



RESOLUTION No. 6) SECURITY AT WORK

The 29th World Congress of Public Services International (PSI), meeting in Durban, South Africa, on 27-30 November 2012

NOTES that:

Secure forms of employment combined with good conditions, a safe work environment and well-established social security systems for ill health, parental leave and unemployment, as well as good pension conditions create security in everyday life.

NOTES further that:

Our members' security is dependent on strong collective agreements and trade unions, on ILO conventions and on national social, health, labour market and education policy. There is a clear connection between security and employment.

A dynamic labour market requires job security. It is a politically aware offensive measure for social development that in turn forms the basis of sustainable growth, high productivity and better conditions for our members. An active labour market and social policy, structural and industrial policy that invests in education and research, supports innovation and development of social welfare contributes to creating job security and a dynamic labour market.

Our members' rights in working life are partly based on labour law, collective agreements and equal partnership. Being able to meet social demands for structural transition or employers' demands for rapid adaptation also requires sound conditions, education and social and trade union rights. As trade union organisations we have a joint responsibility with the employers to create security in adaptation.

National and international laws and regulations must aim to give members security and trade unions a strong influence.

PSI's member organisations must work to ensure that collective agreements and laws complement each other and to ensure better conditions adapted to the industries and conditions in the respective countries. The labour laws and collective agreements must be binding on both parties and protect members in various situations. Mutual trust between the parties creates the basis for cooperation and leads to better conditions for members as well as to a long-term perspective, stability and flexibility for the employer.

Collective agreements are to distribute risks between employers and employees when there are changes or cutbacks in the business. The agreement is to give the individual member protection when there are changes in working life as well as when there are changes in private life. It is to create the possibility of high employability through training and skills development. The agreement is also to promote compensation for parental leave and create the conditions for the member to combine working life with parenthood.

NOTES further that:

Providers of publicly funded services are entitled to a good work environment, characterised by secure and safe workplaces with a reasonable workload, good management and a working climate free of harassment and discrimination. No-one should be exposed to physical or mental ill health at their workplace.

NOTES further that:

The global crisis and economic uncertainty are used as reasons for employers' unwillingness to give workers secure forms of employment. In other countries it is stated that strong economic development requires insecure forms of employment for continued growth. In large parts of the world there are considerably more women than men who have fixed-term, insecure jobs. The difference between men's and women's working conditions is clear when it comes to forms of employment.

Public Services International (PSI) is a global trade union federation representing 20 million working women and men who deliver vital public services in 150 countries. PSI champions human rights, advocates for social justice and promotes universal access to quality public services. PSI works with the United Nations system and in partnership with labour, civil society and other organisations.

Fixed-term jobs for months, days, hours or seasons are not as secure as regards rights or conditions of employment as permanent employment. Insecure employment is particularly common among the young, women and migrant workers, who consequently have less protection against discrimination, a bad work environment and exploitation.

NOTES further that:

It is in times of crisis that the public sector and the welfare society are most put to the test. Cutting the standard of public welfare when tax revenue falls, meeting the crisis with major lay-offs and cutbacks and throwing hundreds of thousands of people into unemployment when the need for education, healthcare and social services is constant, is not a policy that leads to growth. It is important that efficiency gains and improvements are carried out on a regular basis in services. But it is even more important to maintain a large and strong public sector in times of crisis. This must be done through training initiatives, labour market measures and sound industrial policy. Partly to reduce the effects of the crisis, but also for a more rapid recovery after the crisis.

Economic and social security is one of the most basic prerequisites for public health. There is a link between good public health and a society characterised by economic and social security, equality of living conditions, equal opportunities and justice. Development of common social security systems that are flexible and based on each country's conditions and needs, is a prerequisite for achieving this.

NOTES further that:

Many countries in the world have a deficit in their pension systems or have no national pensions at all.

The pension systems must be changed and strengthened in almost all countries. For the foreseeable future pension system reforms will be a central issue. The task of the trade union movement is to take an active part in discussions, and in every way ensure that governments and decision-makers create fair solutions for their citizens. A pension is a long-term obligation. The systems built up and the collective agreements signed concerning pensions must be sustainable and able to function for many years to come.

To succeed in taking the responsibility expected of us we must develop our cooperation and transnational exchanges. PSI considers that the vesting conditions of the pension system must be made gender-neutral and that people's future economic security should not be based on speculation.

NOTES further that:

The right to a living wage is in many countries not the same as the minimum wage. In a fifth of the world's countries the minimum wage is below the poverty line of 2 dollars a day. In the wake of the economic crisis there have been calls for wage reductions to meet competition.

It is important that in times of unease we remember the "Trade Union Vow" in which workers promise not to compete with each other for jobs through lower wages and poorer conditions. Because it is self-evident that lower wages do not give more jobs or lower unemployment.

On the contrary, both globally and regionally we need stimulus measures and an economic policy that leads to increased growth.

EXHORTS PSI

To give priority to and strengthen work under the Geneva Charter.

EXHORTS the affiliates

- 1) To participate and support the work of the PSI under the Geneva Charter and to adapt it to national circumstances.
- 2) On all fronts and using all democratic means, to work for an inclusive society with a well-functioning public sector free from corruption and enjoying strong public confidence.
- 3) To participate in an ambitious policy for combating unemployment through constant skills development of public sector employees, greening, and general welfare.
- 4) To mobilise on the issue that the right to a living wage is the same as a minimum wage or the lowest wages for full time.

- 5) Through collective agreements and advocacy to work for good public health and a society characterised by economic and social security, equality of living conditions, equal opportunities and justice.
- 6) To work to increase solidarity between workers with insecure forms of employment and workers with permanent jobs.
- 7) To adapt their constitutions to be able to organise workers with insecure forms of employment.
- 8) To encourage training of organisers to organise workers with insecure forms of employment.

See all [Congress resolutions](#) including the Program of Action and the Constitution.