



APRECON
13TH Asia Pacific Regional Conference
QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES
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Adopted Resolution No 1: OHS Issues in the Electricity Industry in Pakistan

PSI Affiliates in APRECON, held on 11-12 October 2016 in Fukuoka, Japan,

NOTED with great consternation that many tragic accidents happened in the Pakistan electricity industry in the last 12 months, where more than 125 workers have been killed in the workplace, as informed by the All Pakistan WAPDA Hydro Electric Workers Union (CBA)

APRECON mourns those workers who lost their lives and expresses heartfelt condolences to their families.

NOTED that PSI, in its Programme of Action adopted at the Durban Congress in 2012, placed the issue of occupational health and safety as a high priority, firmly committing to a “Zero Accident Policy” and to lobby and campaign for this issue at global, regional and local levels.

NOTED that during the Regional Local Government Forum held in Surabaya in July 2016, the PSI regional affiliates endorsed that PSI should adopt a statement expressing concerns and condemning the inaction of the governments in the region in moving to protect workers from death and serious injuries through hazardous accidents in the electricity, water, health and local government sectors.

APRECON CALLS UPON the regional affiliates to express their concerns to their national governments at such human casualties related to the OHS issues and urges them to take preventive measures to save the precious lives of workers and to also implement the provisions of labor inspections in ILO Convention 81 as well as the provisions enshrined in C.18 and C.159, C.155, C.161 and recommendations R.187 and 197.

APRECON CALLS UPON the regional affiliates to mount the pressure, on the major funders promoting the restructuring of public utilities, in relation to OHS issues, and to globally disseminate this kind of information through their networks and other social media platforms, so that these incidents get adequate exposure and the governments are pressurized.

APRECON CALLS UPON PSI to support affiliates and help to redefine a strategy considering some possible options, such as technical support and training, and by linking affiliates with unions or specialised organisations.



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Adopted Resolution No 2: In Support of Korean Public Sector Unions' Struggle Against the Korean Government's Labour Repression and Attack on Public Services

The international community has recently been focusing a great deal of attention on the labour situation in South Korea. This is because labour repression and violations of democratic rights are now occurring there at a level which defies common sense. On the occasion of the 2016 PSI Asia Pacific Regional Conference (APRECON), therefore, the PSI affiliates in the Asia-Pacific region, who have been following this situation closely, call on the South Korean government to stop these unjust and violent acts and declare their full support for the struggles of South Korean public sector workers.

Over the last years, the South Korean government has cut the wages and benefits of public sector workers and sought to weaken their collective bargaining agreements. At the same time, the government has been pursuing the overall reform of the labour law that will make it easier for employers to fire workers and expand precarious work throughout the economy. We are aware that both of South Korea's national trade union centres are now cooperating in a broad-based struggle to defend the rights and livelihoods of Korean workers against these policies.

We understand that the South Korean government is engaging in such extreme labour repression to make it easier to implement its anti-labour, pro-business, neoliberal policies, which are now aimed specifically at the public sector. The government is indiscriminately forcing a system of performance-related pay and termination on public institutions, which will undermine teamwork by stimulating competition among employees and further commercialise the public sector. In addition, the government is using the deceitful claims of 'stimulating private investment in the railway', 'adjusting functions in the energy sector' and 'advancing the service industry' as a guise to pursue privatisation of transport, energy, healthcare, water and other essential public services, despite widespread opposition by workers and the entire Korean public. This is none other than an attempt by the government to turn public assets into commodities for the profit of private capital.

In addition, the government continues its repression against public servants and teachers by refusing to recognise the Korean Government Employees' Union (KGEU) and Korean Teachers and Education Workers' Union (KTU). Korean public servants and teachers continue to call on the government to fully guarantee their fundamental labour rights and the right to free political activity. We once again condemn the Korean government for its refusal to recognise the legal status of the KGEU and KTU and call on it to move quickly to address teacher and public servants' demands. We also call on the government to adhere to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association's recommendations and grant association rights to fire fighters.

Korean public sector workers are aware that the government's policies are bad not only for workers but for all Korean people. They are therefore fighting against the government's policies, seeking to defend quality public services. In this process, Han Sang-gyun, President of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, Cho Sung-deok, Vice President of the PSI-affiliated Korean Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (KPTU) and 4 other union officers have been imprisoned. We cannot hide our astonishment that such violent acts of labour repression are taking place in a country which is a member of the OECD.

APRECON affirms the legitimacy of the struggle of their Korean colleagues and vow to stand in solidarity and fight together with them.

