1st Draft REGIONAL ACTION PLAN 2019 -2022
Asia Pacific Region
(April 2019)

"Defending a strong democratic state and an inclusive society, committed to ensuring gender equality, respect and dignity for all, economic development for the benefit of all, redistribution of wealth and strengthened workers' power, will be our objectives for the next five years."

1. **INTRODUCTION**

   1.1. In 2017, PSI affiliates shaped and adopted an ambitious and comprehensive Programme of Action (POA) entitled *People Over Profit* to guide PSI's work over the period 2018-2022.

   1.2. Affiliates also adopted a range of additional resolutions to further guide the collective political positions of PSI and the actions we should take to achieve a more just and equitable world for workers and the public.

   1.3. The POA articulates a vision for a more just and equitable future. It requires us to grow our collective power, deepen our political analysis and develop new strategies to resist and counter the attacks on trade union rights, on our public services and on democracy stemming from the power that neoliberal ideology and policies have delivered to capital, particularly to large corporations. The POA requires us to be bolder, to deepen our resolve and solidarity, and to find new ways to challenge entrenched power.

   > *We must be bold. No great movement will be built to challenge corporate power without a clear articulation of who has power and in whose interests it is wielded. (POA 1.1.10)*

   1.4. This will not be easy, particularly in our region where unions are under attack, often divided, and where neoliberalism is often coupled with authoritarianism to make resistance deadly.

   1.5. To help direct the implementation of the POA, a shorter document identifying PSI Priorities for the period 2018-2022 was developed and approved by the Executive Committee. The priorities identified are:
      a. Trade Union Rights
      b. Quality Public Services and Alternatives to Privatisation
      c. Influencing Global Policy
      d. Organising and Growth

   1.6. This Regional Action Plan for the Asia and Pacific regions seeks to provide the regional context and the contribution that the regional office and affiliates will make to the implementation of the POA.

   1.7. The actions in this POA will frame our work over the next four years. We will, however, remain flexible and retain an ability to respond to changes in the context we are working in, mobilising where attacks occur, and identifying opportunities where they emerge.

   1.8. In 2018, affiliates in the Asia Pacific region were invited, through the Subregional Advisory Committees, to identify priorities that most align with their work and national circumstances. The survey was developed to help the Secretariat understand the areas of work that different

affiliates, countries and subregions were most likely to contribute to, become involved in, or, utilise. The survey has helped to shape this Regional Action Plan.

1.9. The survey resulted in identification of regional priorities, sub-regional priorities and priorities across specific countries or affiliates. The top issues identified, arranged according to priority, were: (1) Young Workers, (2) Trade Union Rights, (3) Privatisation, (4) Gender Equality, (5) Taxation, and (6) Funding for Quality Public Services.

1.10. While there was significant overlap and consensus among the affiliates on the top five priorities, others themes that emerged in the top five priorities of certain subregions are: Emergency Service Workers for East Asia; Trade Agreements and Corporate Power in Oceania; and Migration and Refugees in South Asia.

1.11.
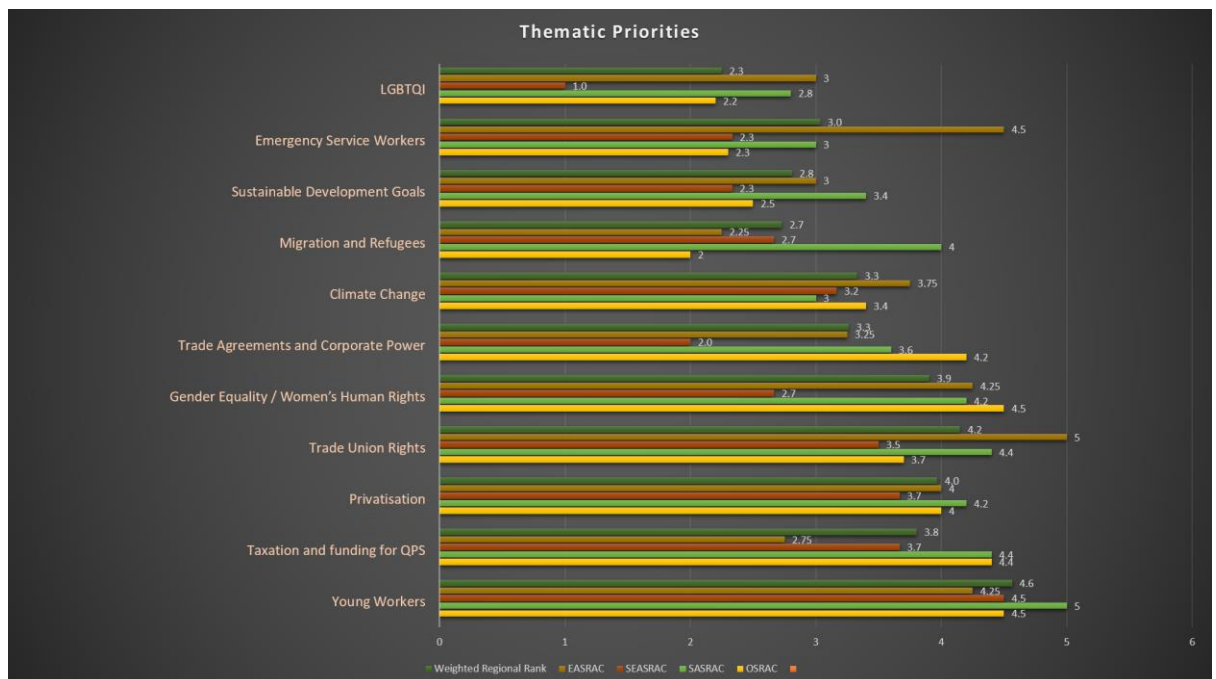
1.12. The Asia Pacific Regional Executive Committee (APREC) considered the results of the survey and the Congress resolution to implement a new POA, and approved a broad framework for our draft Regional Action Plan. To ensure that we did not lose a year, PSI and affiliates have begun implementing some of the actions.

