



Director-General and esteemed delegates,

It is my honour to address this assembly on behalf of Public Services International, the global union federation representing 20 million public sector workers in 150 countries.

PSI welcomes the ILO reform initiated several months ago, which we hope will contribute to a stronger and more dynamic ILO.

However, within ILO, governments are rarely considered as employers.

Our major employers are largely missing in the ILO structures, including local governments as well as national entities.

We thus welcome the discussion of collective bargaining in the public sector for the first time in more than 30 years.

We wish to see the challenges identified in the ILO Survey on collective bargaining in public services at the forefront of ILO activities in coming years.

Director-General, your report of the challenges facing the ILO should also have addressed the role of public services.

You state that the world has been transformed.

Indeed it has: in 2013, in many countries, public services are the target of austerity policies.

As a result, 50% of public sector workers are now in precarious employment, and public service cuts are growing the ranks of unemployed.

Anti-union tactics are trying to impose a new model with reduced workers' rights, which threatens an independent public service that underpins inclusive, transparent and democratic societies.

This situation is compounded by a de facto privatization of public services, which leads to higher prices, fewer investments in infrastructure and poorer working conditions. It is on the basis of many and long experiences, that we affirm that it is now time to abandon the myth that private services are more efficient than public services.

The challenges of climate change and the needs of a green economy cannot be met without investments in public goods including strong public utilities and public-public partnerships. We need governments bold enough to lead the change.

We need a strong Plan B and we need it now!

We need and demand serious social protection. We applaud the ILO initiative on the social protection floor and we also emphasise that public services are essential to achieving the SPF agenda.

Only public services can ensure that Social Protection Floors are implemented on the basis of principles of universality, accessibility, affordability and quality.

It is not by reducing workers' rights that we will overcome the current crisis. We strongly refute the suggestion that limitations to collective bargaining are acceptable in any circumstances.

We recognise the need to regulate essential services to protect users and communities, but we re-affirm the right to strike as a fundamental collective right and a matter of democracy for all public and private workers.

The role of public services in monitoring labour conditions in all sectors of the economy is pivotal. Tax departments and finance control bodies are crucial to fight corruption, unfair competition and to ensure tax justice, in the interest of all of the members of our societies.

This is why we demand that the ILO would address the protection, autonomy and independence of public finance control workers through the creation of an ILO standard to that effect.

We request an ILO global action program to strengthen freedom of association in the public sector and ratification and effective implementation of Conventions 151 and 154.

PSI has been contributing to social justice for the last 106 years and we would like to contribute to the ILO Centenary initiatives by submitting an 8<sup>th</sup> idea to underscore the important role of Quality Public Services for economic recovery, youth employment, gender equity and social justice.

This would be in line, Director-General and esteemed delegates, with your commitment to deal with the impact of growing inequality, its causes and consequences as a new policy area for ILO.

Thank you.