



**PEOPLE  
OVER  
PROFIT**

**REGIONAL  
PROGRAMME  
OF ACTION**

**Final version**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This is the final version of the Regional Programme of Action which should guide us over the next five years. Changes from the first and second versions that were distributed at the end of October 2018 and the beginning of February 2019 reflect the proposed amendments that were submitted to the PSI Interamerican Regional Secretariat.

The proposed amendments that have been incorporated into this document either refine or complement existing content. There are no substantive changes to the content, and therefore no opposition to their incorporation into this Regional Action Plan.

Detailed, concrete proposals on what actions should take place over the next five years are not included. Given the level of volatility in the region, it would have been very difficult to predict what is happening today at our last IAMRECON. An effort has been made to establish guidelines that will allow both IAMREC and SUBRACs to annually develop proposals relevant to the current moment.

Without a doubt, PSI bodies including National Committees, SUBRACs and IAMREC will approve the concrete ideas contained in this Action Plan. As noted, this is an initial proposal that will surely be improved with contributions from all. A process of collective construction will guarantee a better Regional Action Plan and more commitment to its execution.

### **1. From the Americas we have to the Americas we want**

***(PoA 1.1.1) Defending a strong democratic state and an inclusive society, committed to ensuring gender equality, respect and dignity for all, economic development for the benefit of all, redistribution of wealth and strengthened workers' power, will be our objectives for the next five years.***

- 1.1 This is from the introduction of our Global Programme of Action.
- 1.2 Unfortunately the Americas are heading in the opposite direction of what is necessary to achieve these goals. Poverty has grown considerably in the countries of the Caribbean, North, Central and South America. Millions of people who had escaped poverty have now returned to feel its effects again.
- 1.3 Privatization remains the norm in many countries around the region despite its failure around the world, as demonstrated in PSI's recent study on re-municipalization / bringing public services back in.
- 1.4 Free trade and investment agreements are being advanced in the region. All new or revised agreements under negotiation favor corporate interests to the detriment of the public.
- 1.5 Tax evasion continues to go unpunished despite the continued appearance of scandals like the Panama Papers which repeatedly demonstrate how

millionaires and transnational corporations transfer fortunes to tax havens, thus avoiding the payment of much-needed taxes to the countries where they operate or are based. Tax evasion is the private capturing of the profit generated by our paid and unpaid work which then makes it more difficult for the State to adequately implement necessary public policies.

- 1.6 Because we oppose this situation, the attacks against the trade union movement in the region continue. Restrictions on the freedom of association and thus the ability of workers to organize are growing. The impediments to union recognition, delays, denials, and proscriptions have become widespread, and now initiatives are being added to drain the financial resources of union organizations by preventing or hindering the collection of union dues.
- 1.7 The systematic attack on the right to strike has grown in all countries, reproducing what has been happening within the ILO itself. Corporate power wants to take away our main tool of defense and struggle. PSI expresses its conviction on the inclusion of the right to strike in ILO Convention 87, and therefore, its character as a "fundamental right to work", which is extended as a "universal human right" by its inclusion in the main human rights treaties at a global and regional level.
- 1.8 The criminalization and judicialization of protest is growing in the Americas, and the trend is very worrisome. Union leaders are threatened and assassinated in countries beyond those that have historically suffered this scourge. Judicial impunity and the lack of protection and/or complicity of governments have extended the practice of anti-union violence to almost the entire region.
- 1.9 We are suffering a clear setback in collective bargaining generally, with a notable brake on collective bargaining in the public sector. After years of progress of the PSI and TUCA campaign to ratify ILO Conventions 151 and 154, the bipartite work of ACTRAV and PSI, and the ongoing militant efforts of our affiliates in favor of social dialogue, today we find that the majority of governments are hostile and seek to regress to unilateral practices, and in some cases have proposed the elimination of collective bargaining in the public sector. PSI highlights the need for social dialogue in general and in labor relations, and absolute respect for the right to negotiate collective agreements.
- 1.10 All of this happens in a context of a mass media that is monopolized in the hands of large companies and that present incomplete and biased versions of this reality for most of the population of the continent.
- 1.11 It's time to say Enough! Millions have already stood up and participated in historic struggles against this situation. The feminist movement has recently provided an excellent example of struggle and capacity for mobilization. Trade unions also offer clear examples of what is possible in their efforts to defend workers.
- 1.12 Today, more than ever, we need to have a clear vision on how to strengthen democracy and human rights and ensure the redistribution of

wealth, decent work, dignity and equality. As public sector unions we know the specific role that as we must occupy in this struggle.

