's affiliates in the sub-region were the first within the Caribbean trade union movement to raise the issue of **taxation** in the Caribbean. The questions asked, the quest for more information and even responding to the tax haven labels given to a number of countries in the sub-region, caused others to ask more questions and to join in the global conversation on **tax justice** as well as **anti-corruption**. The fact that multinationals (those originating in developed countries as well as those that are Caribbean-born) are not paying their fair share is increasingly gaining traction in the sub-region.

Caribbean countries are among the ones most affected by **climate change**. We feel the effects every day. It does not necessarily have to be hurricane season for disaster to strike, causing finances previously earmarked for other projects and programmes to be shifted to deal with relief efforts and similar urgent needs. **Climate finance** is key to the sub-region, yet even in this large private sector groupings are seeking to take the much-needed resources to enrich their coffers. The people are secondary.

There is increasing violence against women and men; and especially against women and girls – at home and at work. Even attempts to draft and pass legislation on harassment, rape and other forms of **gender-based violence** are met with resistance. And while there is much talk about gender mainstreaming, many see it only as a numbers game.

The current geopolitics and its heavy influence on small island developing states increases the importance of **regional integration** in states such as those in the Caribbean. Public services unions saw the light almost 45 years ago, and there is increasing need to widen the vision and take leadership in promoting various aspects of the integration movement in the Caribbean.

*(There will be a verbal and visual presentation of some of the key themes and issues covered over the last year and the work done by affiliates; as well as some of the emerging issues.)*

## 30<sup>th</sup> World Congress 2017

*Sis Rosa Pavanelli, Bro Wayne Jones, Sis Jillian Bartlett*

*An overview of preparations and plans for the 30<sup>th</sup> World Congress, including important deadlines.*

*Sessions later in the afternoon will provide opportunities for small group discussions that will incorporate the views and recommendations of affiliates on the contents of the draft PoA 2018 – 2022, as well as the proposed constitutional amendments.*

Note especially the following:

1. **Congress Circular No. 3** (including guidelines and template for affiliate resolutions):  
[http://www.world-psi.org/sites/default/files/en\\_geneva\\_congress\\_circ\\_no\\_3\\_resolutions.pdf](http://www.world-psi.org/sites/default/files/en_geneva_congress_circ_no_3_resolutions.pdf)
2. **Draft POA:**  
[http://www.world-psi.org/sites/default/files/en\\_poa\\_v16\\_final\\_jan\\_2017\\_web.pdf](http://www.world-psi.org/sites/default/files/en_poa_v16_final_jan_2017_web.pdf)
3. **Draft Constitutional Amendments:**  
[http://www.world-psi.org/sites/default/files/en\\_constitution\\_revision\\_5\\_eb149\\_web.pdf](http://www.world-psi.org/sites/default/files/en_constitution_revision_5_eb149_web.pdf)

To assist affiliates in seeing the PoA as a living document, one that is applicable to the realities in the sub-region, committee members in small group discussions, will review and discuss the contents especially focusing on key sectors, themes and issues.

Discussion leaders/steering group co-chairs will provide guidelines on the format of the discussions, guiding members through the draft PoA and the draft constitutional amendments.

Discussion leaders/steering group co-chairs will present the report backs from the various groups.

## Can there be an enabling environment for the LGBTQI community in the Caribbean? What is the role of trade unions?

*Maria Fontenelle, Advocacy and Communications Officer, United and Strong Inc, St Lucia; Linda Mienzer, Bermuda PSU*

In 2014, the sub-region endorsed the nomination of Sis Linda Mienzer, 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president of the Bermuda Public Services Union as its representative on the Americas LGBTQI committee.

In 2015 as part of the lead up to the Inter-American Regional Conference (IAMRECON) in Mexico City, Sis Mienzer, through a [video message](#) to the 2015 SUBRAC, sought to start the conversation among affiliates on the rights of LGBTQI workers and the role of public services trade unions in promoting their human rights and their rights as workers. This has not been an easy task given the traditional strong views and still existing laws in many Caribbean countries. SUIBRAC agreed to start the conversation.

A short [survey](#) to affiliates received 3 responses.