APRECON condemns the South Korean government's labour repression and demands the following :

- Stop the illegal imposition of the performance-related pay and termination systems and create a forum for social dialogue to discuss a fair wage system consistent with the goal of providing quality public services and solutions to other problems in the public sector.
- Stop pursuing privatisation of the public sector (energy, rail, healthcare, water, etc.), which seeks to turn public services, which should be preserved as a universal human right, into commodities for capitalist profit!
- Recognise the legal status of the KGEU and KTU and guarantee the civil rights of public servants and teachers, in particular their fundamental labour rights and right to free political participation!
- Respect the recommendations of the ILO CFA and guarantee freedom of association rights to fire fighters!
- Immediately release all workers imprisoned in retaliation for their legitimate fight against regressive labour reforms, cancel all criminal charges against them and ensure that all workers fired in response to just trade union activities are reinstated!



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Adopted Resolution No 3: The Campaign to Ratify Convention No 151 (Labour Relations on Public Services, 1978) in the Philippines

Public Services International (PSI), with support from affiliates and its partners: Trade Union Solidarity Center of Finland (SASK), Finland Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors (JHL) and the Public and Services Trade Union of Ireland (IMPACT), collaborated to implement the campaign to ratify ILO Convention 151 in the Philippines. The Philippines ILO Convention 151 Project that ran from 2013 to 2015 was a phase in a long-term collaboration process between PSI and SASK on achieving trade union rights for public services workers in South East Asia;

ILO C. 151 is the convention on labour relations and was adopted on June 27, 1978, to further guarantee the public sector workers the protection on the right to organize, facilities to be afforded to public employees' organizations, procedures for determining terms and conditions of employment, settlement of disputes arising in connection with the determination of terms and conditions of employment, and civil and political rights;

In the Philippines public sector, there is no right to collective bargaining and, for many years, unions in the public sector had made attempts to win collective bargaining by lobbying for amendments to existing regulations; this proved to be extremely difficult and cumbersome and with any change in administration regulations could be changed backwards and forwards and, thus, no certainty could be secured;

APRECON expresses concern that no country in Asia-Pacific region has ratified Convention 151 and very few countries in the region practice collective bargaining in the public sector.

APRECON commits to support the continued campaign on the ratification of ILO Convention 151 in the Philippines as a way to upgrade existing regulations in the Philippines.

APRECON urges all the PSI affiliates in the region to work for the ratification of convention 151 at national level and also for the active implementation of collective bargaining regulations in the public sector



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Adopted Resolution No 4: Organizing in the Private Health Sector

Public Services International (PSI), in partnership with the Services Employees International Union (SEIU), is implementing an organizing project to complement the PSI organizing and growth policy, with the Alliance of Filipino Workers (AFW) being chosen as the pilot union in the Asia Pacific region. AFW is a PSI affiliate in the Philippines since 1992 and a confederation representing the private health sector worker organizations in the country;

APRECON noted that AFW expresses deep concern that Private health workers are facing serious challenges and their working conditions are grossly minimal and drastic steps need to be taken in organising them

APRECON appreciates that AFW affirms to embark on an unprecedented organizing expansion program throughout the country, targeting the most prominent hospitals and medical centers belonging to the Manny V. Pangilinan Group of Hospital and Medical Centers, and organizing their health workers into trade unions.

APRECON noted that AFW extends solidarity with the Public Sector unions in the country as well as in the region and willing to have mutual support and exchange of experiences from the international colleagues in organizing the private health sector workers.

APRECON hereby confirm and support the organizing work in the Private health sector in the region and will continue to get feedback from the pilot projects ongoing in the region.



Adopted Resolution No 5: Oppose Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

Resolution No. 22 on Trade of the 29th World Congress of PSI, 2012, resolves to oppose international trade agreements which threaten the funding and delivery of public services globally and to LEND particular SUPPORT to unions in the global south who voice opposition to TPP and other bilateral and multilateral trade agreements;

NOTING that 16 Asia-Pacific countries are negotiating a mega Free Trade Agreement that includes the 10 ASEAN member states plus Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

PSI Affiliates in India and Malaysia are very concerned that RCEP is currently being fast-tracked and negotiated in secrecy.

RCEP is expected to undermine local and national government decision-making powers and increase corporate access to public services, resulting in the privatization of critical public services; whilst it has been demonstrated that privatization of health-care, education, water, energy and other publicly-provided services have the most negative impact on women, noting that six out of 10 of the world's poorest people are women.

RCEP is expected to constrain government expenditures as revenues are lost due to the decrease in import duties, as well as the cost of expensive arbitration cases provided for under RCEP.

RCEP is expected to provide for unfair and secret arbitration tribunals (known as Investor State Dispute Settlement mechanisms, or ISDS), where corporations can make exorbitant claims against governments, but governments cannot make claims against corporations.