1.13. We work from the understanding that advances in labour rights and access to quality public services are only possible when unions are strong, organised and able to exercise power and act in solidarity across workplaces, sectors, borders and across movements. To get to that place of strength we have identified four elements that are required to win any collective fight:
   a. Unions need to build strong **capacities** across a range of activities: organising, campaigning and advocacy;
   b. Unions need data, **knowledge**, and evidence;
   c. Unions need space and means for **advocacy** and public campaigning, and;
   d. Unions need **networks**, structures or institutional mechanisms to be able to act in solidarity.

1.14.   These elements provide the basis for our planning framework. In planning our work for each thematic area and sector we have considered whether we need to contribute work in one, several, or all, of the four elements.

2.   ASIA AND THE PACIFIC – THE GLOBAL ENGINE ROOM FOR NEOLIBERALISM

2.1.   Over the past two decades, since the Asian financial crisis, the region has undergone a large, and mostly painful, shift to neoliberal capitalism. The power of corporations to dictate economic, labour, trade and regulatory policies has grown in both democratic and non-democratic countries.

2.2.   As geo-political instability disrupts traditional rule making and alliances in the region, corporations have increased their capacity to dictate policy regardless of the political and economic environment.

2.3.   The economic blocs that tie the region, including ASEAN, APEC, and the multilateral and bilateral trade agreements (and to a lesser extent SAARC and the East Asia Forum), all prescribe the foundational tenets of neoliberalism: liberalisation of trade and capital, deregulation of labour and economic regulations and privatisation of public services and assets. What often started as structural adjustment programmes at the insistence of International Financial Institutions, has now become economic orthodoxy for governments, who are often beholden to corporate donors and corporate influence.

2.4.   Inequality is at records highs globally, and most starkly in our region. Three critical factors feature in the rates of inequality within countries: the ability to secure higher wages and secure jobs for workers; the capacity to redistribute through fiscal policy and; the level of investment in public services.

2.5.   The correlation between trade union density and inequality is clear. Japan, the country in the region with the highest union density, enjoys the most income and wealth equality. Thailand has one of the lowest union density rates in the world, and has been listed as the world's most unequal country, with 1 percent of the population holding two-thirds of the country's wealth. In India, the richest 1 percent also hold over half the country's wealth. And in Indonesia, the four wealthiest men have more wealth than 100 million of the country's poorest people.

2.6.   To reduce inequalities, we must ensure that every worker delivering public services can join a union that has the power to represent them and defend public services. We must make sure that states increase their capacity to tax corporations and the wealthy by changing national and global tax rules. And we must make sure that money is spent on quality public services, not on subsidising the wealthiest through public-private partnerships and other vehicles that diminish public goods.

2.7.   More than 68 percent of workers in the Asia Pacific region work in the informal sector. The figures vary widely from more than 90% in Nepal and Cambodia to below 20% in Japan and Australia. Other forms of irregular work through outsourcing, casualisation and contractualisation, labour hire, zero hours contracts and 'gig'work are also increasing, particularly where privatisation has occurred.

2.8. Our work to combat precarious work will feature across thematic priorities and sectors. It is critical to our strategies on young workers, trade union rights, fighting privatisation and gender equality.

2.9. Our POA commits us to defending strong democratic states. However it is clear that, in the Asia Pacific region, the liberal democratic order has lost its legitimacy. Democratic governments are deeply unpopular and voters have abandoned traditional parties, including those associated with organised labour. Authoritarian governments are far more popular than purportedly democratic ones. The 2018 Edelman poll found that 84 per cent of Chinese respondents trusted their government (an all-time high) compared to only 37% of Japanese and 35% of Australians who trust theirs – an all-time low.

2.10. This decline in support for governmenst has implications for public administration workers and reflects concerns that democratic bureaucracies are now longer able to deliver fair and impartial public services. It is clear that workers increasingly understand that elected governments in our region, too regularly, represent the powerful and not the people.

