

# **EI/PSI SEXUAL DIVERSITY FORUM**

## **Background**

PSI and EI held a forum on sexual diversity prior to the July 2004 EI Congress in Porto Alegre, Brazil. A declaration and proposals for action on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) workers were drawn up at this event and presented to the EI and PSI. In April 2005, the EI Secretariat developed a draft plan of action, which was adopted at its Executive Board in April 2005 and EI was requested to seek external funding for some of the proposals, in cooperation with PSI.

PSI and EI have agreed to coordinate work on sexual diversity issues and EI, which has dedicated staff time, agreed to take the lead in developing and implementing the programme and in applying for external funding.

## **Vision**

The declaration adopted at the Porto Alegre meeting recalls the importance of the equal and inalienable rights of all human beings. It is concerned that the rights of sexual minorities are not explicitly recognized, allowing discrimination and inequality based on sexual orientation and gender identity to continue. It recognises the diversity of LGBT communities and lifestyles and asserts that the workplace must be a space free of discrimination of any kind and that trade unions must play an important role therein. It acknowledges that campaigns for equal rights for LGBT workers will be strengthened if they are integrated successfully into broader rights campaigns at national, regional and international level.

## **Plan of Activities**

### **EI/PSI propose to**

- 1) promote the setting up of sexual diversity networks at national level, comprised of EI and PSI affiliates, and to facilitate communications and sharing of resources and information. National networks will be encouraged to develop policies and capacity building programmes, promote respect for the rights of LGBT workers and take part in coalitions promoting legislative reforms both at national, regional and international level.
- 2) upgrade their existing webpages, link them together and provide a regular supply of news, resources and updates on the work of national networks.
- 3) establish a Steering Group of 8-10 members drawn from the Executive Boards of each organization and representatives of PSI Women's Committee and EI's Equal Opportunities Committee. The Steering Group would operate through e-mail consultations with one meeting planned for 2006 and 2007 and seek to engage other global unions in its work.
- 4) participate in the 3rd World Workers' Out Conference in Montreal, Quebec, July 26 - 29 2006 and organize a side event on the role of public sector trade unions in promoting LGBT rights at the workplace; and encourage affiliates to support the conference by sending delegations.
- 5) agree to hold a 2nd international forum on sexual diversity at the work place in partnership with EI prior to the PSI World Congress in September 2007.

### **The Executive Board is invited to:**

- 1) **note this report;**
- 2) **seek nominations for the Steering Group;**
- 3) **endorse the proposal to participate at the 3rd World Workers Out Conference in 2006;**
- 4) **agree to hold a 2nd international forum on sexual diversity at the workplace with EI prior to the PSI Congress in 2007.**