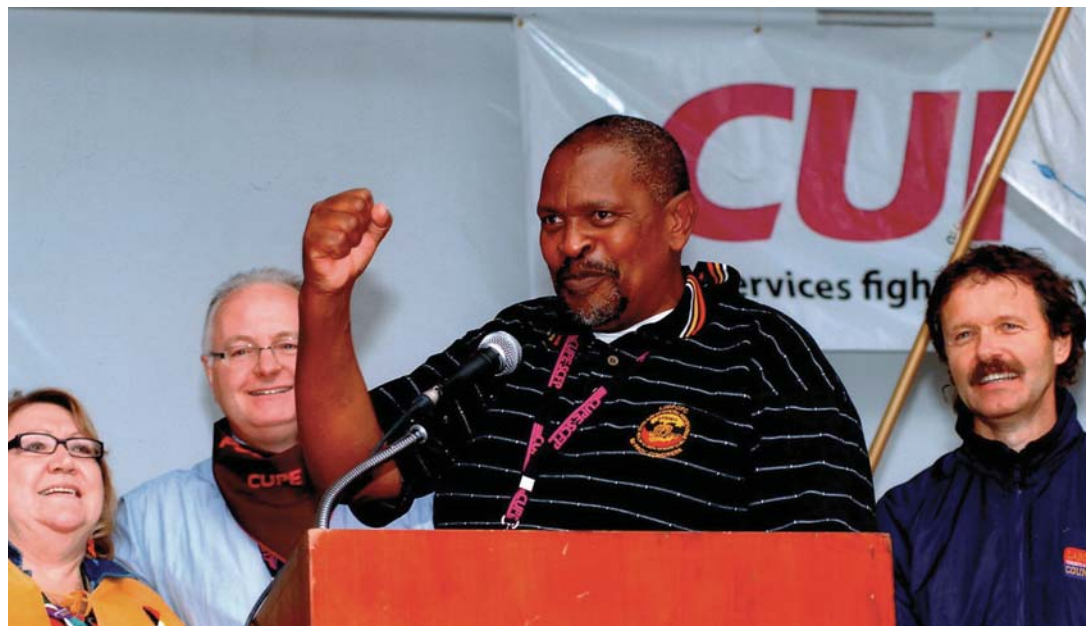




Autumn
2007

Global Justice

International guests inspired, helped organize



Petrus Mashishi, SAMWU president, speaks at CUPE anti-poverty rally in Toronto.

OUR 15 international guests went beyond the call of duty during national convention Oct. 15-19, 2007. They actively participated and assisted in convention functions.

On the first day, Peter Waldorff, the new general secretary of Public Services International, addressed convention and talked of his plans to reach out to affiliates like CUPE around the world.

Petrus Mashishi, president of the South African Municipal Workers' Union, spoke at the anti-poverty rally. He told the crowd how public services help beat back poverty in his country. Other guests, who had joined the march to the rally, cheered him on.

Earlier in the convention, Norma Stephenson, president of UNISON,

the public sector union in the United Kingdom, inspired the women's caucus offering her support.

One guest from each country spoke at an international dinner, bringing powerful words of encouragement that reinforced the importance of solidarity and justice globally. Each also spoke at the global justice forum, focusing on privatization, human rights and international solidarity.

Guests met with many delegates to discuss mutual concerns. In one case, the meeting may have inspired an organizing drive. University workers talked with South African guests, who told them that CUPE was the union to join if they were serious about international solidarity.

Global Justice is published by the Canadian Union of Public Employees and is available online at www.cupe.ca/globaljustice. Send suggestions to rverzuh@cupe.ca

CUPE

Oxfam, CUPE team up to fight poverty

CANADA'S oldest university provided the backdrop for the launch of Oxfam Canada and CUPE's 'Public Services - For all - Fight Poverty' campaign in Halifax.

Oxfam supporters and students at the University of King's College carried 10-litre buckets of water around a parking lot. The action symbolized the daily struggle faced by women and girls around the world who must walk up to six km to find clean water for their families and communities.

Oxfam and CUPE are working together in Canada and around the world. The goal is to ensure that everyone has access to basic human rights like clean water, working toilets, classrooms with teachers and clinics with nurses to empower their lives – especially women and girls.

For more about the campaign, go to <http://www.oxfam.ca/what-we-do/campaigns/open-for-all-public-services-fight-poverty>.



CUPE leaders write Colombian president

CUPE has written to Colombian president Dr. Álvaro Uribe Vélez to protest the kidnapping and torture of Andres Damian Florez Rodriquez and to support the demands of SINALTRAINAL, the trade union representing workers at the Coca Cola bottling plant.

