

# ASIA PACIFIC NEWS

September 2013

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is a global union federation representing 20 million members in 150 countries.

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## Advocacy campaign for the ratification of Convention 151



While the Philippines have ratified ILO Conventions 87 and 98, public sector workers cannot exercise full collective bargaining rights due to government regulations. As part of an ongoing campaign to win these rights, PSI affiliates conducted an orientation activity on ILO Convention 151 (Labour Relations in the Public Services) for Public Sector Labor Management Council members, led by the

Civil Service Commission in Quezon City, Philippines, on 25 July 2013. The ratification of ILO Convention 151 is important since it elaborates the rights affirmed in Conventions 87 and 98 specifically for public sector workers.

At present, the rights to organize, collectively bargain, settle disputes and undertake ordinary union activities are not guaranteed for public sector workers. Public sector unions who were accredited by the CSC were invited, among them the Confederation of Independent Unions in the Public Sector (CIU), Philippine Government Employees Association (PGEA) and Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK). The meeting was also part of the Trade Union Rights Philippines strategy on the Campaign to Ratify ILO Convention 151. The orientation was part of a social dialogue process aimed at strengthening the campaign by soliciting the support of heads of government agencies to endorse ratification of the convention. More [here](#)

## Pakistan: WAPDA workers rally against privatisation

Pakistan WAPDA Hydro Electric Central Labour Union staged a demonstration recently against the decision of privatisation of the WAPDA utility. They demanded that their demands for upgrading, and increases in salaries and pensions should be approved. The protesters also called on the employer to drop punitive cases against WAPDA workers, or the union will consider taking strike action. Please contact Mr. Khursheed Ahmed, General Secretary, for more information: [pwf@brain.net.pk](mailto:pwf@brain.net.pk)

## Regional Symposium: Follow up of the Ratification Campaign and Implementation of ILO Conventions Nos 87 and 98



ILO ACTRAV and trade unions in India jointly organised an Asia Pacific Regional Symposium as follow-up to the Campaign for Ratification and Application of ILO Conventions 87 and 98, from 11-13 September 2013 in New Delhi. The symposium reviewed the ratification campaign in select countries of Asia Pacific and developed a strategy for the campaign for the next two years, building towards the ILO 2015 deadline for universal ratification of fundamental conventions.

National trade union representatives from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand took part in this symposium. Ms. V. Lakshmi, PSI-Asia Pacific Regional Secretary, spoke during the inaugural address on behalf of global unions. She spoke on the engagement with the multilateral financial institutions for ensuring Core Labour Standards, the need for public investment, fair and equitable taxation, engagement with regional groupings such as ASEAN, SAARC, BRICS etc. and shared the PSI campaigns in Thailand, Philippines, and India for ratification of ILO Conventions 87, 98 and 151. She suggested looking at unexplored areas and coming up with new strategies to achieve the universal ratification of core conventions by 2015. Mr. Raman Kannan, Sub-Regional Secretary, PSI-South Asia was a panelist addressing the 'Global union efforts to promote fundamental principles and rights at work'. The efforts of PSI affiliates to secure rights for public workers, new strategies to organise the informal workers in organised sector, dialogues with ADB to ensure CLS, mobilisation during the 2013 International Labour Conference, the project-based approach to ensure rights at work at Korea, Philippines, Thailand and India, and the push to increase trade union density were shared. One important point of the panel discussion was on increased co-operation between the national trade union centers and the global union affiliates in each country to secure freedom of association and collective bargaining rights. The country delegates prepared an action plan for the coming years to secure ratification and application of Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining Conventions. For more information of this report, please contact Mr. Raman Kannan: [kannan.raman@world-psi.org](mailto:kannan.raman@world-psi.org) or visit PSI's website [here](#)

## Economic class and labour market inclusion: Poor and middle class workers in developing Asia and the Pacific

A recent ILO study shows that despite robust economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region, millions of people are still living under or just above the poverty line. Using an absolute definition of poverty and the middle class, this ILO paper presents trends and estimates of the poor, near poor and middle class working population in developing Asia and the Pacific. It finds that since 1991 working poverty has fallen remarkably while middle class jobs now account for nearly two-fifths of all employment in the region (671 million middle class workers). However, a sizeable share of workers (around 28 per cent or 497 million) still lives just above the poverty line and remain highly vulnerable to falling into poverty. The paper also applies a class-based framework for assessing inequality in the labour market, with a special focus on Cambodia, India, Indonesia and Viet Nam. By applying a class-based framework for assessing inequality in the labour market, the paper sheds light on decent work challenges that must be addressed by policy-makers in the region in order to eradicate working poverty and foster growth of the middle class. It provides empirical evidence that economic participation is inversely related to affluence, while educational attainment and access to better quality jobs both increase with higher economic class status. In addition, it presents sex- and age-disaggregated analysis to highlight particular gaps for poor women and youth and the measures that can help strengthen their position in the labour market. Click [here](#) to download the paper.



