

Twentieth Executive Board Meeting, 4 – 6 February 2003

COOPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICES INTERNATIONAL (PSI): ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL GLBT FORUM

1. Introduction

The first EI triennial report on gay and lesbian education personnel published in 2001 has shown that in many countries lesbian and gay teachers continue to face discrimination and harassment, including violence and abuse, as a result of their sexual orientation.

The 2nd World Conference of Gay and Lesbian Unionists in Sydney, held on 31 October – 2 November 2002, confirmed that only in a few (European) countries equal rights have been achieved for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. But even in those countries discrimination has not disappeared. The conference advocated the integration of the defence of gay and lesbian workers' rights into national and international trade unions' structures and programmes. Most persons attending the conference were rank and file members of EI and PSI unions in Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and Europe.

EI and PSI appear the most active global union federations in developing policies and programs aimed at supporting their national unions in promoting the rights of their gay and lesbian members.

2. Promoting GLBT rights

While many EI/PSI member unions in the industrial countries have adopted anti-discrimination policies, still too many remain inactive. In some regions the internationals have even encountered unwillingness to fight discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Furthermore, it should be noted that GLBT rights are not covered by any UN convention or recommendation, not even the ILO Convention against Discrimination.

The above gives reason for both Internationals to step up their activities aimed at promoting GLBT rights by:

- ◆ Creating awareness among EI and PSI member organisations which have not yet developed anti-discrimination policies;
- ◆ Documenting cases of discrimination and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation in the public sector, including education sector. Such cases will include denial of promotion, dismissal, unwarranted transfer, unequal treatment in labour conditions and harassment or violence against lesbian and gay teachers or education workers;
- ◆ Organising training programs;
- ◆ Advocating the inclusion of GLBT rights in the ILO Convention against Discrimination and other international conventions and recommendations;
- ◆ Seeking the active co-operation of all Global Unions.

(These activities would be in accordance with the resolution “Protecting the Rights of Lesbian and Gay Education Personnel” that was adopted by EI’s Second World Congress in Washington D.C., July 1998)

3. International GLBT Forum

With the purpose of providing guidance to the the two internationals in undertaking the above activities it is proposed that an **International GLBT Forum** be established composed of all interested EI/PSI member unions (or their GLNBT caucuses/groups/committees). The Forum would be an advisory body of the EI and PSI Executive Committees. It would meet in conjunction with the World Congresses of EI and PSI, and as often as the Executive Committees of EI and PSI would deem it necessary.

An important objective of the Forum would also be to facilitate an exchange of views and information on the situation in the countries represented on the Forum and on the activities undertaken by member unions.

To prepare for the first International GLBT Forum – which is to be held in conjunction with EI’s World Congress in July 2004 – **a working group should be formed of EI and PSI member organisations with active Gay and Lesbian groups:**

EI (still to be determined): NEA, AFT, CSQ, NUT, GEW, AOb, AEU, NTEU, NZEI
PSI (still to be determined): ADSME, CUPE, UNISON, Abvakabo, ...

4. Budget

For (a) activities mentioned in paragraph 2, (b) a meeting of the EI/PSI working group in 2003 and (c) the International GLBT Forum in 2004 an amount of € 20,000 should be allocated.