



PSI - Utility Bulletin

Asia-Pacific Region

March 2008

Women call for access to safe water, says Public Services International (PSI) - International Women's Day, 8 March 2008, marks the launch of PSI's 'Water, Women and Workers' campaign. This two-week campaign will emphasise the vital importance of access to safe, publicly funded water supplies to sustainable development, gender equality and a decent life for all – especially women. The days of action will continue until 22 March, International Water Day. The 'Water, Women and Workers' campaign highlights the importance of access to water as essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In many developing countries, women and girls walk on average six kilometres each day to fetch water. They carry around 20 kilograms of water a day. Apart from the sheer physical toll, this is time they do not spend on other activities, such as school and paid work.

Peter Waldorff, General Secretary of PSI says, "*If women only have time to focus on daily survival, they cannot build the necessary skills or engage in productive activity to help move themselves and their families out of poverty. They cannot enjoy a decent standard of life. This is why, on the occasion of International Women's Day, public sector unions around the world are calling on governments to reaffirm their commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and to reduce by half the number of people without access to water by the year 2015. It is unethical that persons or institutions get rich from the sale of water while 1.8 million children die each year because they do not have access to safe water and sanitation*", continues Waldorff.

<http://www.world-psi.org/TemplateEn.cfm?Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=19885>

The United Nations officially launched the International Year of Sanitation to accelerate progress for 2.6 billion people world wide who are without proper sanitation facilities. The International Year of Sanitation logo was unveiled and the IYS public service announcement as well as the message of Gareth Thomas of the Department for International Development UK viewed. The launch of IYS, which runs through 2008, was organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in collaboration with the UN-Water Task Force on Sanitation.

<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/flashindex.html>

PSI resists water This year's 22 March World Water Day is renamed the World Sanitation Day in recognition of the International Year of Sanitation 2008. Modern sanitation (removal and treatment of sewage) is arguably the most important ever advance in public health - an important component in reducing waterborne diseases, essential for safe, reliable water supply. Water is of fundamental importance to everyone on this planet, yet sanitation is the lost cousin of the water sector.

<http://www.world-psi.org/TemplateEn.cfm?Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=19963>

Privatisation in Turkey during World Sanitation Day weekend, PSI staff meet with a number of unions and activists in Istanbul, Turkey to plan the next year's activities in support of public water. David Boys, PSI Utilities Officer explains: "The next World Water Forum will be held in Istanbul in 2009 and we are extremely excited to be working one year ahead with Turkish unions, engineers and NGOs. Public water here is under the threat of outright privatisation. We call on the Turkish government to halt its inappropriate privatisation policies. And we send a particular message to the governments of Canada and the USA: Stop blocking UN efforts to declare Water as a Human Right!" <http://www.world-psi.org/TemplateEn.cfm?Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=19963>

UNISON, sponsored a research paper by the PSI Research Unit, Public sector trade unions are calling on their governments to take the necessary steps to resolve the urgent water and sanitation problem. As part of this effort, PSI and UK union, UNISON, sponsored a research paper by the PSI Research Unit, entitled, "[Sewerage Works – Public investment in sewers saves lives](#)". This paper clearly outlines the need for systematic public investment in sewer systems for all urban populations. It concludes that ad-hoc septic tanks and outdoor latrines are not viable in the long-term.

Philippine Cities Show the Way to Dynamic Development A dynamic development process has been taking place in the country's cities, led by the League of Cities of the Philippines. Since the Bank introduced its Cities Development Project

in the country in 1999, Philippine cities have become the hub of creative development activities that have demonstrated the willingness and ability of local governments to take the development agenda into their own hands. Nine years later, the League's commitment to sharing the benefits of the City Development Strategies program with as many local cities as possible is bearing fruit. Read more

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21686278~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html> source world bank

Thailand - PSI believes the establishment of a civil servant union would benefit in anti-corruption, democracy, political, social and economic development .Mr. Saneh TANTISANOH the chairman of PSI-Thai Affiliates Council (PTAC) disclosed the outcome of the PSI South East Asia Advisory Committee Meeting held in KL, Malaysia during 12-15 March 2008 that Mr. Katsuhiko Sato, Public Services International Asia-Pacific Regional Organization (PSI-APRO), regional secretary expressed his concerned on the political situation in Thailand "There is no friendly atmosphere for democracy even though this government is just recently elected. Also the new constitution 2008 guarantees the right to organize of civil servants in Thailand as comment in article 64 paragraph 2. But the Thai government had expressed their views tried to prohibit or obstruct civil servant in organizing their union.

http://psithai.no-ip.org/psithai/epsithai/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=98&Itemid=9

PSI & ADB – The public services international Asia Pacific regional office has reached agreement with the ADB to undertake a joint research project, around electricity industry reform. More advice will follow once the joint working committee has meet .