Within the sub-region and especially in 2016, there were at least 4 instances in which the issue became national and regional hot topics, with varying levels of engagement by trade unions:

### **Case1:** [Constitutional change – promoting gender equality](#)

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas proposed 4 amendments to the Constitution and set in motion a national referendum held on June 7, 2016. The four referendum questions as they appeared on the ballot:

**QUESTION #1** - Do you approve of the constitution amendment number one bill, 2014? Under this proposed change to the constitution, a child born outside The Bahamas would, after the coming into operation of this amendment, become a Bahamian citizen at birth if either its mother or father is a citizen of The Bahamas by birth.

**QUESTION #2** - Do you approve of the constitution amendment number two bill, 2014? Under this proposed change to the constitution, a foreign spouse of a Bahamian citizen would, after coming into operation of this article, be entitled to apply for and obtain citizenship subject to satisfying, one, existing national security or public policy considerations and two, new provisions guiding against marriages of convenience.

**QUESTION #3** - Do you approve of the constitution amendment number three bill, 2014? Under this proposed change to the constitution, a Bahamian father of a person born outside of wedlock, after the coming into operation of this amendment, would be able to pass his citizenship to that person subject to legal proof that he is the father.

**QUESTION #4** - Do you approve of the constitution amendment number four bill, 2014? Under this proposed change to the constitution, it would be unlawful to discriminate based on sex, which will be defined as being male or female.

**Case 2: [Same sex marriage and civil unions](#)**

The Government of Bermuda set in motion a non-binding referendum on June 23. There were two questions:

“Are you in favour of same sex marriage in Bermuda?”

and

“Are you in favour of same sex civil unions in Bermuda?”

**Case 3: [Section 53 struck down](#)**

The Supreme Court of Belize struck down a law that had been in place since the country was a British colony; it appears to be the first time a court has struck down a sodomy law in the Caribbean region. The plaintiff in the case was Caleb Orozco, Executive Director of United Belize Advocacy Movement (UNIBAM). The challenge by UNIBAM was to Section 53 of the Belize Criminal Code, which banned "carnal intercourse against the order of nature" and disproportionately affected gay men.

**Case 4: [Gender equality and the Grenada constitution](#)**

Some claimed that the Rights and Freedom Bill creates a loophole that could result in Grenada legalising same-sex unions. Gender equality, according to the legislation, provides for both men and women to be entitled to equal rights and status in all spheres of life, especially in economic, educational, political, civic, and social activities.

**PSI and LGBTQI workers’ rights**

PSI is committed to equality for all irrespective of sex, marital status, ethnic origin, national identity, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion, at the workplace, in trade unions and in the broader political, social, economic and cultural context. LGBTQI workers’ rights are trade union rights, and trade union rights are human rights. Trade unions are committed to fight against discrimination and for an inclusive non-violent society.

See PSI’s page on [LGBTQI](#) and workers’ rights.

## **Matters relating to the [International Labour Organisation \(ILO\)](#), other [Global Union Federations \(GUFs\)](#) and regional labour organisations**

*Sis Paula Robinson, ILO Caribbean; Bro Thomas Letang, DPSU; Sis Jillian Bartlett, NUGFW TT; Bro Roland Ignacio, ABVO Curaçao*

*We invite SUBRAC members to carefully note the priorities and work programmes of these regional and global organisations.*

*The discussion will highlight key spaces in which PSI affiliates can promote quality public services and PSI's key messages on tax justice, public-public partnerships, gender responsive public services, and other strategic priorities.*

The sub-regional office and PSI affiliates are becoming more involved in the work of a number of regional and global trade union organisations, promoting quality public services and spreading the PSI's messages on key themes and issues.

Some PSI affiliates are, individually, or through their national centres, members of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) other Global Union Federations (GUFs) and the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL). All independent countries are also members of the ILO.