2.11. Leaders in the region are capitalising on discontent with liberalism and traditional political parties.. In the Philippines President Duterte has flagrantly flaunted respect for the rule of law, international norms and democratic process, yet remains popular. In India, the Modi government has been able to introduce radical changes to currency availability, to goods and services taxes and further enriched billionaires by fuelling religious tensions.

2.12. Globalisation has fuelled xenophobia.

2.13. Yet our opposition, neoliberal capitalists, are also deeply unpopular. And it is the mistrust of multinational corporate power and its links to centrist parties that potentially drives voters away from democracy and centrist parties toward authoritarian populists. The idea that the state should have no regulatory role has waned, and the free market is not the political selling point it once was. Yet policies that channel wealth from the public to the tiny minority of rich individuals and companies continue to outweigh redistributive policies.

2.14. Subsidies of state-owned enterprises were regarded as bad policy by neoliberal economists, as they distorted the market. Subsidies to corporations are now the backbone of industrial policy. Too often, the question is which industry the public should subsidise – private fossil fuels or private renewables; mining corporations or healthcare corporations – rather than focusing on building national industries and services.

2.15. Capital has globalised their power. If unions are fractured and purely localised in outlook, it is impossible to combat globalised capital. In our region contests between unions aligned to different political parties takes up too much of our scarce energy and resources and often makes political and industrial action weaker.

2.16. While the challenges are great, our collective work in the region is having real impact and demonstrating that a more just and equitable region is possible. From having community health workers win a minimum wage and the right to unionise in Pakistan, to the

ratification of ILO Convention 151 and the achievement of the Universal Healthcare Act in the Philippines, the potential to reverse privatisation of water in Jakarta and making corporations pay taxes they have been evading in Australia, we are demonstrating that solidarity is **the** answer to the crises we face.

3. YOUNG WORKERS

3.1 Young workers in the region face a future of precarious work, high levels of unemployment, and lower real wages. They are also less likely, in many countries, to be protected by a union. Public policy is often skewed toward the interests of older people because young people are not organised. The future of the union movement in the region depends on the ability of unions to respond to and address issues young workers face and to ensure that they are an organised, powerful voice within unions, within their workplaces, and within policy-setting processes.

3.2 Young unionists who met to develop a regional strategy have identified seven thematic priorities a. Women and Gender b. Climate Change c. Free Trade Agreements d. Trade Union Rights e. Privatisation f. Precarious Work g. Organising).

3.3 Our work will be organised around two main objectives:
   a. Increasing the leadership capacity of young unionists to fight for trade union rights, against privatisation, for gender equality, and for just and equitable global rules, and;
   b. Increasing the capacity of affiliates to attract young workers into the union movement.

3.4 With support from DGB, we have staff dedicated to facilitating a new young workers strategy for the next three years.

3.5. **Network and Solidarity Architecture**: We will reinvigorate the Asia Pacific Young Workers Network, identify active young union leaders across the region, and increase communication amongst young unionists.

3.6. **Capacities**: We will establish a "Young Workers Academy" and provide a series of capacity building programmes in South and South East Asia focused on the priorities identified in the POA: trade union rights, quality public services and alternatives to privatisation, global policies, gender equality, as well as organising skills together with issues of the political economy in the region and the impacts on young workers. Capacity building opportunities will also be identified through engaging young union leaders in PSI events and advocacy opportunities across our programme of work. We will develop tools and a system for mentoring of young union leaders.

3.7. **Research and materials** will focus on good practices amongst unions in organising young workers and supporting the leadership of young unionists.

4. TRADE UNION RIGHTS

4.1 The rights to freedom of association, to collectively bargain, and to strike, have been eroded across the region. Every country in the Asia Pacific region covered by the 2018 Global Rights Index violated rights to collective bargaining or to strike and 86% of countries exclude workers from the labour law. Governments in our region have been enthusiastic advocates for deregulation of labour and of the private sector whilst simultaneously increasing regulation on trade unions and civil society.

4.2 These rights are fundamental to the work we do. Without them, unions cannot effectively defend and advance the rights of workers, nor defend and advance quality public services.

4.3 Leaders and members of affiliates in Indonesia, Cambodia, and Korea have lost their jobs because of their union work, and many have been threatened with violence and intimidation.

4.4 Several governments in the region have used "essential services" provisions to curtail the right of workers to unionise and to strike. Workers in Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, and Korea have been prevented from forming unions or bargaining through use of the "essential services" clause despite repeated recommendations from the ILO to reform the provisions.

4.5 Governments have also placed extensive restrictions on the capacity of unions to advance broader economic and social rights through legitimate strike action.

4.6 Our work on trade union rights will include both defensive and offensive strategies. We will take urgent action and provide solidarity where trade union rights and trade unionists are under threat. We will also seek to increase trade union rights through targeted campaigning and advocacy.