Alarmed that the Philippines government reportedly spent USD 58 million on legal services for an ISDS case, which could have been invested in strengthening public services.

Noted that several affiliates in the region have opposed the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) as it will destroy local industry and jobs.

Noted with concern that there is a consequent overlap between the provisions included in the TPP and those expected to be included in RCEP.

RESOLVES TO

- OPPOSE the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) being negotiated in the Asia Pacific Region;
- WORK with global union federations, affiliated unions and civil society allies who oppose RCEP, with the aim to promote alliances and coalitions to challenge RCEP;
- LEND particular SUPPORT to unions in the global south who voice opposition to RCEP and other bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.

REQUESTS AFFILIATES TO

- MONITOR developments at the country level with regard to the RCEP negotiations;
- Actively educate their members and their broader communities about the negative aspects of RCEP and their ability to intervene.
- Actively participate in campaigns against RCEP at the national and regional level.
- Encourage the formation of coalitions that will participate in campaigns against RCEP.



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Adopted Resolution No 6: The PSI Support to Promote Quality Public Health Services and Strengthening the Unions in the Philippines Health Sector

Public Services International (PSI), with support from the Trade Union Solidarity Center of Finland (SASK) and the Finland Union of Health and Social Care Professionals (TEHY), is implementing a project to strengthen unions and promote quality public services with decent work in the Philippines health sector;

The Philippines Health Project is an ongoing project from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2017;

According to the study conducted by project it was revealed that there are various approaches and models of precarious work arrangements adopted which affected the job security, protection, compensation and welfare of precarious workers. It was also identified that some government issuances are not well enforced and hence have facilitated the proliferation of precarious work arrangements within the health sector.

APRECON noted the concern of PSI affiliates in the Philippines that this is a big challenge for all workers, associations and federations - **FACING, COMBATING and ADDRESSING** the negative effects of Precarious Work Arrangements

APRECON noted the affirmation that it is vital to carry out serious organising efforts at national level in order to strengthen the unions and requests PSI to assist affiliates in the organising work

APRECON confirms and support the organising projects to strengthen unions and promote quality public services



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Resolution No 7: Condemning the Act of Terrorism in Davao City Philippines on 2 September 2016 and Extending Sympathy and Solidarity with All the Victims and the People of Davao City

The Asia Pacific Regional Conference taking place on October 9-12, 2016, in Fukuoka, Japan:

CONDEMNS in the strongest terms the inhuman and cowardly act of terrorism which claimed the lives of fifteen (15) innocent people and injuring a further 67 in the City of Davao, Philippines last September 2, 2016 evening;

EXTENDS its sympathy and solidarity with all the victims and the people of Davao City as well as hope for justice for the victims and their kin;

EXPRESSES CONCERNS about the declaration of national emergency due to the state of lawless violence which may be interpreted differently and may cause an escalation of more violence;

BELIEVES that human rights are fundamental and the basis of all other civil and political rights, and expresses fear of further degradation of human rights, if the declaration is used as a way to pursue aggressively the war on drugs;

STATES that, while Section 18 of Article 7 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution empowers the President as commander in chief of the military to call on troops to support the police if there are violent acts and bombings, it is alarming that the September 2 terrorist act is used as one of the basis to the declaration to increase the campaign against illegal drugs, a campaign that has already led to the deaths of thousands of suspects without due process;

STRONGLY SUPPORTS the rule of law and respects those who are mandated to uphold the same; and

CALLS UPON the Duterte administration to act appropriately, stressing that to fight terrorism and lawless violence, it is imperative to uphold human rights and maintain transparency as well as checks and balance to the exercise of power.

CALLS UPON the PSI Asia Pacific Regional Office to send a copy of this resolution to the President of the Philippines and to all the PSI affiliates.



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ADOPTED Emergency Resolution No. 1 PSI SUPPORT TO THE FIJI PUBLIC SERVICES ASSOCIATION

APRECON noted the information provided by the Fiji Public Services Association that Fiji National Fire Authority continues to defy the Labour Laws (ERP 207) and has mounted a campaign to annihilate FPSA.

APRECON noted that the union filed a motion with an Affidavit to the Employment Relations Tribunal (ERT). The Tribunal heard the motion but the Registrar's legal counsel from the Solicitor General's Office was absent without any notification. The Tribunal made the orders that the Registrar as Respondent should make available the names of the office bearers of the in-house union, that the FPSA should be allowed to exercise its right under Section 139 of the ERP to file an appeal against the registration to the Registrar of Trade Unions.

APRECON notes with grave concern the establishment of an in-house union amongst fire fighters in Fiji. This is a clear breach of the right to freedom of association and should be reversed. APRECON therefore resolves to assist, Fiji PSA, in defending Trade Union Rights in Fiji.