Harassment and violence at work - The European inter-professional social partners BUSINESSEUROPE-UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC have signed a Framework Agreement on harassment and violence at work The agreement aims at increasing the awareness and attentiveness of employers, workers and their representatives to workplace harassment and violence. It also aims to provide employers, workers and their representatives at all levels with an action-oriented framework to identify, prevent and manage problems of harassment and violence at work. Full statement at -

http://www.epsu.org/IMG/pdf/2007-11-27_-_Draft_Joint_statement_violence_at_work_AMR.pdf

ILO 28 April World Day for Safety & Health The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has initiated its 28 April website for this year, which now includes materials it has produced for its selected themes: "**My life, my work, my safe work - Managing risk in the work environment: Managing Risk in the Work Environment**". A special report on the subject is now available, as well as a poster, bookmark and postcard, produced in English, French and Spanish:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/worldday/index.htm>

ILO News - More women are working than ever before, but they are also more likely than men to get low-productivity, low-paid and vulnerable jobs, with no social protection, basic rights nor voice at work according to a new report by the International Labour Office (ILO) issued for International Women*s Day.

http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Press_releases/lang--en/WCMS_091102/index.htm

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is in the process of adopting a core labour standards requirement for all of its loans (this follows the example set within the World Bank) The new draft

Environmental and Social Policy, which contains the requirement, was posted today on the EBRD's web site:<http://www.ebrd.org/about/policies/enviro/policy/review/draft.pdf>

"EBRD Performance Requirement 2: Labour and Working Conditions" is on pages 20-23 of the policy. The new standard resembles IFC's performance standard on labour which took effect in May 2006. However the EBRD made a few modifications which could make the requirement weaker in some circumstances than the IFC version, notably concerning the all-important clause on freedom of association.

The EBRD has invited comments on its new policy until 9 April and Global Unions will use the opportunity to submit recommendations for improvement. The EBRD is holding public consultations in six cities in late March and early April as indicated at this web page:

<http://www.ebrd.org/about/policies/enviro/policy/review/index.htm> Peter Bakvis ITUC/Global Unions - Washington Office

PSI Asia Pacific young workers web site at: <http://www.psiapoyouthnetwork.org/>

Energy Networks Association – Australia ena update http://www.ena.asn.au/udocs/ena_032708_142643.pdf

Renewable Energy Focus magazine for the latest on renewable energy at <http://www.renewableenergyfocus.com>

France The CGT and FSU public service trade union federations have called a day of action and strikes on 29 March in defence of the pensions system including retaining the right to retire at 60 and the right to early retirement in difficult or dangerous occupations. The unions also point out that the government failure to address the decline in purchasing power in the public sector will also have an impact on the level of pensions (advice EPSU)

Belgium - Electricity distribution workers in the Wallonia region have been involved in two weeks of industrial action involving working to rule, in protest at pay differentials in the industry. Unions say that new pay rates introduced since 2002 mean that many new employees are paid 30%-40% less than other workers who were taken on before 2002. Although the action has been called off and negotiations started, unions have not ruled out further action (advice EPSU)

EU PROGRAM TO HELP PACIFIC POWER UTILITIES Focus on upgrading skills for energy efficiency - SUVA, Fiji (Fiji Times, March 14, 2008) - Power utilities in Pacific, African and Caribbean states will soon benefit from a new project to build capacity in energy resource management in the region. The European Union-funded project Capacity Support for Sustainable Management of Energy Resources in the Pacific region will be implemented by the Pacific Power Association over the next four years. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat deputy regional authorising officer Patricia Sachs-Cornish said the objective of the project was to improve efficiency of power utilities in the Pacific. <http://www.fijitimes.com>.