4.7 **Network and Solidarity Architecture**: We will use our strength as a global union to coordinate solidarity actions when unions and unionists are under attack, connect unions facing similar restrictions, (for example through the emergency services network).

4.8 **Advocacy**: We will identify at least two countries to start campaigns for the ratification of ILO Convention 151 in the next five years. We will support affiliates in identified countries to change the rules that prohibit workers delivering public services to unionise and bargain, to utilise national judicial systems where appropriate, and to assist affiliates to bring cases to the ILO and relevant mechanisms within the UN Human Rights Council. We will support campaigning to demonstrate that unionised public service workers can secure better public services. We will support affiliates to use the right to strike as a strategy to protect their rights.

4.9 **Research and materials**: We will document the experience of the Philippines 151 campaign as a case study for affiliates to utilise. We will provide condensed information on the laws relating to trade union rights across the region.

4.10 **Capacities**: We will provide affiliates with capacity building on trade union rights and the use of international mechanisms where appropriate.

5 QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES AND FIGHTING PRIVATISATION

5.1 Quality public services are the foundation of a fair society and a strong economy, and are essential for the realisation of human rights, gender equality, and social justice. Some of the largest private providers of public services are targeting Asia as a growth area. In 2018, Asia was the world fastest growing healthcare market, estimated at more than US$500 billion. Estimates from the UN state that municipal water services will require a minimum of US$59 billion in investments for water supply and US$71 billion for improved sanitation just to meet basic needs. In 2017, it was estimated that 62 percent of the world renewable energy jobs were in Asia. The sector is growing rapidly, but mostly captured by private providers.

5.2 International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), including the World Bank (International Finance Corporation, IFC) the Asia Development Bank

(ADB), the New Development Bank (NDB), and the Asian Infrastructure Development Bank (AIIB)continue to play a key role in financing and promoting private expansion in public services, especially through Public-Private Partnerships.

5.3 Financing from China, through the banks and through the Silk Road fund, the finance arm of the Belt and Road initiative, carries the risk that infrastructure will be privatised to foreign ownership.

5.4 The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (ESCAP) dedicates a significant amount of its resources to promoting PPPs, including providing a training certificate in PPP implementation. Despite the United Nation's (UN) primary responsibility for ensuring human rights, ESCAP the has failed to undertake human rights impacts assessments of the PPPs they promote.

5.5 Yet, new public services are also created by governments in the region to respond to populations needs. For water service provision, public utilities remain the dominant framework. Public-Public Partnerships (PuPs) are often less known, yet successful alternatives.

5.6 Our work will incorporate the dual strategy of fighting privatisation where it is likely to occur, and facilitating campaigns for re-municipalisation. We will highlight the human rights benefits of Quality Public Services, and promote PuPs as an alternative. We will cover all four areas of work, as detailed below.

5.7 Strengthening Capacities: We will provide capacity building for affiliates in: identifying early warning strategies to identify privatisation threats; building community campaigns that prevent planned privatisation; deploying strategies for remunicipalisation and; building PuPs.

5.8 Research, knowledge and tools: We will produce materials on the drivers of privatisation, including the role of International Financial Institutions, to be used by public services unions in Asia Pacific to identify threats of privatisation. We will produce research and case studies that show that public services (including PuPs) work, to be used by our affiliates to counter the arguments for privatisation. Both will contribute to advocacy efforts for plugging the PPP pipeline.

5.9 Advocacy: We will seek to influence decisions relating to PPPs and privatisation plans by building early warning mechanisms and responses with civil society allies, and build a campaign: *Plugging the PPP Pipeline.* We will support affiliates in their national advocacy and identify opportunities to influence regional actors including UN ESCAP and the IFIs, and utilise international mechanisms, including the UN Special Rapporteurs.

5.10 Architecture for solidarity / movement action: We will create alliances that support solidarity actions between unions and civil society in national and regional campaigns against privatisation. We will invite other global unions and civil society organisations to join the campaign, *Plugging the PPP pipeline*.

6   TAXATION AND QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES

6.1 Quality public services and decent wages for workers delivering them are only possible if governments collect sufficient revenue. Corporate tax-dodging shifts the burden of taxation from capital to labour and starves vital public services. The effects are especially pernicious

for women and other groups who rely disproportionately on public services, and for developing countries, which rely on tax revenues for development and for alleviating poverty.

6.2 On average, tax revenue in the Asia Pacific region represents a low 17.6 percent of GDP. In developing countries it is wholly insufficient to invest in quality public service. In South Asia, the tax to GDP ratio is around 10 percent. With largely informal workforces, corporate taxes are the main progressive tax policy option available to governments.

6.3 Several countries in the region provide tax havens including Singapore, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Cook Islands.

