



GEN CIRCULAR No 3 (2016)

To all PSI affiliates
To members of the PSI World Women's Committee

Archive reference: RP/VM/CHM-UNCSW60
Contact person: veronica.montufar@world-psi.org

11 February 2016

Dear colleagues,

INFORMATION CIRCULAR 2 **60th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Legal and Social Status of Women (UNCSW)** 14-24 March 2016, New York (United States)

With less than two months to go before the start of the 60th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Legal and Social Status of Women (UNCSW), the PSI and other global trade unions (ITUC, IE, ITF) are continuing their joint efforts to obtain greater recognition of the trade unions' role as defenders of women's rights, both at the workplace and in society. Along with the women's movement and NGOs that share the same principles, they also want to increase their influence on the decisions made by government actors about gender equality and equity policies at the global level.

The current state of play is as follows:

I. PRESENTING OUR POLITICAL POSITION

Meeting of Experts at UNCSW (New York, November 1-4, 2015)

Marieke Koning, Policy Adviser at the ITUC Equality Department was invited to represent the international trade union movement. This validated the place won by the global trade unions at the CSW and recognised we have expertise on this issue.

Review of CSW Working Methods on monitoring and accountability for Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Objectives (SDOs) prepared by the Women's Rights Caucus.

The ITUC, IE, PSI and CLC-Canada prepared comments and proposals that demonstrated the need for civil society to input annual reports into the monitoring process. We also proposed the inclusion of issues on the Multi-Annual Work Program, such as full employment and decent work, access to universal quality public services, gender-sensitive public services and the funding of public services.

53rd Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago de Chile, 26-28 January, 2016)

Juneia Batista, President of the World Women's Committee (WOC), represented the PSI. This meeting held a special consultation session on UNCSW60.

PSI campaign for 8 March

In 2015, the World Women's Committee chose Pay Equity, necessary for the economic empowerment of women, as the main theme of International Women's Day in 2016. The PSI will prepare a statement for distribution to all government delegations at the UNCSW and to government ministries responsible for gender, women and employment.

Lobbying at UNCSW60

We will request an audience with government delegations from countries for which we have a delegate in our delegation, to lobby on key national issues, raise our profile and highlight the points on the trade union agenda for UNCSW60.

II. PSI DELEGATION

Around 180 representatives from a wide range of unions throughout the world will participate this year. PSI will have a 20 strong delegation, including representatives of affiliates in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Juneia Batista, WOC President, will be in the delegation representing the Brazilian government, which gives the trade union movement an opportunity to participate in official meetings and have a higher profile and greater influence.

The trade union delegation as a whole will hold introductory and planning meetings to prepare for the sessions during the first week, beginning with an advisory session on Sunday 13 March. We will produce guidelines to advise on our participation and what we expect to achieve.

III. OFFICIAL AND FRINGE EVENTS

The trade union movement will take part in three official events with:

- The Belgian government, on “Making women’s access to productive employment and decent work a reality through social dialogue and collective bargaining”;
- The Norwegian government, on “The United Nations initiative on the education of girls”;
- The Canadian government, on “Violence against women”.

There will be other fringe events. The PSI and WILF/MADRE/AEDIDH/ITUC will organise an event on: **Arab Women and the Human Right to Peace**. It will provide an opportunity for trade union and social movement leaders from Arab countries to give their views on peace as a human right. The promotion of peace and justice is part of Sustainable Development Objective 16 and will only be possible if we also achieve other objectives in the field of representation and equal rights for women, notably independent social organisation in trade unions and access to quality public services.

IV. DOCUMENTS

- Report of the Meeting of the Group of Experts: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw60-2016/preparations>
- Report of the General Secretary on the Priority Theme of CSW60 (attached)
- High Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/1/wee-high-level-panel-launch>
- New UN Women Executive Board <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/1/executive-board-bureau-2016-elected>
- UNCSW60 Program: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw60-2016/official-meetings>

V. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

As in previous years, the global unions will have a blog on the PSI website to report on preparations, activities and results. See <http://unioncsw.world-psi.org/>

We reiterate the importance of you keeping us informed of your lobbying activities and the position adopted by your government. Write to veronica.montufar@world-psi.org

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rosa Pavanelli". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Rosa PAVANELLI
General Secretary