Pacific Power Association The PPA is a regional, non-governmental, non-profit organization to promote the direct cooperation of the Pacific island power utilities in technical training, exchange of information, sharing of senior management and engineering expertise and other activities of benefit to the members. PPA has also reported on Fijian electricity project at **EU SIGNS FINANCIAL AGREEMENT WITH PIFS PROVIDING €1.2M FOR THE PPA TO CONDUCT THREE REGIONAL PROJECTS** <<GO 14 MARCH 2008

Water reform in Fiji – PSI's Oceania regional advisory committee recently received reports on the Fijian government's plans for reform of the water industry, including broader participation by the private sector. The reports to the Oceania committee including expectations of government privatization

ADB - FIJI ISLANDS LOAN AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT FOR THE SUVA–NAUSORI WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE PROJECT - http://www.adb.org/Documents/RRPs/FIJ/rrp_fij_32200.pdf These and other ADB – Fiji Islands projects for electricity and other services , including a full list of projects from the year 1996 to 2008 , located at <http://www.adb.org/projects/summaries.asp?browse=1&ctry=FIJ&type=&query=&p=ctryfij> – source ABD web

Australia - The state government in NSW is continuing to argue for privatisation of the retail and generation arms with the Union movement continuing to Campaign against the moves latest campaign argument can be located – <http://www.usu.org.au/usu/artman/publish/stoptheselloff.shtml>
<http://www.etunsw.asn.au/index.htm>
<http://www.stoptheselloff.org.au>
http://cpsu-spsf.asn.au/latest_news/general/20080109_privatisation.html
<http://council.labor.net.au/>

BIG BUSINESS PRIVATISATION BACKERS PUT PROFITS AHEAD OF CONSUMERS - Australia (NSW) The move by the business lobby to establish a pro-electricity privatisation alliance highlights that big business will be the big winners if the proposal goes ahead, Unions NSW said. The groups calling themselves 'Alliance for NSW Future' - including property developers, business chambers and lobbyists all have a self-interest in privatising power. The establishment of this group should send alarm bells through the community - because, just as they did with WorkChoices, the business lobby is pushing their own agenda at the expense of the interests of working families. (Advise from unions NSW) – Unions NSW media <http://council.labor.net.au/>

NSW GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE (NSW) Response to the Energy Consultative Reference Committee's terms of reference - 29 February 2008. This response has been provided at the request of the Consultative Reference Committee to assist with its deliberations and report back to the Government by 7 March 2008. The response can be downloaded here: <http://www.nsw.gov.au/energy/index.aspx?id=97af5197-b2eb-4968-ab65-efa06>

WATER reform in Australia – the state governments of New South Wales and Tasmania are undertaking Water industry reform, which in part is focused around removing responsibilities from local government and placing them under state owned

corporations and creating playing filled for private sector participation – in NSW the Union movement is campaigning against the reforms fearing lost of local employment, community in put and more participation by the private sector through PPP's .

Launch of the Aqua Publica Europea network On 18 March, the Water Pavilion in Paris hosted the launch of the Aqua Publica Europea network, the European association for public water management. The network brings together European public water and sanitation operators in order to promote public water management at a European level and beyond. It will enable an exchange of information, expertise and collaboration between public water companies and/or local authorities. Its aim is to encourage scientific, technical, economical and administrative actions relating to water management. [Read more](#) [source PSI bulletin](#)

Labour and the Challenges of Globalization The publication by Pluto Press critically examines the responses of workers to the challenges posed by the neoliberal restructuring of the global economy. The study identifies new or renewed labour responses among formal economy workers as well as those on the periphery, including street-traders, homeworkers and other 'informal economy workers. The book contains ten country studies, including India, China, South Korea, Japan, Germany, Sweden, Canada, South Africa, Argentina and Brazil. It argues that workers and trade unions, through intensive collaboration with other social forces across the world, can challenge the logic of neoliberal globalization. The book can be ordered from the Pluto Press website <http://www.plutobooks.com/cgi-local/whatsnew.pl>. To benefit from a 20% discount, use the promotional discount code PLULABOUR before going to checkout - [source PSI news bulletin](#)

Greg Mclean
PSI - APREC-Utilities Network Coordinator &
PSI - Public Sector Working Group Member.
E-mail gmclean@syd.asu.asn.au
Fax 61 2 9283 9270
mobile phone 61 419 796 801

This e-mail and any files transmitted with it are privileged and confidential information intended for the use of the addressee. The confidentiality and/or privilege in this e-mail is not waived, lost or destroyed if it has been transmitted to you in error. If you have received this e-mail in error you must (a) not disseminate, copy or take any action in reliance on it; (b) please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail to the sender; and (c) please delete the original e-mail.