## PSIRU report - International Financial Institutions and Energy Investments

A new PSIRU paper examines the activities of the international financial institutions as they affect finance for the energy sector, through their preferences for private companies and insistence on eliminating price subsidies, and how investments to

extend electricity networks and develop new electricity generation depend largely on public finance. The annexe includes lists of current IFI projects affecting the energy sector. Download the paper [here](#).



## Fundamental Rights at Work in South Korea

PSI affiliates in South Korea joined the ITUC and KCTU at a press conference on September 16 to stress the severe situation of trade union rights in South Korea. The ITUC issued a statement urging the Korean government to guarantee trade union rights, including recognition of the KGEU, and to ratify ILO core conventions 87 and 98. The South Korea – European Union Free Trade Agreement Civil Society Forum and advisory committee for sustainable development chapter's trade union rights seminar was held on 12-13 September 2013.

The Kor-EU FTA Civil Society Forum formed in June 2012. For more info, please contact Ms. Sunghee Oh, KGEU International Relations: [kgeu.inter@gmail.com](mailto:kgeu.inter@gmail.com)



## India: Anti-Corruption campaign

PSI's affiliate, the Delhi State Electricity Workers Union, organized campaign rally against corruption on 4 September at BSES Yamuna Power Ltd, KKD, Delhi office, under the banner of **"Free India from Corruption"**. The union's general secretary Mr. Kuldeep Kumar said the union takes the fight against corruption seriously, and that the campaign gives the working class a chance to speak out about corruption and assert their rights for clean government. For more info, contact: [kuldeep.k.kumar@relianceada.com](mailto:kuldeep.k.kumar@relianceada.com)



## Labour's plan to tackle global unemployment

The leaders of the G20 group of countries met in St. Petersburg, Russia, September 5 and 6 to discuss world economic issues. Labour representatives told the leaders to focus on jobs and presented a three-point strategy. A [RadioLabour](#) report featuring John Evans, General Secretary of the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD can be heard at this link [here](#).



## PSI Energy Meeting

PSI's global energy meeting was held in Luxembourg, 24-25 September 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to deal with the major challenges facing workers in energy and to develop strategies to organise and mobilise in-country, by region and globally. Key issues of discussion included:

- Organising and mobilising in the energy sector: *Mapping the employers, the workers and our unions to achieve greater union density and power of representation*
- Privatisation: *How and why to resist, who is fighting now, who is winning and why Is outsourcing a form of hidden privatization*
- Energy networks inside PSI: *How to link unions in order to exchange information and to coordinate support for specific campaigns*
- Skills, training and health and safety: *Energy is a dangerous industry, thousands of workers are hurt and killed each year*
- Best practices for trade unions: *An ageing workforce requires new staff, new skills*

For more details, please see visit [PSI's website](#) or [EPSU](#)

Quality  
Public  
Services

**ACTION NOW!**



## Regional Forum on Quality Public Services

PSI's Asia Pacific Regional Office will host a Forum on Quality Public Services on 16-18 October 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand. This forum will highlight discussion on the priority public services issues of the region, evaluating union strengths and strategies to take the issues to a further level. PSI's World Congress in November 2012 identified broad areas of work; this event is about collective actions and regional initiatives for growth and mobilization of our union members. The forum format will combine discussion of PSI's thematic and sectoral issues.

APREC members, sectoral network coordinators and staff will facilitate the various sessions.

Keynote speakers and outside resource persons have also been invited to provide additional inputs and information.

More than 100 PSI affiliate participants from our affiliates have registered to date. For the program and further information, please contact the AP Regional Secretary: [lakshmi.vaidhiyanathan@world-psi.org](mailto:lakshmi.vaidhiyanathan@world-psi.org)