- 1.13 We are the workers that are most responsible for the services that are essential to human dignity. We are at the front lines of health, child and adult care services, the provision of water and energy, support for education, the promotion of social services, tax collection, control of public spending, emergency response in cases of natural disasters and many other essential services. Consequently, we have an intimate and clear vision of the real significance and importance of quality public services and so must be bold in their defence.
- 1.14 We defend democracy as an absolute good and repudiate attacks against democratically elected governments where electoral results are negated, a practice present in our region both historically and recently. We repudiate all threats of military intervention in any country of the Americas and the world. We want a multi-polar world where peoples' self-determination is respected; where strong democratic and multilateral institutions exist; where balanced and development-friendly international agreements are negotiated which promote fair distribution of wealth and quality public services that help to realize gender equality and social justice.
- 1.15 We know that our ability to fight depends on the size, strength and unity of our organizations. We understand the importance of building alliances with civil society and its organizations, with public service recipients and with progressive forces in general. Only then will we our actions be most effective.
- 1.16 As a global union, PSI understands the importance of identifying and connecting national struggles with global issues while thinking globally and acting locally and nationally. We recognize that nothing that affects the interests of workers at national level is disconnected from global affairs. The role of PSI is to support local and national struggles, to promote solidarity actions, to use our own strong and well-developed means of communication while always showing that what happens to one happens to everyone and is ultimately the result of a global policy of attacking our rights. Thus, the victory of one is also the victory of all.
- 1.17 The main forces responsible for the negative situation that we experience in the region are large and unfortunately growing international corporations and their allied governments.
- 1.18 We know that the American continents and the Caribbean produces and possesses enough wealth to ensure that everyone lives a dignified life with their basic needs met. It is therefore sufficient to distribute this wealth that is produced by our work in a fair manner and to ensure that democratic processes respect the decisions made by the majority rather than being manipulated to enrich a tiny portion of the population.
- 1.19 What do we propose to move forward?

## **2. Fighting corporate power: For a fair economy**

### **2.1 Introduction**

*(PoA 4.1.5) The alternative requires an economic system that exists for the benefit of the people, not despite them, and takes into account the environmental and social consequences. An economy democratically run for the benefit of all requires a strong public sector to fix market failures, constrain the excesses of power, regulate the effective running of markets and oversee redistribution to ensure efficiency and justice. Political choices and decisions at all levels must respect social and environmental imperatives in order to improve the living conditions of workers and the public.*

- 2.1.1 We believe that Americas and the Caribbean have enough wealth to guarantee a dignified and fair life for all. The main obstacle to this becoming reality is the intense concentration of wealth in the hands of a tiny portion of the population - the 1%.
- 2.1.2 We clearly identify this concentration as a function of the logic of neoliberal globalization which has allowed transnational corporations to become richer and more powerful than many nation states, to govern the countries of the world and consequently our region.
- 2.1.3 Due to (habit-forming) electoral campaign financing mechanisms through which corporations make large donations to candidates, governments elected with this financial support become committed advocates for these same companies, eventually promoting policies that serve their interests to the detriment of the common good. This mechanism is reinforced by bribery and direct corruption, by which corporations corrupt representatives of the state. This is known as the capture of democracy by corporate power. We want to change this reality
- 2.1.4 Consequently, our priorities are:

### **2.2 International and regional financial institutions**

- 2.2.1 We want global and regional financial structures that reflect the PSI's vision. For example, inclusion of requirements in lending agreements that governments or companies respect the ILO's Core Labour Standards and don't favour agreements that are advantageous for global commercial interests. We will exert pressure to implement this practice as standard policy.
- 2.2.2 We highlight the fact that several of the regional financial institutions have developed mechanisms for dialogue with the trade union movement in Europe, Africa and Asia. In the Americas, however, this type of practice has not been adopted by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). We must continue to demand more transparency and the participation of

a workers' representative in both the Bank's Executive and consultative meetings with civil society in order to allow for necessary monitoring.

- 2.2.3 We will also combat the lending practices of these regional and international financial institutions - such as the IADB and the World Bank - to companies and governments that drive the privatization of basic public services and pension and social security systems in the Americas. With the understanding that many borrowing companies violate basic labour rights, we will fight for them to be sanctioned.

