

Declaration of Buenos Aires

9 December: International Day Against Corruption

On 7 December 2017, in the city of Buenos Aires, those gathered here, representing the following organizations affiliated to PSI: AFAIN (Uruguay), AFIICH (Chile), UNACOM (Brazil), ANEJUD (Chile), CLTPJ (Latin America), ANEC (Chile), CUT (Chile), APOC (Argentina), UEJN (Argentina), AEFIP (Argentina);

During the Follow-up meeting to the Symposium on the Protection of Whistleblowers, held in Geneva (Switzerland) on the 30th of October 2017,

NOTING:

The public demands an improvement in the public governance through efficient and transparent public policies. Corruption is now perceived as a social illness that harms the common good that democratic states have the duty to defend.

The alarming increase in inequality and social injustice is the main threat to peace and progress.

Recent years have seen an increase in warnings by whistleblowers: workers reporting wrongdoings or corruption they have become aware of.

Public institutions have the job of balancing political and economic power and facilitating a social dialogue able to identify solutions to conflicts and avoid abuses and attacks, in which the weakest are always the first to suffer. Such institutions are responsible for regulating, judging, inspecting and alerting the public about misappropriation and threats to the common good. The workers responsible for carrying out these tasks are made of flesh and blood and are on the front line of the battle to prevent and reduce damage.

Unfortunately, the workers are – as qualified whistleblowers – the first to suffer attacks from those responsible for public and private corruption. However, the public still does not seem to fully understand the importance of protecting these first warnings and alerts by workers who would be able to counter threats to health, education, the economy and life, had they enjoyed the necessary working conditions and protection.

The increased demand to fight corruption is not accompanied by the provision of adequate protection for workers whose job it is to blow the whistle. Therefore, it is a contradiction for the public to call for fighting corruption while taking no notice of the threats and harassment suffered by these workers on a daily basis at their workplace.

The practice of killing the messenger and punishing those who carry out their duty to warn the public is a new type of harassment that we call Objective Labour Violence and it constitutes a great weakness of the modern state.

CONSIDERING:

The discussions that took place at the Symposium on the Protection of Whistleblowers, held in Geneva (Switzerland) on the 30th of October 2017.

The PSI new Programme of Action 2018-2022, which specifically address the fight against corruption and the protection of whistleblowers as a key element of achieve that goal (Section 4.5).

RESOLVES:

- To recognize the work carried out so far by PSI, UITOC, the ICJ Workers Network of Argentina (AEFIP, APOC and UEJN), as well as the CLTPJ, in in the protection of whistleblowers, and in particular those employees of state control, justice, tax and inspection bodies;
- To create PSI Whistleblowers' Task Force, which will aim to:
 - Follow up on the conclusions of the Symposium on the Protection of Whistleblowers, held in Geneva (Switzerland) on 30 October 2017;
 - Actively collaborate with PSI to shape and develop Section 4.5 of the new PSI Program of Action 2018-2022;
 - Promote and develop visibility actions at the national level and before international organizations, aimed at the adoption of an international standard of the ILO on the protection of informants;
- To request PSI to contact affiliates of all regions for the purpose of considering the incorporation of trade union organizations from these regions into the PSI Whistleblowers' Task Force;
- To promote a Global Alliance for the Protection of Whistleblowers, specially workers in the tax, independent audit, and justice sectors, with the aim of gather together other trade union organizations, NGOs, the civil society, and other partners willing to fight corruption.