**Expert meeting on enhancing capacity-buildingfor local governments to incorporate human rights into all their work**

**Session 1: Human rights cities – Enhancing capacity-building for local and regionalgovernments**

**PSI speaking points**

(28 August 2023)

2 minutes

Thank you Chair, Excellencies, distinguished Delegates, Secretariat,

Public Services International (PSI) is the Global Union Federation representing over 30 million public service workers worldwide at all level of government, including health, care, social services; public emergency response, firefighting; water and sanitation; waste and electricity; migrant reception and employment services; public and social housing; and many more.

Our members in local government are mostly women on the frontline of the multi-crises, the essential workers who continued working throughout the Covid pandemic often at the cost of their own lives; and translate public policies on the ground and localise the SDGs daily. However, they often work with inadequate staffing levels; in precarious, dangerous, unsafe and unhealthy employment conditions; in many cases lacking basic human and labour rights.

**If local governments are to effectively uphold and implement human rights in their territories and communities, this implies ensuring that those same human rights are fully upheld for their staff, including labour and union rights, which are human rights.**

We urge this meeting to include the above considerations as well as the following 4 operational recommendations in the report:

1. States should channel adequate levels of public investment to build local government capacity: not only physical infrastructure, but human capacity, as professional, trained workers in adequate numbers in decent work, as per the definition of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which underpins SDG8.
2. Devolution need to be adequately funded, strengthen local government to staff and operate properly; and must provide national industrial relations frameworks conducive of constructive social dialogue between local government employers and representative worker organisations.
3. The implementation of human rights is a core duty of States and should not be depleted through austerity cuts, outsourcing, privatisation; and the systematic use of private consultants. Local government capacity must be (re)build in-house, including through the de-privatisation and (re)municipalisation of public services.
4. Include public service workers’ representatives in the design and implementation of public policies and training curricula for local government employees at all level of government, as they are the frontliners and experts of human rights policy implementation in cities and territories.

I thank you for your attention and will add some points in the afternoon.

Related resources:

* [Inclusive multi-level governance: the case for the meaningful involvement of local and regional governments and public service trade unions in the multilateral system of the future](https://www.globalpolicy.org/sites/default/files/Multi-level%20governance_final.pdf), in Spotlight on Global Multilateralism “Perspectives on the future of international cooperation in times of multiple crises”, Global Policy Forum (2023)
* [Trade union rights, employment conditions and labour relations in the Local and Regional Government sector](https://pop-umbrella.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/03ef5029-adb7-4071-a655-bc2914dc1176_2021_EN_LRG_Conf_Brief_7_Indesign.pdf), PSI LRGNext2021 Brief #7 (2021)
* [SDG 11 – Tackling the challenges of global urbanization: flagship local government initiatives to meet the SDGs](https://www.2030spotlight.org/sites/default/files/spot2019/Spotlight_Innenteil_2019_web_sdg11.pdf), in Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2018, “Exploring new policy pathways” (2018)

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