## **2.3 Tax justice**

***(PoA 4.3.1) PSI condemns all forms of corporate tax avoidance and evasion as theft of workers' money which should rightfully be funding public services, economic development, alleviating poverty and enabling the state to meet its obligations to human rights. Fair taxes also enable the redistribution of wealth and funds vital economic infrastructure. A just, progressive, gender-neutral and transparent taxation system is the mechanism by which wealth is used for the benefit of the people.***

- 2.3.1 We will support all national campaigns for progressive tax reform by providing content for this discussion throughout the region. To strengthen the struggle and create a convergence of proposals among our affiliates, we will produce a text that contains the central ideas for the application of progressive tax reforms that take into account the different socioeconomic contexts in the Americas.
- 2.3.2 We want to deepen our work on tax exemptions and subsidies that governments offer to transnational corporations. Studies in this area demonstrate the lack of positive results of these policies and the fiscal loss they represent for the national / local budget, and consequent losses to taxpayers. In sum, this financial war is detrimental to all developing countries.
- 2.3.3 To resolve taxation issues in the region, it is necessary to invest in more cooperation and less competition. Therefore, we support the creation of a regional tax forum, with the participation of top economic authorities from the countries of the Americas, in a manner similar to the 'African Tax Forum'. The objectives of this forum would be the exchange of information and best practices and the coordination of regional tax policies that including tax exemptions.
- 2.3.4 We will continue to relentlessly denounce the practices of transnational corporations that transfer profits abroad through trade between their subsidiaries and the use of tax havens. We will pressure governments to adhere to the proposal for international tax reform in line with the suggestions of the Independent Commission on International Corporate Tax Reform (ICRICT).

## **2.4 Public debt**

***(PoA 4.4.1) The consequences of sovereign debt crises are devastating. They usually include cuts to health, education and other social services, privatisations, unemployment, cuts to workers' wages and conditions, cuts to pensions, raising regressive taxes on labour and consumers and undermining democracy as sovereign governments become dependent on financial institutions (like World Bank and IMF) and their conditions.***

2.4.1 Public debt needs to be addressed more closely in our region. We recently organized a seminar on the subject in Puerto Rico, and we intend to organize a second regional seminar, preceded by a survey of the debt situation in some key countries of the region in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding. We want to take advantage of this and other national activities to identify and build closer relations with civil society groups demanding citizen public debt audits which, in turn, aim to reduce interest payments in favor of more investments in quality public services. We propose regional mobilization actions that question the very legitimacy of public debt.

## **2.5 Corruption**

***(PoA 4.5.1) PSI condemns and opposes corruption in all forms, as it undermines trust in government, steals resources from public services, undermines economic development and contributes to inequality.***

- 2.5.1 We observe how transnational corporations evade taxes, fund electoral campaigns, are associate with monopolized means of mass communication, and promote corruption in our region. In practice, transnational corporations seek to buy governments, parliaments and even judiciaries in order to manage the nation state according to their own interests.
- 2.5.2 We will tirelessly continue the fight against corruption in all its forms and we will increase our attention on the manipulation that large corporations practice in many of our countries.
- 2.5.3 In the upcoming period we will continue to work towards the creation of an ILO Convention that protects whistleblowers that expose practices and mechanisms of corruption that permeate our reality, as well as promoting a more in-depth discussion on anti-bribery laws and transparency measures in public finances. We will also strive for the structuring, restructuring and strengthening of bodies destined to combat corruption and tax evasion in each country.

## **2.6 Trade and Investment Agreements**

***(PoA 4.6.1) PSI acknowledges that trade and investment are vital for economic development. A stable set of trade and investment rules can facilitate orderly economic growth to the benefit of all. PSI believes that these rules are political constructions, not some sort of economic given. Therefore, they must be made in open, transparent, inclusive, democratic and multilateral fora, where nations can protect national sovereignty and policy space and choose their economic policy free from coercion by economic colonialism and corporate pressure.***

