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MIGRATION IS A TRADE UNION ISSUE

On the occasion of the UN-declared International Migrants' Day, PSI joins the ITUC, Global Unions, civil society and the international community in celebrating the human rights of all migrant workers and members of their families worldwide.

This International Migrants' Day celebration comes at a time when more and more workers are migrating across the globe in search for work, set against the backdrop of an economic crisis and rising unemployment.

"In the public sector, health care workers are leaving their profession to become migrant workers abroad. PSI and its affiliates are working very hard to defend better pay and better working conditions so that health care workers, a majority of them women, have the option to stay," says Peter Waldorff, PSI General Secretary. *"However, if and when they eventually decide to migrate due to lack of decent work opportunities in their home countries, we have to ensure that their rights are protected, they have the proper information and that they are able to join trade unions in the destination countries,"* he adds.

"For PSI, we see migration as a trade union issue. It is very important that migrant workers' rights are fully protected. Ensuring trade union rights for migrant workers is fundamental in fighting abuse, exploitation and exclusion of migrant workers, particularly undocumented migrants," explains Waldorff.

In the health sector, PSI is re-launching the campaign for the adoption of the WHO Code of Practice in the International Recruitment of Health Personnel. A draft Code of Practice is currently being developed by the WHO and will be tabled for adoption in the upcoming World Health Assembly in Geneva in May 2009.

Since 2005 when it first launched its campaign, PSI and its affiliates have contributed to the development of the WHO Code of Practice as well as in the establishment of various regional and national Codes of Practice. PSI is part of the Global Health Workforce Alliance, an international cooperation that seeks to address the global health workforce shortage and is responsible in the development of the WHO Code. In Europe, PSI's European organisation, the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) has established a Code of Practice with the employers in the hospital sector. In the Pacific, PSI affiliates have lobbied and made inputs in the development of the Pacific Code of Practice. PSI affiliate, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), joined the coalition of professional associations, trade unions and employers in establishing the USA Voluntary Code of Practice for Foreign-Educated Nurses. All these initiatives are building the momentum towards the establishment of a global Code.

"From today, December 18 to May 2009, PSI and its affiliates have important work to do in lobbying the governments and the international community in supporting the adoption of the Code of Practice. We value the importance of the Code in setting in place principles and mechanisms to equitably address the global health workforce shortage, protect the rights of migrant health workers and ensure the regulation of private recruitment agencies. We have fought several cases of abuses perpetuated by these unscrupulous recruitment agents. It is time to end them," stressed Waldorff.

[Join the PSI Campaign for the Ethical Recruitment of Health Workers](#)

Public Services International (PSI) is a global trade union federation that represents 20 million women and men working in the public services around the world. It has some 600 affiliated unions in more than 150 countries. PSI is an autonomous body, which works in association with federations covering other sectors of the workforce and with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). PSI is an officially recognised non-governmental organisation for the public sector within the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and has consultative status with ECOSOC and observer status with other UN bodies such as UNCTAD and UNESCO.