

## Decent Work's 10th anniversary – JUST DO IT!

Read online: <http://www.world-psi.org/en/decent-works-10th-anniversary-just-do-it>

Last Sunday, 7 October 2018, we “celebrated” the 10th anniversary of the World Day for Decent Work (WDDW): 10 years that unions across the world have been fighting to place decent work at the centre of government policies, to bring back economic growth that puts people first – people over profit.

In the past 10 years, decent work has been echoed in major global instruments, such as the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017), the Conference on Sustainable Development (2011) and during the UN General Assembly in September 2015 – decent work and the four pillars of the ILO Decent Work Agenda are central elements of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda calls for the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

But this decade also witnessed the global financial crisis of 2007-2008, one of the worst ever. World leaders responded with austerity recipes that led to unemployment, informal and precarious jobs, privatisation and deregulation, all of which increased the gap between the richest 1% and the rest of the planet. Decent work took a heavy blow.

Add to this the changes in the world of work brought about by internet technology, where apps drive the gig economy and digitalisation is causing turmoil in work relations, and the decent work agenda is further strained.

The emerging forms of capitalism which were born from the crisis confront us with new working relationships, such as the “Uberization” of work – which certainly is not the future of work we want. In public services, we are seeing more proposals to privatise, and to financialise and securitise the assets of these services – basically turning them over to the financial sector's speculations. Public coffers were emptied to prop up the financial institutions that were on the edge of failure, but workers and trade unions are fighting back.

In public services, PSI

- helps unions understand and act on the connections between public finance and decent work: if the corporations and the world's richest continue to evade taxes, governments will continue to be starved of funds, public services will be eroded, and working conditions will be the first victim – with our communities not far behind.
- leads a push against the latest proposals to privatise, financialise and securitise public services, turning our public assets over to the financial institutions whose greed and recklessness caused the global financial crisis.
- supports the growing wave of ‘remunicipalisations’, whereby privatised services are brought back under public ownership and management.
- holds the line on attempts to eliminate the right to strike, denying workers the ability to withhold their labour – undermining one of the pillars of labour rights.
- advocates for the rights of migrants and refugees to access basic public services and decent work.

- organises young workers who are often the most affected by the lack of decent work opportunities.

In all of these struggles, PSI's messages are clear: "Unions must be able to fight on many fronts and work with community allies to defend the decent work agenda, which forms the basis for just and equitable workplaces and strengthens families and communities", says Rosa Pavanelli, PSI's General Secretary.

From these rather limited but persistent successes we learned that the access to universal quality and gender responsive public services is essential for a better world.

We celebrate the 10th anniversary of the World Day for Decent Work with that in mind and call for all workers to join with unions to fight for Decent Work for All!

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