- 2.6.1 We will continue to oppose Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) in our region including the modification of existing agreements that seek to deepen the protection of the interests of transnational capital in each of our countries.
- 2.6.2 We will also oppose the private arbitration courts that are being created in the region by bilateral and multinational agreements, the objective of which is to guarantee rights and privileges to investors in the event of investor vs. state disputes. Such mechanisms undermine the ability of the state to regulate, including in the areas of labor, environmental and social issues.
- 2.6.3 We want to continue to focus on the United Nations Commission on International Trade and Law - UNCITRAL - the UN body responsible for this issue – where we will highlight more economic, cooperative and public alternatives. We are currently mapping the representatives of the countries of our region that are part of this body to exchange information and materials produced by PSI, and to articulate joint meetings with our local affiliates.
- 2.6.4 We understand that this struggle is not exclusive to the union movement. In the last period we supported the construction of national platforms to fight against FTAs that included trade unions, academics and NGOs. In the next period, we want to consolidate a regional platform that allows PSI to act more broadly in opposition to these treaties and in defense of quality public services, highlighting their impact on gender inequality and deepening social inequality.
- 2.6.5 We will continue to give special attention to the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) due to its irreversibility if it is approved and its numerous other nefarious clauses that limit State power to regulate public services. Other treaties that will continue to receive more attention in the region include: the various agreements signed with the European Union including the agreement under negotiation with Mercosur, TPP 11 and the expansion of the Pacific Alliance, concretized in the bilateral treaties promoted by the Chilean government.



## **2.7 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

***(PoA 4.7.2) PSI believes that while parts of the 2030 Agenda provide an alternative narrative to neoliberal policies, several significant flaws remain. Most fundamentally, the implementation and accountability mechanisms are voluntary.***

- 2.7.1 Recent developments on the continent show that we are moving in the opposite direction of the SDGs. Health and education coverage have been reduced rather than expanded. Instead of eliminating poverty, it has actually grown in many of our countries.
- 2.7.2 We will defend the SDGs as an instrument of pressure in the fight against regressive policies adopted in the region. We believe in the importance of using international pressure as one of the elements of national struggles developed by our affiliates.
- 2.7.3 We understand that there will be no sustainable development without decent work and quality public services that bring about gender equality and social justice.

## **2.8 Climate change**

***(PoA 4.8.1) Climate change is one of the most significant threats to a peaceful, prosperous future for humanity. Despite near consensus amongst the scientific community, the move to zero-carbon economies is far too slow and inconsistent.***

- 2.8.1 We will continue to advocate for clean energy and just transition policies on the way to carbon-free economies to ensure that the quality of life of workers and communities improves. We know that this transition is a State responsibility, and that only public companies will be genuinely concerned with the promotion of policies that contribute to halting climate change rather than profit.
- 2.8.2 We will give special attention to the cases of natural disasters that commonly result from climate change while defending decent working conditions and the right to organize for emergency workers. We will make an effort to participate in local and regional discussions that involve disaster preparation. These issues should be included in broader discussions about climate change.
- 2.8.3 It is important to emphasize the transversal character of the fight for the environment because, as is particularly the case in Latin America, the sectors that destroy the environment including agriculture and mining, are constantly linked to tax evasion and tax avoidance practices and are rarely punished for environmental crimes or crimes committed against social activists. Discussion of greater transparency in the extractive industries in relation to the money they spend on commissions and bribes in order to benefit from tax deductions is unattainable.

- 2.8.4 We will highlight the importance of the role of quality public services that bring about gender equality and social justice in the fight against climate change and for sustainable development through information sharing and contributions to organizing in order to alert and educate our affiliates.

## **2.9 Pensions**

***(PoA 4.9.1) Just and equitable societies protect workers after their retirement. PSI supports and defends public pension and retirement systems that provide security and solidarity.***

- 2.9.1 We will combat the various policies of privatization and individualization of public pension fund systems, defending a solidarity-based, intergenerational, public pension system without gender distinctions. Regarding private pension funds where workers have some degree of control, we must avoid that resources are used in businesses that negatively affect workers, as in cases where investments are made in companies connected to privatization of public services in other countries of the region.
- 2.9.2 In the past, the role of the World Bank in promoting the privatization of welfare systems in developing countries was much more direct. In addition to rhetorical support for the ideology and financial interests that support privatization, this entity has also facilitated lending and technical assistance to countries that have decided to pursue this path.
- 2.9.3 We want to hold a regional meeting on pensions, preceded by a regional analysis that includes the identification of the increasing interest of businesses in promoting social security reforms in several countries. We will support national struggles with technical and financial resources that contribute to the defense of a dignified retirement for all workers.

## **2.10 Fighting privatization**

***(PoA 6.1.1) PSI believes that quality public services are the foundation of a fair society and a strong economy. Quality public services make our communities and economies more equitable, resilient to downturn and disaster, and protect the youngest, sick, unemployed, disabled, aged and vulnerable. Quality public services are among the state's primary mechanisms for fulfilling its obligations for the realisation of human rights, gender equality and social justice.***

- 2.10.1 No economy will be truly strong without a state to drive the central areas of economic growth for complete human development and without public policies and quality public services that guarantee income redistribution. Privatization has been the fastest way for corporations to capture large profits as they take over state functions.