6.4 Support for our proposals to change the global tax rules has been rapidly growing. There is now a real opportunity to increase corporate tax transparency and to tax corporations as a unitary body in the countries where economic activity takes place. Our work establishing the Center for International Corporate Tax Accountability and Research (CICTAR) has demonstrated that unions can run extremely effective tax campaigns that simultaneously support union industrial campaigns, increase tax revenue for governments, and expose problems of privatisation and corporate power.

6.5 Our objectives will be to shift tax policies in the region, deliver higher revenue to governments, and use tax campaigns to challenge corporate power.

6.6 **Strengthening Capacities:** We will provide capacity building at the national and regional levels so that affiliates can run corporate tax campaigns and understand the key demands for global tax policy changes.

6.7 **Documentation of Knowledge s and tools:** The production of high quality research into specific tax evasion practices of defined corporate targets will form the basis of industrial tax campaigns. We will aim to increase our capacity to produce targeted tax research in priority countries. The CICTAR toolkit for successful tax campaigns will be completed and translated, and ICRICT research will also be made available for affiliates.

6.8 **Advocacy:** We will seek to influence national governments to change their national taxation laws and policies and influence targeted governments to advocate for changes to global tax rules by: supporting affiliates to conduct national advocacy campaigns, lobbying law makers, providing information to the media, and raising public awareness. We will identify regional targets for tax advocacy, and support the global efforts to change international tax rules.

6.9 **Architecture for solidarity / movement action** We will continue to collaborate with GUFs and CSOs in the region, as well as CSOs based outside of the region, which have interests in the campaign in the region.

7 **GENDER EQUALITY**

7.1 The Asia Pacific region produces the largest gender pay gap, and a large, and in some cases, growing, participation gap, in many countries. (For example, in India, women's labour force participation is reducing.) Women's wages across Asia are between 70 and 90 percent of those of men's.

7.2 Workplace gendered violence, including sexual harassment, is prevalent and a problem in all countries in the region. In several countries sexual harassment laws are non-existent or

inadequate (for example Indonesia, Japan, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and several Pacific Island states have failed to pass sexual harassment laws). The ILO found that workers delivering public services, particularly those in healthcare and education, face a heightened risk.

7.3 Quality public services are essential in overcoming gender inequalities. Conversely, privatisation, tax avoidance, and corporate power have a disproportionate impact on women, and exacerbate gender inequalities.

7.4 Increased global interest in feminist movements and actions – the #MeToo movement and the proposed ILO Convention and Recommendation on Violence and Harassment in the world of work – provide opportunities to increase organising and support for women's human rights, and demonstrate that unionising is the best strategy to improve women's economic and democratic rights.

8 Trade Justice

8.1 The Asia Pacific region is the focus of global efforts to deepen neoliberal trade rules through free trade agreements. The 2018 'trade war' between the US and China generated a false dichotomy that the only options for trade rules are either neo-liberal globalisation on the one hand, or, nationalist protectionism on the other. A progressive, multilateral trade policy that works in the interests of the people is the only answer to both unfair globalisation and resurgent right wing nationalist and protectionist solutions.

8.2 With the largest trade agreements in the world, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, we must expand our efforts to ensure that public good, rather than corporate power, are the central purpose of trade agreements.

8.3 We will maintain our campaigns against the controversial Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism while expanding analysis of the impact of services, investment and regulatory coherence provisions on public services, privatisation, and the capacity for remunicipalisation, as well as on the e-commerce provisions increasing the power and privatising influence of digital corporations.

8.4 Our defensive strategy will be to build campaigns against RCEP, TPP, and new bilateral or EU-led agreements. This will be strengthened by an offensive strategy to advocate for countries to withdraw from existing agreements. We will cover all four areas of work, as detailed below.

8.5 We will illustrate the elements required for a just and equitable trade agenda that protects workers and our public services. Rather than a race to the bottom, countries can work together to establish common protection. A regional minimum wage, for example, has been proposed by Indonesia for the ASEAN region to end the race to the bottom wage competition. Tax cooperation, rather than competition, would be another example of trade collaboration in the public good.

8.6 **Architecture for solidarity / movement action:** In 2018 we successfully established *Unions for Trade Justice* allowing for coordination among global union federations and trade unions in the region. This will serve as a vehicle for coordination, sharing of information, strategizing, and campaigning in the region. We will consolidate regional coordination, and take up joint actions, as collectively agreed, as well as increase national coordination, in India, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand.

8.7 **Strengthening Capacities:** We will aim to strengthen capacity of our affiliates, who are interested in trade issues, to campaign and engage with trade negotiations in the region so that they will be able to build trade advocacy in order to engage governments, their members, and the general public nationally and regionally.

8.8 **Documentation of Knowledge and tools**: We will produce research on the impacts of trade and investment agreements on public services, as well as on a trade union perspective on trade justice to be used by our affiliates to inform their leadership and engage in advocacy with the government nationally and regionally. In 2019, we will start with a paper focused on the impact of the proposed e-commerce chapters on public services. We will collate existing analysis that may be helpful for unions on the UTJ website.

