



UNITED NATIONS STAFF UNIONS

File Reference: RP/SV/CHM
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30 September 2013

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

On behalf of Public Services International, and the more than 20 million public sector workers we represent worldwide, I write to you to express our deep concern and solidarity following the recent decision of the Secretary-General to withdraw collective bargaining rights from you, the elected representatives of United Nations staff.

The highest quality of public services can only be delivered by workers whose rights are fully respected. To this end, Public Services International defends and advances the fundamental rights and conditions of work for all workers across the globe regardless of status. These rights begin with the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. The United Nations and its specialized agencies such as the ILO are seen by people across the world as the main reference point for the promotion and protection of fundamental workers' rights. This naturally includes the rights of public employees. In a context where workers' rights face an onslaught in both the private and public sectors, PSI is convinced that the UN is sending the wrong message by denying these fundamental rights to its own staff.

UN employees are certainly a special category of public employees, often exposed to particular risks to their health and physical integrity and with a strong sense of duty to promote world peace and human dignity in a global context, above and beyond national administrations. This sends an unacceptable message to the world that unions are not relevant – and is especially hypocritical coming from the global organisation dedicated to peace, social justice and upholding the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (Article 23 Section 4) and the fundamental international labour conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining of the International Labour Organization. At the occasion of the World Day for Decent Work, we call on UN Secretary General Ban-ki Moon to fully restore collective bargaining rights to UN Staff immediately. The United Nations as an employer should set a global example in this regard.

While I could not be there with you during your Union summit, I have asked the PSI delegation present in New York for the UN High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development to meet you and deliver this short message on my behalf. Please be assured of my support and solidarity, and that of the entire PSI membership. We stand by the 65 000 UN employees and their struggle for collective bargaining rights. PSI is committed to support your campaign!

In solidarity,

General Secretary