***(PoA 6.1.4) The fight against privatisation is not just a fight to stop the sale of our public services. It is also a fight for the type of society we want, a fight for social justice and equity.***

- 2.10.2 Privatization continues to advance in our region including in the noxious form of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), completely disregarding international experience which shows the bankruptcy of this model. Many countries in the world have been reversing privatizations and bringing essential services back under state and municipal control.
- 2.10.3 We will contest all forms of privatization, including Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) of essential services, unrestricted outsourcing in the public service and social impact bonuses. We will condemn legislation that seeks to introduce or facilitate these policies. We are attentive to proposals such as the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) which, if approved, will permanently prohibit a government from bringing privatized services back under state control.
- 2.10.4 We will contest the myth that privatization is the best solution to solve existing problems in companies and public services. We will support our affiliates in their national struggles and we will promote joint studies with civil society that expose this myth.
- 2.10.5 In the case of services already privatized, we will act in defense of the workers providing those services while seeking to promote the inclusion of their union organizations in the activities of PSI.
- 2.10.6 With regard to transnational corporations that continue to take over public services in Brazil, we will continue to participate in the discussion of Global Framework Agreements as possible tools to internationalize our struggles.
- 2.10.7 Access to quality public services for the entire population must be considered a fundamental human right guaranteed by States. Public health, education at all levels, provision of water and energy services, access to justice, social security, and benefits that guarantee conditions of human dignity for the population must be guaranteed by the State through public services. PSI will uphold the human right of access to public services in all fora, through a regional campaign.

## **2.11 The future of work and the work of the future that we want**

- 2.11.1 For PSI, the discussion about the future of work cannot be limited to issues related to new technologies, digitalization and artificial intelligence. For us, the future of work is directly linked to the model of development that we want in our countries and in the region. More specifically: How broad will the democratic participation of each individual be in the political and economic definitions and what kind of employment we want? The introduction of new technologies in the

workplace should always be negotiated directly with workers and their representatives.

- 2.11.2 We cannot separate the debate on the future of work from discussions of the future of capital. This is a central point. For corporations and their allied governments, the future of work is about to how to reduce the number of jobs, privatize services, increase precariousness – including through the use of platforms - to intensify exploitation through income insecurity and gender and racialized wage gaps and increase profits with the consequent concentration of income.
- 2.11.3 We will accompany the process of debates proposed by the ILO on the "future of work", articulating with the trade union movement as a whole and in our regional plan, and at the same time, from our sectoral perspective, to modify the aspects of changes to work that are taking place, and yet to come, in the public sector. The changes in paradigms in the organization of work, the influence of technological changes, and new public services represent challenges for States and for workers and we must overcome them on the basis of social dialogue while maintaining and raising the current levels of protection and respect for labor rights.
- 2.11.4 We demand a fair division of income which is results from our work. We must fight for a fair wage policy, including a decent minimum wage, and for measures to ensure that jobs are formalised. We demand full respect for the right to organize and to strike, and to collectively bargaining over any changes affecting our workplaces, continuing education policies for all workers and social protection for anyone without a job.
- 2.11.5 A sensitive point linked to this theme is the issue of control of personal data. With the world increasingly digitalized, there is an increasing risk that corporations that control this data (whether collected legally or illegally) will control the entire life of each one of us, including our labor. We therefore want a global data policy where data remains in public hands, is treated in an ethical manner and where data's reduction to a simple source of income and control for large corporations is prohibited. We are approaching civil society groups and experts in this area in the Americas.
- 2.11.6 So-called digitization and the creation of new algorithms can not continue to be disruptive or a short-cut to increase corporate power in our region.
- 2.11.7 After the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2019, which will have the future of work as the central theme, we must debate this future in all national and regional forums, always with a view to guaranteeing decent worker for all in the future. We will also encourage the exchange of best practices in the area and seek to deepen the debate with all our affiliates.
- 2.11.8 We need to strengthen the instruments of global governance, in particular to reinforce the ILO's normative capacities and its ability to enforce and implement the Conventions. The work of the future, because

of its dynamics of change, requires institutions capable of providing rapid, effective, global responses arising from tripartite dialogue.