8.9 **Advocacy**: We will seek to influence identified governments (currently Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Australia, and New Zealand) to withdraw from key negotiations, such as RCEP and treaties that include ISDS or other harmful provisions, by engaging our affiliates in the negotiations, influencing national centers, and engaging the parliamentary process. We will support media campaigns to broaden the debate to the general public highlighting linkages between trade and privatisation, contractualisation, low wages, and national sovereignty.

9   CLIMATE CHANGE

9.1 Climate change in the Asia Pacific region is already having a devastating impact on workers and countries and hindering the right to development. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on global warming released in October 2018 shows that climate chaos is already here, sooner than expected, as well as more intense, as seen in the more frequent and intense cyclones and hurricanes in the region; unprecedented, devastating floods; extremes of heat and cold; wildfires across climates; ocean temperature rise and acidification; melting of glaciers causing landslides, and other effects of climate change.

9.2 At the same time the ILO has found that a just transition to a low-carbon economy could create 14 million jobs in Asia and the Pacific.

9.3 PSI will fight for a just transition and to ensure that the costs of transition are not borne by those least able to bear them; to produce material to support national policy advocacy; to organise workers in new energy economies, and build alliances with communities to ensure democratic participation so that climate change policies meet the needs of people and planet, and not just the rich and powerful.

9.4 Workers are impacted by both the devastating impact of climate change and in the essential transitions that will reduce employment in fossil fuel-dependent industries. Workers in the energy sector, and the unions that represent them, can be a powerful force to shape more just energy and economic policy.

9.5 A just and equitable transition will require an economy-wide transition where: all energy is sourced from clean renewables; the right to sustainable development is achieved for all peoples whilst living within planetary boundaries; inequalities are dramatically reduced, and communities are supported to adapt to and withstand climate change loss and damage. We know that climate transition is inevitable; justice, however, is not.

9.6 The scale of the shift required necessitates governments to commit to a new green social contract, to invest in large-scale, publicly-owned renewables, as well as to facilitate the

changes in consumption and production required to stay within planetary boundaries. To ensure that the right to decent work and to development is met, governments will need to invest in low-carbon intensive services that provide social and gender-equitable benefits (for example health and social care), as well as increase regulations over emissions.

9.7 Energy unions in the region are often accustomed to using collective power for the public good. Unions have defended the right for all people to access energy and to keep energy as a public good, rather than a commercial commodity. At the same time unions are under attack, and often, struggling to survive, to counter union busting tactics, and to stop outsourcing and precarious work in the energy supply chain. In this context it can be difficult to engage unions in efforts to advocate for a just transition of the sector.

9.8 To involve energy unions in climate justice work, it will be important to demonstrate that social dialogue and union and community campaigns can lead to transitions to publicly-owned renewables providing decent work. It will also be important to demonstrate the capacity to organise in renewables and to engage young workers in unionism.

9.9 **Capacity Building:** We will provide capacity building around the threats of climate change to workers and public services, the obligation to facilitate a just transition and the possible actions for a just and equitable transition of the economy.

9.10 **Knowledge and research**: We will develop a scoping paper that provides information on the existing energy mix in identified countries, the mix of public / private per energy source, the nationally determined contributions or other commitments that will impact on the energy mix, and the extent of existing social dialogue with unions in relation to energy policy. The findings of this paper will inform a broader strategy.

9.11 **Advocacy**: We will support affiliates to identify: opportunities to engage in social dialogue around a just and equitable transition, and processes to promote a green social contract.

10 MIGRATION and REFUGEES:

10.1 The number of migrant workers within and beyond the Asia Pacific region is continuing to rise. At least 80 million migrants live within Asia and workers from Asia form the majority of migrant workers within the Arab states. Yet in many countries migrant workers are denied access to decent work, social protection and public services and are less unionised and, consequently, suffer high levels of exploitation.

10.2 Within our region migrants make up a large proportion of the working population in many countries – 46% of the population in Singapore, 56% in Macao, 40% in Hong Kong, 29% in Australia. In 2017 India was the largest country of origin of international migrants. China, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Philippines are all in the top 10 sending countries.

10.3 Right wing governments routinely foster fear and hatred of refugees and migrants as a way to deflect anger away from neoliberal policies that produce poverty and inequality. We must counter those tactics by exposing those foundational lies, organising migrant workers and using our power of solidarity to support the rights of refugees to receive asylum and access decent work and public services.

10.4   The number of health workers migrating is particularly on the rise, many of them migrating from developing countries to OECD countries and, with a growing shortage in qualified health workers and an aging population, demand for migrant health workers is rising.

10.5   The reliance on migrant health workers in wealthy countries diminishes health systems in countries of origin. Our work must involve improving the conditions for health workers in origin countries as well as organising them in destination countries. We will use our position within the WHO's High Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth (COMHEEG) to push for implementation of the Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel.

10.6   We will develop a migration strategy through our health sector work which will include establishing agreements between unions from sending and receiving countries and build capacities around the Code of Practice and organising migrant workers.

