



## **PSI Executive Board Meeting 24-25 June 2014, Nyon, Switzerland Emergency Resolution on the Right to Strike**

The Executive Board of Public Services International expresses deep concern with the continuous attacks on trade union and worker's rights. We strongly refute the suggestion that limitations to collective bargaining are acceptable under any circumstances. As public services unions we are committed to protect citizens and users by ensuring they always have access to quality public services, included through regulating essential services. But when a conflict persists, workers have only one effective democratic right: the strike.

In too many countries legislation has been passed or is being discussed to limit or prohibit strikes in "essential services" or even for all public sector workers. In addition, the criminalization of social conflicts and increasing violence against protesters is a reality from North to South.

The right to strike, to form trade unions and collectively bargain on wages and conditions are fundamental freedoms and human rights. These rights are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

At the International Labour Conference (ILC) in June 2014, during the discussions in the Committee on Application of Standards (CAS), the Employers' Group persisted to deny that the right to strike forms part of ILO Convention 87, thus undermining decades of jurisprudence and the application of international law.

The Workers' Group unanimously rejected the demands of the Employers' group. The conflict over the right to strike has been referred to ILO's Governing Body, which could call on the International Court of Justice to produce an advisory opinion and put an end to the dispute. A decision is expected in November 2014.

The PSI Executive Board therefore commits PSI to:

- Launch a global campaign to defend and promote the Right to Strike for all workers;
- Lobby governments to take a stand in favor of the ILO supervisory mechanisms;
- Call for referral to the International Court of Justice and lobby members of the ILO Governing Body. We need a majority in the ILO GB, which means that PSI affiliates need to lobby trade union national centers and governments.
- Build alliances with other trade unions for this campaign, as well as civil society organizations;
- Continue to offer solidarity and assistance to affiliates whose rights are under attack
- Proactively campaign to ensure nations ratify and comply with ILO Conventions 87 and 98;
- Lobby inter-governmental bodies and other relevant international agencies and organisations e.g. World Bank, IMF etc. to declare their support for ILO Conventions that guarantee fundamental trade union rights;
- Lobby to ensure global free trade agreements include meaningful commitments to labour rights, including compliance with ILO Conventions.