## **3. Respect and dignity for all**

### **3.1 Introduction**

***(PoA3.1.1) Our movement is inclusive and recognises that diversity is strength. Our vision, and our ability to realise it, is underpinned by our principles and our cohesion.***

***(PoA 3.1.2) Real inclusion requires the righting of historical wrongs. Fighting discrimination, realisation of human rights and empowering everyone requires that we acknowledge the past, take specific actions to remedy injustice, shift the balance of power and mainstream our inclusive practices to create a more inclusive future for all.***

- 3.1.1 We recognize the important role of public services in the fight against discrimination. We want unions that are inclusive and a society without discrimination.
- 3.1.2 Therefore, it is necessary to fight for anti-discrimination policies and practices for specific social groups in public selection mechanisms and defend the adoption of targets and quotas for the inclusion of women, racialized people, indigenous peoples, LGBTI+ people, young workers and persons with disabilities in these processes.
- 3.1.3 In the Interamerican region we have four organized equality committees: The Women's Committee; the Committee to combat racism and xenophobia and defend indigenous peoples; the LGBT workers' Committee; and the Young Workers' Committee. The Women's Committee is a statutory body, while the other three function based on regional decisions.
- 3.1.3 Despite our continued struggles for equality, we see the growth of intolerance in all its forms: racial, sexual orientation, religious, nationality, etc.
- 3.1.4 Migrants in particular have been the victims of aggression in many of our countries. As a result of economic decline, young people are finding it increasingly difficult to find any kind of job, much less a decent job. As unions, we will set an example of what it means to be inclusive organizations and will firmly defend a society without discrimination and that provides equal opportunities for all.

## **3.2 Gender**

***(PoA 3.2.4) Equal pay is a fundamental human right, which is enshrined in international human rights standards, such as ILO Convention 100 Equal Remuneration (1951), ILO Convention 111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) (1958) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979). Sanctions should be adopted on companies and administrations that discriminate and contravene these conventions. We must support collective legal and political actions, at national and global level, that allow victims of discrimination to take the matter to the courts.***

- 3.2.1 We will continue to address gender issues in a broad and transversal way. We will work to ensure that transversality is included throughout this Plan of Action.
- 3.2.2 Considering equal pay for work of equal value as a fundamental human right, initiatives have grown in many countries of the Americas including Peru, Chile, Panama and Barbados. We hope that these initiatives will continue to spread to countries all over the region.
- 3.2.3 Violence against women will be combated in all its forms given that it affects all aspects of life, with consequences that go far beyond home and work. PSI continues to work towards the adoption of an ILO Convention tied to a recommendation and its subsequent ratification and implementation in the countries of the region.
- 3.2.4 We will fight for all demands related to maternity, including the right to decide on pregnancy and for the provision of free, quality public child care centres as a means of guaranteeing the rights of children and the autonomy of women.
- 3.2.5 We support the attainment of 50% women in leadership positions of our affiliated organizations or at a minimum, a proportion equivalent to the number of women in the membership. We defend that gender issues and their articulation are clearly incorporated into the sectoral structures of PSI.

## **3.3 Young workers**

***(PoA 3.3.5) The situation of young workers is one of the most profound challenges facing the labour movement, and public service unions specifically. Ensuring young workers are integrated into all levels of union leadership and activity is essential, if we want our movement to survive and grow. PSI's recent Young Workers' Policy outlines the next steps.***

- 3.3.1 We understand that young workers, like women, are disproportionately affected by economic crises. Today, it is almost impossible for young

workers to find stable, decent and secure jobs. The fight for decent work for young workers will be one of our priorities.

- 3.3.2 We have identified that only unionization of young workers is insufficient to strengthen unions. Precariously employed and subcontracted, these workers face barriers to participate in our organizations. We want to offer proposals for training / union education without an adult-centered approach and that interests young workers and integrates them at all levels of the union structure, including in leadership.
- 3.3.3 Young workers should have guaranteed space in any educational project and in campaigns in defense of decent public jobs articulated by PSI. They should actively participate in all PSI campaigns. The regional Young Workers' Committee should meet annually to plan its activities and to evaluate previous progress in order to do a systematic identification of development. The committee should also coordinate, in each country or subregion, the construction of a young workers' group that exercises its political capacity to renew trade unionism and influence all PSI political bodies, both through their physical presence and in their capacity to analyze and to make proposals.

