



End violence against women now! ***International Women's Day 8 March 2013***

Public Services International joins our members across the globe in celebrating the social, political and economic change and achievements of women on 8th March. PSI promotes the work of women trade unionists and stands united with our sisters who place themselves on the frontline to deliver vital public services.

But there is still much to be done. Violence against women exists in all countries and in all societies. One out of every three girls today will face some form of violence in her lifetime.

PSI General Secretary Rosa Pavanelli says, “We received the terrible news that ten PSI member nurses in Nigeria were brutally shot to death while they were giving an immunization clinic on 8 February. We remember them and will not rest until justice is served in their name.”

“We call on all PSI affiliates to mobilise for action to end violence against women. On 8th March this year, PSI launches a special campaign on this theme. But this is not just a women’s problem. I call on all members of PSI, men and women, to work together to stop violence against women.”

Violence against women and girls can be physical, sexual, psychological or economic. It happens in private and public places, and in physical as well as virtual online spaces. Violence is often driven by a deep-seated belief that a woman is not equal to a man.

Pavanelli emphasizes that: “Public sector workers are well-placed to promote and enforce laws and rules that advance gender equality and protection against violence and harassment. Quality public services are often the only shield and support for women in this situation. Violence against women creates inequality, affecting the well-being of current and future generations. Violence and the threat of it deprive women of their basic human rights. We must take action and end violence against women now.”

PSI and our affiliates can work together and with civil society organisations to break the silence and mobilise against discrimination and violence in our workplaces and societies. This can include measures in collective agreements, and pressuring governments to enforce laws, provide the necessary resources to assist victims, and train judicial authorities and the police to deal adequately with issues of violence against women and girls. Equality is a right.

Union women, including PSI members from around the world, are gathering for the United Nations’ 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York this month. The aim of this meeting is to agree on a UN resolution on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. PSI calls on all UN member states to take the necessary measures to immediately prevent and remedy violence against women and girls.

Please join PSI’s “End violence against women” campaign now! Watch the 2013 International Women’s Day video message to affiliates from PSI’s leader, Rosa Pavanelli, at www.world-psi.org/IWD013-video and download and distribute PSI’s colourful new IWD posters (in many languages) from our website at <http://www.world-psi.org/IWD2013-posters>. If you need high-resolution files for print, contact communications@world-psi.org. Please see the following list of actions you and your union can take to make a difference and end violence against women.

Take action to end violence against women now!

PSI and its affiliates can:

- Raise awareness on and mobilise against discrimination and violence.
- Break the silence and act to end violence at the workplace.
- Include measures to protect victims in collective agreements.
- Improve coordination between PSI members, sharing best practices and policies that have real impact.
- Make strong demands to government to address violence against women.

Demands to governments:

- Ensure gender equality is enshrined as a principle in national constitutions.
- Put in place effective implementing mechanisms to enforce the law in close cooperation with civil society.
- Provide sufficient resources for policies to be implemented and to assist victims (shelters, hotlines etc.)
- Train judicial authorities and the police to deal adequately with issues of violence against women and girls.
- Ensure legal sanctions are strong enough to discourage acts of violence.
- Facilitate women's access to justice, including by providing translation into different languages and free legal assistance.
- Take effective measures to ensure that the media demonstrate and promote respect for women and girls.
- Integrate the prevention of violence and the principle of gender equality into school curricula.
- Actively support women in leadership positions and work toward achieving parity in all decision-making bodies.
- Enact national legislation that recognises gender-based violence as grounds for asylum and related claims.
- Develop indicators on work-related violence, and set up systems to measure progress toward agreed targets.
- Adopt strong legislation to protect women and girls against discrimination and violence.
- Ratify CEDAW and implement its General Recommendation No 19 on violence against women.
- Ratify ILO Convention 111 on non-discrimination, No 189 on domestic workers and No 182 on child labour.
- Implement ILO Recommendation No. 200 on HIV/AIDS which states: 'Measures should be taken in or through the workplace to reduce the transmission of HIV and alleviate its impact by... ensuring actions to prevent and prohibit violence and harassment in the workplace'.