Important upcoming **ILO** meetings in the Caribbean to note and to which public services unions can deliver strong messages include:

1. [Caribbean Future of Work Forum, 2017](#) | February 22, Kingston
2. [10<sup>th</sup> ILO Meeting of Caribbean Ministers of Labour: Realizing Decent Work under the 2030 Agenda](#) | February 23 – 24, Kingston

At recent elections of the **Caribbean Congress of Labour**, the general secretaries of the Dominica PSU and the NUGFW TT were elected as the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice president respectively. This should help to ensure a strong voice and advocacy for quality public services and key issues affecting public service workers in the Caribbean.

*[There will be verbal reports/presentations on developments and proposed future actions.]*

The **TUCA** held its [3<sup>rd</sup> congress](#) in São Paulo, Brazil in April 2016. There were some important developments, including stronger calls for internal democracy as well as more visibility for Caribbean affiliates.

*[There will be a verbal report/presentation on developments and plans.]*

## *References*

### **ILO publishes the annual report on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (2017)**

[http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_543646.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_543646.pdf)

*SUBRAC members may wish to note that Deborah THOMAS-FELIX<sup>2</sup> (Trinidad and Tobago), President of the Industrial Court of Trinidad and Tobago since 2011 is a member of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR).*

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<sup>2</sup> Judge of the United Nations Appeals Tribunal since 2014; current President of the United Nations Appeals Tribunal; former Chair of the Trinidad and Tobago Securities and Exchange Commission; former Deputy Chief Magistrate of the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago; former President of the Family Court of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; A. Hubert Humphrey Fulbright Fellow; Georgetown University Leadership Seminar fellow; and Commonwealth Institute of Judicial Education fellow.

## **The Future of Public Services in the Caribbean**

*Bro Wayne Jones, Sis Sandra Massiah*

*We invite SUBRAC members to deliberate on their vision for public services in the Caribbean.*

*We also invite members to discuss, recommend and endorse various actions.*

Two major initiatives in the Caribbean on Public Sector Transformation are:

1. The [Caribbean Leadership Project \(CLP\)](#);

And

2. The Draft Charter of Caribbean Public Services, spear-headed by the [Caribbean centre for Development Administration \(CARIDAD\)](#) *Improving Public Services for the people of the Caribbean*
  - a) The Draft Charter for Caribbean Public Services:  
<http://www.caricad.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Draft-Charter-for-Public-Services.pdf>
  - b) The Implementation Guide: <http://www.caricad.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CPSC-IMPLEMENTATION-GUIDE-V1.pdf>

### **About the CLP**

#### **Vision**

The Caribbean Leadership Project is a dynamic, integrated renewable community of adaptive leaders transforming the regional public sector into one that instils trust and confidence.

#### **Mission statement**

Given the essential role of the public service in achieving national and regional growth and development objectives, the Caribbean Leadership Project will support Heads of Government and key regional institutions to develop a network of leaders equipped to navigate the globally imposed and regionally inspired transformations.

#### **Goal**

As approved by the Minister Responsible for CIDA, the goal of the CLP is to strengthen strategically the next generation of Caribbean men and women leaders to contribute more effectively to regional integration and economic growth. This will be accomplished by establishing a project specific to the needs and culture of the Caribbean Region and by fostering regional approaches for the sustainability of leadership development.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the seven-year CLP is to strengthen the capacity of future leaders in the Caribbean to support gender-sensitive public sector reform and work collaboratively towards regional integration.

## **Pillars**

- [Leadership Development Programme](#)
- [Continuous Learning and Development Network](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Communities of Practice](#)
- [Enabling Environment](#)
- [Caribbean Centre for Leadership Excellence](#)

The sub-regional office is taking an active interest in the CLP and the Charter through connections and contacts made at various fora and conferences in the Caribbean. There are many opportunities for collaboration as well as spaces in which PSI in the Caribbean can deliver strong messages on quality public services and the workers who deliver them.

*[There will be verbal reports/presentations on the CLP and the Charter of Caribbean Public Services.]*

The themes of debt, growth and productivity are constantly present in all discussions, consultations, collective bargaining exercises in the Caribbean. They form an important backdrop to the nature and tone of the discussions that public services unions have with governments and other employers.

Addressing these issues requires public funding that ensures that women and men, boys and girls have equal and fair access to public services. This is the key to strong sustainable societies.

What kind of public services do you want in the Caribbean? What are the principles and values that you hold dear?