### **3.4 Combating racism and xenophobia and in defending indigenous peoples**

***(PoA 3.5.1) Times of cyclic economic crises too often see increases in racism, xenophobia and all types of discrimination, both inside and outside the workplace. While public services, public employment practices and public service unions are often community leaders in combatting racism and xenophobia, we acknowledge that they are not without structures and practices that may perpetuate discrimination.***

- 3.4.1 Frequent attacks on the rights of people of African descent and indigenous peoples continue in many countries of our region. As a result of the economic crisis, we also see cases of xenophobia growing.
- 3.4.2 In order to strengthen our Regional Executive Committee, in the next period we will hold regular planning and training meetings. We will strengthen the struggle for International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 111 on Discrimination at Work and will continue to work towards the goals set for the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2014.
- 3.4.3 In the Organization of American States (OAS), PSI has played an important role in the elaboration and adoption of the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance (A-68) and the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance (A-69) in June 2013. We will continue to work towards the effective implementation of these two resolutions in the region.

- 3.4.4 In our struggles against free trade agreements, we will give more prominence to violations of ILO Convention 169, which guarantees the right to free, prior and informed consent for government policies affecting indigenous peoples. We also intend to hold the first regional union meeting of indigenous peoples.
- 3.4.5 We will work to integrate affiliates from the United States and Canada affiliates deeper into the Regional Executive Committee.

### **3.5 LGBTI+ workers**

***(PoA 3.6.1) PSI opposes all forms of marginalization and stigmatization linked to sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics. Homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and stigmatisation of intersex people in all forms create disadvantage and prejudice and constitute a violation of human rights.***

- 3.5.1 Our committee is still awaiting its final composition and occasionally faces difficulties in the development of actions against discrimination related to sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual characteristics in unions and society more broadly.
- 3.5.2 We will continue to promote policies that respect diversity, guarantee spaces for LGBTI+ workers at public services workplaces and in unions and contribute to building more inclusive and respectful societies.
- 3.5.3 An important issue in our region is violence against the LGBTI+ population which causes thousands of murders annually. We will continue to demand the investigation and resolution of every such case, repudiating any attempt to continue with the current impunity in relation to many of these crimes.
- 3.5.4 We will follow up on partnerships and agreements with the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association for Latin America and the Caribbean (ILGALAC).

### **3.6 Migrants and refugees**

***(PoA 3.4.1) Most people migrate to find work and to improve their living conditions. Of the 244 million international migrants in 2015, over 150 million are migrant workers. While labour migration can positively contribute to the economic and social development of countries, it also comes as consequence of the asymmetries in development between rich and poor countries, with workers struggling to find work elsewhere.***

- 3.6.1 We will fight all forms of persecution and violence against the millions of immigrants and refugees in our region. Instead of walls, we want to build bridges that allow a true integration of people who in most cases migrate or seek refuge due to the disastrous economic policies adopted by international pressure from governments allied with corporations



- 3.6.2 We will seek to improve lobbying work for the application of norms and laws favorable to the rights of migrants and refugees promoted by organizations such as the UN and the OAS or those derived from regional agreements.
- 3.6.3 We defend that public services should be available to meeting at least the basic needs of this group of people, regardless of whether they have required documents or not.
- 3.6.4 We want to integrate migrants and refugees into our unions as soon as they enter the labor market, and even before where possible, through so-called trade union passports, whereby workers' unions in the country of origin make links to the unions in destination countries.

### **3.7 Persons with disabilities**

- 3.7.1 We have identified experiences of affiliates in the region that could serve as a basis to better articulate PSI's work. We will begin by disseminating norms, covenants and legislation that promote the rights of persons with disabilities. In the coming years, we intend to organize a regional seminar for the exchange of best practices that will result in the formation and organization of a working group within PSI.
- 3.7.2 At the same time, we will act with vigilance in relation to compliance with quotas in public hiring processes for persons with disabilities, in the countries where they exist, and fight for their implementation where there is still no legislation to guarantee them.
- 3.7.3 We will also work to encourage unions to adapt their physical spaces to ensure accessibility for people with mobility difficulties.

## **4. Organizing to respond to current challenges**

***(PoA 2.2.1) Organising workers to build union power starts in the workplace. Unions must build strong relationships with members and potential members by identifying the issues that matter and demonstrating that union activity can make a difference. Unions must identify and train workplace leaders and activists, strengthen local branches and recruit new members.***

***(PoA 5.1.1) The protection of workers' and trade union rights is a core activity for PSI. The rights to freedom of association, collective bargaining and the right to strike are vital to improving and protecting wages and working conditions.***

### **4.1 Union rights**

- 4.1.1 This is the union model we defend. We know genuine union struggle is only possible when workers' right to organize and freedom of association is fully guaranteed. It is unacceptable that the vast majority of countries

in our region have not yet regulated collective bargaining in public services at all levels of government. Continuing to fight for trade union rights for all workers providing public services will be our priority.

