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Robin Hood rally at the PSI World Congress

On 29th November 2012, more than 1,000 delegates in bright green Robin Hood hats rallied outside the International Convention Centre where the PSI World Congress in Durban was took place. The participants delivered their messages that fair taxation is a key to the equitable redistribution of wealth. A small tax on financial transactions would mean big change for people. Such a Robin Hood Tax could help fund good sustainable jobs, tackle poverty and inequality, make public services accessible to all, and strengthen the global fight against climate change. Read the report, click here and watch the video on YouTube

Fair taxation and fighting against economy inequality

ISL Network Coordinator, Katsuhiko Sato, was guest speaker at the PSI World Congress event in the Interactive Discussion on "Fighting Against Economy Inequality" in Durban, South Africa on 29th November 2012. The discussion reviewed that income and wealth inequalities have risen sharply in the last two decades, causing untold hardship and fuelling the sharp debt increase that followed the global financial crisis.

On the discussion, the Network Coordinator, and other panel speakers agreed that Quality Public Services (QPS) and fair taxation are fundamental to equalizing wealth and opportunity. Therefore, it is critical time to push for fair taxation of the large transnational institutions whose reckless actions led to a global financial meltdown, rising unemployment, and deep cuts in services to people. More info, click here

Why financial transaction tax is essential

Joining with the crowds on the Robin Hood Tax rally at the PSI Congress in Durban, South Africa on 29th November 2012, ISL Network Coordinator, Katsuhiko Sato, addressed participants on how we should fight for economy inequality and to promote fair taxation. "Money is a necessary part of our lives, but sometimes money can end up driving us to the bottom. Money divides society between the wealth of the 1 percent and the poverty of the 99 percent. How long will this society continue? "said Sato. "A financial transaction tax is a way to change things. But we must also get rid of tax havens where dirty money from around the world accumulates. We must take the money that is tied up in crime come back to life – and for that to happen a financial transaction tax is essential. "

Taxing financial transactions – making it work in European Union countries

Financial trading tax would be applied by Austria, Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. Together, these 11 EU countries are to introduce a new financial transaction tax. At their request, the Commission is setting out a common approach to collecting the tax. The tax aims to ensure the financial industry makes a fair contribution to the public purse. The sector currently pays fewer taxes compared to other sectors. It would also be a way to make banks and other financial services companies pay their fair share of the cost of recovering from the crisis. They were a major cause of the economic downturn and received substantial government support to help them survive. The tax would cover all financial transactions involving a party located in one or more of the 11 countries. The minimum rate would be 0.01% for derivatives, and 0.1% for every other transaction, including purchases of shares and bonds. Participating countries are free to apply a higher rate. The tax would not be applied to everyday financial activities by people and businesses – such as getting insured, taking out a mortgage, credit card purchases and business lending. The estimated revenue from the tax is €30-35 billion a year. Some of that could go to the EU's budget. Each participating country's contribution would be reduced by the same amount. The rest of the tax revenues would go to national budgets, to be used like other tax revenues – to reduce debt or invest in growth and jobs, for example. For more information, please visit European Commission's website, click here

PSI welcomes eleven European Union countries agree to implement Robin Hood Tax

On 22 January, 11 countries, including four of the biggest economies in Europe, agreed to implement a financial transactions tax. **General Secretary of the Public Services International, Rosa Pavanelli,** welcomed this initiative: "Fair taxation is a key to the equitable redistribution of wealth. We believe the funds raised from such a 'Robin Hood Tax' should be used to support sustainable jobs, tackle poverty and inequality, make public services such as healthcare accessible to all, and strengthen the global fight against climate change. An FTT will also help to curb runaway financial speculation. At PSI's recent World Congress, members adopted a resolution backing the implementation of a financial transactions tax in countries around the world.

Pavanelli adds, "PSI is proud of our role in promoting a financial transactions tax through targeted campaigning working with our affiliates and allies. We are committed to continuing to lobby for the introduction of such a tax across the world, to benefit the common good." Please see PSI's website for more info, click here

Leading Group meeting

The Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development held the 11th Plenary Meeting on 6th February 2013 in Helsinki, Finland. Followings are the important points in the Chair's summary. (1) The plenary reminded the participating EU countries of the importance to allocate parts of the revenue of the financial transaction tax to development; (2) It is of utmost importance to curb the illicit capital flight from developing countries and to act against tax avoidance and for the closure of tax havens. (3) The Plenary welcomed the note by the UNDG/UNDP on the status of the processes and noted that the Leading Group could play a role in the reflection on the means of implementation of the post-2015 agenda.