



Ferney-Voltaire, 13 November 2008

Dear sisters and brothers,

On 15 November, heads of state of the G20 countries meet in Washington to discuss the world's financial crisis. On behalf of all public services workers, PSI demands that governments of the G20 take specific and concrete steps to lead us out of the crisis and to resolve the serious anomalies which led us there.

PSI contributed to the Global Unions statement presented to summit participants in Washington on 14 November (attached). I urge our affiliates, especially in G20 countries, to communicate this statement to their Head of Government, their Finance Minister and to members of parliament. It can also serve in discussions with labour centres and with NGOs who fight alongside us for social justice.

PSI specifically urges national governments to increase public investments, both as a means to avert a recession, to create and improve jobs, and to (re)build their public services and infrastructure. Such programmes will also offer unique opportunities to incorporate environmental sustainability priorities, something which is difficult in sectors where short-term profits are the key driver, due to mass privatisations.

We call on governments to live up to their responsibilities to deliver quality public services to all citizens, whether it is in water and sanitation, health, energy, education or public transport. These are among the core public services which provide the infrastructure that make our communities healthy and fair. We warn against further tax cuts for the wealthy and budget cuts in public services.

The Global Unions statement recommends four main points of action:

- A major recovery plan to stabilise global capital markets, move economies rapidly out of recession, diminish risks of a global depression and get back on the track of decent work.
- Establish a new structure for governing the global economy.
- Ensure that the new structure has effective oversight structures and measures.
- Combat the explosion of inequality in income distribution - on every level- that lies behind this crisis.

This crisis is not likely to be resolved soon. A number of economies are moving into recession. Our challenge is how to shape the policies for change. With our combined efforts – unions at national and local levels and PSI at regional and global levels - we have the best chance to pressure our governments into taking the right actions. I will call on a number of unions to assist me in shaping PSI actions. I will ask National Coordinating Committees of PSI affiliates to put this on their agendas and to feed back to me. Together, we need to make sure the needs of our members, our families and our communities are not only heard, but acted upon.

For further PSI input on this issue, see the PSI website www.world-psi.org.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Waldorff', written in a cursive style.

Peter Waldorff
General Secretary