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# A Global Agenda for Quality Public Services

12-14 October 2010

Geneva International Conference Centre, Switzerland

## International conference and action plan

If the world is to emerge from recession and social inequality it must do so with a fresh vision of the future, built upon principles of decency, democracy and quality of life for all.

That is why Global Unions are putting the focus on improving standards and planning for a future in which public service values are at the core of human development.

Citizens the world over yearn for quality public services and the right to access them. Otherwise there is little hope for hundreds of millions who need the Millennium Development Goals to provide them with health, education, and a life free of want and despair.

In rich countries, too, the values of public services are keys to protection of the social wage, social security, health, infrastructure and pensions.

Public services benefit all workers, whether they work in the public or private sectors. Public service values are of concern to trade unions. They protect our members. They nourish and support our communities.

But this does not happen automatically. We fail if public services are badly run. We need quality services for quality life. Unions want to work with all stakeholders in civil society to develop public services for the future. We can contribute with our skill, knowledge and energy.

Building a culture of quality in public services means asking searching questions about the future.

It also means taking a critical look at past policies that made the rich richer and the poor poorer.

How do we fund public services when so much tax payers' money has been used to bail out collapsing banks and to maintain ruinous policies of power and profit without responsibility?

How do we create a new public service landscape with decent workplaces, astute and thoughtful management, and a skilled and confident workforce?



What are the connections between quality public services and sustainable development?

This conference, in the name of the global labour movement, and together with other stakeholders, especially organizations of civil society, will explore how we rise to these challenges.

There will be sharp analysis, inspirational speaking and intelligent consideration of the changes we must make. There will be a rich mix of opinion from all corners of the globe and from all branches of academic, economic and working life. We have a unique opportunity to map out a new agenda for the future of public services, and one in which all working people have a stake.

### **Looking forward**

The conference will chart an agenda for the future – a new direction for quality public services, and strategies for unions to take the lead in nations and communities around the world. It will adopt a *Charter on Universal Access to Quality Public Services*, and an *Action Plan*.

### **Reaching out**

In many ways, this will be a unique event. For the first time, the International Confederation of national labour centres around the world, the Global Union Federations covering all major sectors of the economy, and the labour movement's consultative arm at the OECD, will bring affiliates together for a common cause.

And this will be more than a conference set in one place. From the international city of Geneva, using the communication tools of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the conference will reach out to national union leaders, their local branches, and their members, around the globe, in real time. Global Unions are seeking the cooperation of major global media networks to take the debate out to the world. National and local leaders and activists will be able to follow the discussions through on-line streaming over the internet. We will look into creative ways of providing for interaction with activists in their home countries. This will also be about new approaches to global union communications and advocacy, with flow on for union organizing at the grass-roots.

## **Quality Public Services are important in all our communities:**

*Education ... Emergency and security services ...  
Health ... Municipal services ...  
Postal and communication services ... Public administration ...  
Public media ... Social services ... Transport ...  
Utilities and renewable energies ... Water and sanitation ...*