- 4.1.2 We will fight any attack against workers' ability to organize, including changes that make it more difficult to financially sustain our organizations. We will strengthen the defense of International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions in the region, in particular, 151 and 154. We will also work on agreements 100, 111, 156, 169 and 183, which deal with gender equality and the fight against discrimination at work. We will continue to fight for the adoption and subsequent ratification of the Convention on Gender-Based Violence in the Workplace.
- 4.1.3 We will continue with our policy of broadening the avenues of complaints for violation of the International Human Rights Treaties in the area of trade union rights, taking our complaints before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the social dialogue forums of the OAS, regional and sub-regional socio-labor integration bodies, and all bodies in which we can express our struggle to defend workers.

## **4.2 Training and education**

- 4.2.1 In addition to supporting national and local struggles, PSI's main role will be to establish links between these struggles and the global policies we work on. It is virtually impossible for a specific local or national policy not to be derived in some way from a global policy although in many cases it is also be from good innovative local and national best practices. Either way, we will use training and education projects to train leaders to understand this global policy and thus support each affiliate's capacity to understand its national problems.

## **4.3 Communication**

- 4.3.1 Building a communications strategy is key to leveraging our outlets in terms of content, form and reach, so that we can quickly support struggles and keep our entire membership informed. Communications are strategic for promotion of and sharing information on urgent actions. They are also necessary for the dissemination of material to affiliates on the most important issues of PSI. Effective use of social networks is fundamental, something that we will improve in the next period.

## **4.4 SUBRACs y NCCs**

- 4.4.1 We want PSI to have a strong and dynamic structure. At the annual meetings of the SUBRACs, we must integrate all the affiliates of the respective subregion. If this is not possible, we will work to ensure that all of them at least participate in the pre-meetings of the National Coordinating Committees. This ensures good organization and union democracy by promoting the core debates of our organization from the grassroots to the highest structures of PSI.

## **4.5 Solidarity Fund**

- 4.5.1 We want to expand initiatives that support economically disadvantaged trade unions so that they can participate in PSI meetings and activities. Following the example of the experiences that already exist in Africa and Asia, we want to create a fund in the Americas that facilitates this participation and guarantees resources in the event of natural disasters in the countries of the region. We propose that each affiliate contributes to this fund with a small percentage of its contribution to the PSI.

## **4.6 Sectoral work**

- 4.6.1 Sectoral work is responsible for more directly integrating workers in different countries and building a stronger identity for each specific sector within PSI. We will continue to organize sectoral work.
- 4.6.2 In the last period, we noted important advances due to our sectoral work. Specifically, an overall increase in the number of PSI members. Another important consequence was the increase in PSI participation in regional activities, meetings and conferences including ILO meetings. A third result was the linkage of these sectors to the overall PSI policy.
- 4.6.3 Unlike World PSI, we currently have ten sectors / sub-sectors with different levels of organization in the region. Most sectors have formed confederations that function in articulated fashion with PSI, albeit independently, with their own leadership and statutes.
- 4.6.4 These confederations present challenges that have not yet been resolved. One challenge is how to integrate general unions that represent workers from multiple sectors. We also need to consider existing differences in trade union practices, language and culture between our seven subregions - Central America, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic; Brazil; Canada; the Caribbean; the Southern Cone; the U.S; and Andean Countries. A third challenge is how to bring the statutes of these organizations into harmony with the statutes of PSI, including the integration of all members as formal affiliates. Another challenge is how to ensure that the priorities developed in each sector are compatible with overall PSI priorities including fighting free trade agreements, defending trade union rights and fiscal justice, among others.

4.6.5

### Proposal 1:

We will continue organizing by sector while discussing integration between PSI policy and our regional reality. We will improve mechanisms for participation of sectoral bodies in the structure of PSI. The debate about how to do this should be a priority for the Inter-American Regional Executive Committee (IAMREC) to develop in the next period.

Proposal 2:

In this sense, we will establish the Intersectoral Advisory Committee of the region in order to develop strategies for harmonization, joint prioritization, complementarity and information with the participation of those responsible for the different sectors.