



CIRCULAR EB No. 5 (2013)

To all Executive Board members

For information to all Women's Committee members and all PSI Officers

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Dear colleagues,

PSI Work Priorities for 2013

The recent Regional Advisory Committees—and the Regional Executive Committees scheduled over the coming weeks are the first cycle of Public Services International meetings since our World Congress in Durban, South Africa. I ask you to provide advice and guidance to help me and my team make some difficult decisions on priorities starting in 2013 and through the next five years. Your input will be further shared at the PSI Executive meeting in mid-May.

The resolutions from Congress provide a framework for our discussions and decisions. However, we recognise that the combined resolutions from Congress represent a massive work plan which cannot be implemented all at once, on all fronts. We also know that each region and sub-region will have certain differences in their interpretation of the relevance of each element of the Congress resolutions.

... In the attached paper “**Working for the Alternative - Implementing PSI’s mandate in 2013 and beyond**”, you will see the result of our policy and strategy team’s efforts to focus priorities and to be more specific about activities for 2013.

This is in the context of very challenging times for public service unions, public service workers, and for PSI. We recently reviewed the provisional financial reports of 2012 and budgets for 2013 and it is clear we are heading for two significant deficits. There was major overspending in 2012, particularly due to Congress costs and in 2013 we will need to work differently and make some difficult decisions about our resources.

PSI must become more effective at projecting union power into those international organisations which pose a threat to our members’ rights and interests. One way we will do that is by building our sectoral capacities.

In 2013, we will require a much tighter work plan for health and social services – this is our biggest and most complex sector. We will support the mobilisation of nurses, at the same time we must be able to include in PSI sectoral policies the specificities of the different professional and occupational groups, and look to them to provide leadership in their area.

We need to coordinate our influence in cities – this is where most people access their daily public services such as water, energy, health, education, transport, security, etc. The mayors of the cities are organised regionally and globally, and we must speak to them at this level. We can make common cause to strengthen public services, especially as national and regional governments download responsibilities and limit funding to the local levels.

We must have a focus on firefighters to strengthen our representation in this sector. Firefighters are among the most beloved public services providers and are fundamental in disaster preparedness and response – an area that Congress decided to focus activities in over the next five years.

In these difficult times, PSI must demonstrate value to our member unions.

We will stand firm against violations of trade union rights.

We will support privatisation battles, but we also need early warning provided by member unions.

We will coordinate the battle against the many trade agreements which facilitate privatisation, and provide materials that unions will be able to use to lobby in their own capitals.

We will put pressure on the development banks and donors who use public money to impose privatisation.

We will explore how to integrate youth into our fights, to share trade union principles, and to learn from them dynamic new ways to respond to concerns.

Despite all of the current difficulties we must be ambitious – we must dare to strengthen PSI's role and advance our power by increasing our membership. For our next Congress in 2017, we should aim to report on new growth of at least 1 million members. This figure is achievable as our unions can grow in their own sectors and they can help attract new unions to our PSI family.

In all of our work, we must be prepared to pull together in solidarity and to coordinate in a more flexible and effective manner. The resources of PSI in terms of staff and finances are actually very small, especially when compared with those of our opponents.

When we combine our strength we are able to effectively defend the rights of our members, advance our power, and shape this world for the benefit of the common good.

In solidarity,



Rosa Pavanelli
General Secretary
Public Services International

... Enclosed: Working for the Alternative - Implementing PSI's mandate in 2013 and beyond