11   SECTORAL WORK

11.1   We will increase the sectoral coordination work we do by allocating a staff member in the region to each sector and developing sectoral plans with affiliates. Sectoral plans will all be closely linked with the thematic priorities while providing a specific sectoral perspective.

12   HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

12.1   Government spending on health and social services (H&SS) is an investment in our communities, in the wellbeing of citizens, and provides the basis for a healthy economy. Yet healthcare is significantly underfunded in the region with an average of only 4.7 percent of GDP compared to an OECD average of 9.3 percent. Of the 4.7 percent, only 50 percent is publicly funded. The World Health Organisation (WHO) argues that there are far too few health workers in the region and an aging population will exacerbate the health access gap.

12.2   Underfunding exists due to tax avoidance by private corporations, artificial austerity measures demanded by corporate lobbyists and International Financing Institutions who promote unfounded and dangerous beliefs in neo-liberal policies, and a lack of political will. Our H&SS systems are increasingly seen as commodities, not public services.

12.3   The tangible effects of underfunding include: poor staffing levels and inadequate equipment with significant health and safety consequences; precarious employment; low wages; dependency on volunteerism; inadequate care; and privatisation and a user pays system which creates multiple tiers of inequitable health care. Healthcare is one of the fastest growing industries for private capital in the region, driving profit over people health care and diminishing the right to universal healthcare and a more equitable society.

12.4   Precarious workers must be the focus of our organising work, including: workers in the global care chain; women providing community health services on a so-called voluntary or below minimum wage basis; and workers on insecure, casualised, or short-term contracts in both public and private health.

12.5 Strengthening capacities: We will strengthen the capacities of affiliates to run both defensive and proactive campaigns to organise precarious workers, stop privatisation, increase health funding and create community advocacy campaigns.

12.6 Increase our knowledge of the region and produce evidence that supports our demands: We will develop a better understanding of private sector actors in the region and produce more information on financing public health systems and decent work for health workers.

12.7 Advocacy: We will seek to influence the influencers and decision makers across the region to ensure that our goals are met, targeting policy and legislation, where appropriate, at the national/regional levels. We will seek to educate our communities for the purpose of building strong and powerful alliances.

12.8 Architecture for solidarity / movement action: We will support and build a functional network across Asia Pacific, interlinking this with global networks, which share the aim of achieving our goals. We will support union-to-union links for migrating health workers. At the national level we will support networking with communities who depend on, and should expect, better public health systems.

13 LRG/MUNICIPAL SERVICES

13.1 Local governments and municipal services often have the most impact on communities' access to quality public services and are critical in confronting the challenges posed by rapid urbanization, globalisation, and climate change facing the region. Smart cities are promoted as a tool to attract private investment and private sector operations in the delivery of public services, including through private sector digitilisation.

13.2 Privatisation, corporatisation, a lack of investment in local governments, excessive contractualisation and outsourcing, health and other environmental issues, and low wages and precarious work, impact on municipal workers as well as on the communities who are dependent on the public services they provide.

13.3 Our sectoral work for municipal services will be closely integrated with our work on trade union rights and fighting privatisation.

13.4 Municipal workers have been specifically identified as emergency service workers, even if they are not dedicated first responders. We will integrate work to apply the ILO guidelines with the sectoral strategy.

13.5 Waste workers in our region are often both poorly paid and socially marginalised, and face multiple health and safety hazards. They constitute some of the most informalised public workers in urban settings. Children continue to work in the waste sector. In 2020, we will develop a regional strategy to strengthen information and organising of waste workers in identified countries.

13.6 To strengthen work in this area we will:

13.7 Strengthen capacities: Starting with waste workers, we will provide organising capacity building. We will support capacities in fighting privatisation and precarious work.

13.8 Documentation of knowledge and tools: We will document existing PPP models functioning in LRG sectors. We will map unions covering LRG workers in identified countries prior to undertaking targeted campaigns. We will undertake research into the impact of Smart Cities and the role of multinational corporations (MNCs) in framing urban, technological planning and link this with our work on digitilisation.

13.9 Advocacy: We will seek to provide a normative framework under the UN New Urban Agenda for unions to tackle privatisation and focus to influence or change policy for waste workers (most precarious workers). We will also identify existing resources (case studies, articles), and provide information (translate to local languages) to show that public services can deliver, to counter the arguments of privatisation.

13.10 Architecture for solidarity/ movement action: We will support our work together with civil society groups or campaign organisations working for LRG workers, and create tools for solidarity between unions and civil society organisations. Campaign, network building, and strikes to be carried out to demand for increase in minimum wage and regularization of contractual and outsourced workers. To create a long-term solidarity, existing movements and networks will be mapped that highlights the privatisation agenda and assess the possibility of alignment between other working partners.

14 UTILITIES

14.1 The right to water, sanitation, and energy has been undermined in the region by privatisation, corporatisation and unbundling, underfunding, trade agreements, and climate change. The sectoral strategy will be closely aligned to the thematic strategies on privatisation and trade union rights.

14.2 Workers across the supply chain of water and energy are too often subjected to: wages that fall below a living wage, increasingly insecure work through outsourcing and contractualisation, discrimination, violence and harassment. Utilities workers face unacceptable occupational health and safety risks with deaths and injuries a common occurrence.

14.3 Sanitation workers in South Asia, for example, are often teenagers forced to enter sewers in extremely dangerous conditions, and face risks of death, lifetime health problems, as well as social isolation.

14.4 Trade union rights are often restricted by governments using essential services provisions to limit the right to strike. Union busting is particularly rife where unions have the political consciousness and fortitude to fight privatisation.

14.5 Capacity Building: Capacity building on fighting privatisation and remunicipalisation will be provided to unions in the sector. We will also consult affiliates on interest in other areas of capacity building and target work on trade and funding for quality public services to affiliates

in the sector. Young workers from the sector will be included in capacity building for young unionists.

14.6 **Research and knowledge:** We will produce information on remunicipalisation of utilities; on public-public partnerships as an alternative and on the architecture of water and energy providers, including forensic mapping of corporates acting in the sectors, in targeted countries. We will produce information on just energy transition frameworks to promote accountable, publicly owned renewables providing decent work.

14.7 **Advocacy:** We will focus on two streams of advocacy: trade union rights and fighting privatisation. We will build on the work at the international level showing how privatisation has enabled human rights violations, and will support legal challenges to privatisation, following the example of Jakarta Water. We will support advocacy for the implementation of health and safety standards in the electricity sector.

14.8 **Networks and movement architecture**: We will consult affiliates to identify network needs and cross union collaboration. At the national level we will support the creation of coordination mechanisms of unions across the production and supply chain (with the first target to be both water and energy unions in Indonesia creating coordination architecture). We will continue to support a network newsletter for information sharing across the region.

15 Public Administration

15.1 Public administration workers, including judicial and corrections workers are increasingly facing issues prevalent in other sectors: privatisation, outsourcing and precarious work. Public sector administration is undermined by austerity policies and governments with an ideological determination to undermine the public sector and 'public sector reform' initiatives funded through IFIs and MDBs.

15.2 A well funded, trained, independent and unionised public service is essential for a functioning democratic government capable of combatting corruption and protecting the public interest from commercial interests.   Effective whistle-blowers laws and union capacity to defend and protect whistle-blowers is essential for both public interest and the ability to address internal systemic failures, including issues of harassment and bullying.

16 Emergency Service Workers

16.1 In April 2018, PSI launched the Global Emergency Workers Network (EWN) involving Asia Pacific affiliates. The Network engaged in successful negotiations at the ILO's Meeting of Experts to new adopt Guidelines on Decent Work in Public Emergency Services.

16.2 Recognising that emergency service workers are often denied the right to organise, bargain and strike, and also recognising that the need for public emergency service workers is critical in the fight to respond to climate change, we will position our work on emergency service workers within those two thematic strategies. .

Strengthening Capacities: We will aim to strengthen capacity of PSI affiliates in the region to understand and utilise the new guidelines and advocate for improved trade union rights.

16.3 **Documentation of Knowledge s and tools**: ILO's Guidelines on Decent Work in Public Emergency Services will serve as a key document for the campaign. We will translate the guidelines and produce user friendly material to apply the guidelines. We will document the status of trade union rights in emergency services across the region.

16.4 **Advocacy**: We will seek to influence national governments to change their labour laws and policies, surrounding emergency service workers by lobbying law makers, providing information to the media, and raising public awareness. We will identify at least 2 countries or local governments who can produce a plan to implement the guidelines.

16.5 **Architecture for solidarity / movement action:** the emergency services network will serve as the coordination mechanism for this work and we will map unions in emergency services in the region, identifying potential new affiliates in the field.

17 GROWTH

17.1 We will support growth of our power through three strategies: supporting the growth of affiliates power; supporting affiliates to increase density through organising and; increasing affiliation to PSI.

17.2 We will support affiliates to amplify their power through the use of public campaigns, utilising media and technology, including through new tools developed by PSI. We will share the concept and practice of social movement unionism with interested affiliates to ensure the union movement hinges efforts to achieve more socially and economically just societies and collaborates with communities to collectively defend public services.

17.3 We will support affiliates to increase organising both in existing worksites and in greenfields sites. We will identify affiliates who could build a stronger organising culture and organise new sites as we have done with the Alliance of Filipino Workers (AFW) in the Philippines.

17.4 We will bring in new affiliates to PSI. We will map unions across the region and identify unions with shared political perspectives and the potential to benefit from the global solidarity and support of PSI.

17.5 We will prioritise organising the most precarious workers across our sectors. This means we will organise workers in the informal sectors, for example community health workers. It also means we will support organising and cross border union recognition for migrant workers.