As SINALTRAINAL president Luis Javier Correa Suarez has stated, this recent act of terror reveals that Coca Cola has a policy of violating human rights. The violation against a young college student, the son of a Coca Cola worker and leader of the union, would not be tolerated in other democratic countries.

"We are also concerned about

the ongoing threats against other unions, grassroots social movements and Polo Democratico Alternativo (PDA) candidates," said the letter signed by National President Paul Moist and National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Généreux.

They noted that a recent survey by the International Trade Union Council shows that in 2006 Colombia saw the murder of more than 75 unionists.

Register your protest with the Colombian Embassy, Ottawa, Fax (613) 230-4416, e-mail: embajada@embajadacolombia.ca. Copy Sinaltrainal Internacional, areainternacional@sinaltrainal.org.

South African project update

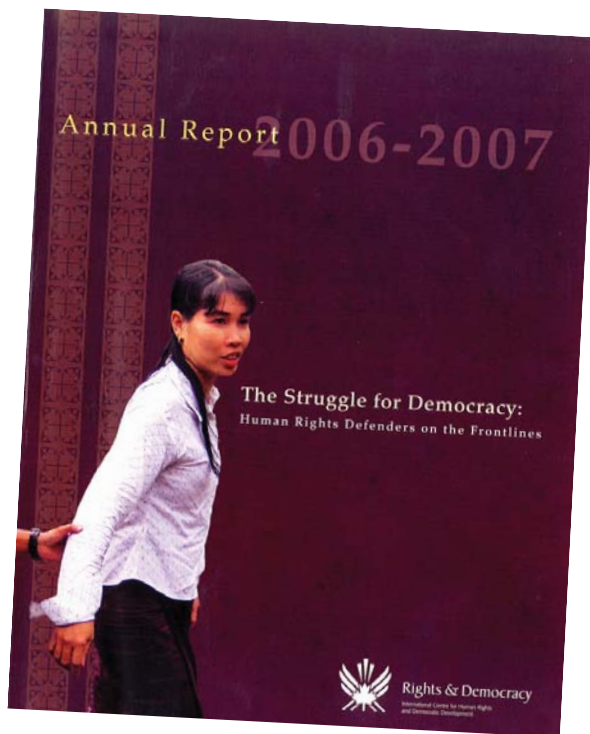
CUPE will move into the third phase of a multi-year project with the South African Municipal Workers' Union in early 2008. This phase continues the work of organizing women workers and encourages news ideas for providing service to them.

"We are excited about the new initiatives that this project will embrace in our continuing relationship with SAMWU," said Anthony Pizzino, CUPE's research director responsible for the union's international work.

The phase involves a national workshop to take place next spring in South Africa. CUPE and SAMWU staff members are in discussions regarding the format and content of the workshop. "It's a great collaboration between our unions and it makes good use of staff expertise," Pizzino said.

The project is jointly funded by CUPE's Global Justice Fund and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Reports laud women activists, slams Peru polluter



THE 2006-07 annual report from Rights & Democracy (R&D) notes that “While women are on the frontlines of defending rights... [they] often face intimidation and harassment, death threats, torture and mistreatment, including sexual violence (rape) or gender crimes.” But, it says that despite all the obstacles, “women activists make an exceptional contribution to the promotion and defence of human rights.”

Also released from R&D is a report on the results of a three-year research project in Latin America. Among its findings, the report shows that Doe Run Peru S.R.L.,

a company that had purchased the state-owned smelter complex at La Oroya in the Andes Mountains, has unleashed “a toxic cocktail of pollutants.”

“In 2006, La Oroya was named one of the 10 most polluted areas in the world,” says the report. Researchers found that the way the complex is being run, “and the failure of the state to take appropriate steps, have had a negative impact on the ability of the people of La Oroya, especially women, to enjoy their human rights.”

Both reports are available at www.dd-rd.ca.

GATT, GATS and now GAPS

The general agreement on public services (GAPS) isn't yet a reality. But an alliance of consumers, workers and various organizations is working together to make it one.

The GAPS partners want “democratic accountability, good services and fair employment.” The group's leaflet says GAPS expresses “the principles that should guide local and national governments in fulfilling their public service responsibilities not only to their own citizens but also internationally.”

Among the group's members are Public Services International, to which CUPE is affiliated; Consumers International; One World Action; Public World; and the European Public Services Union.

For more information, email gaps@gapscampaign.org.

New global justice fund kit released



A NEW CUPE Global Justice Fund kit has just been released, providing information on how locals, divisions and others can join the fund to support CUPE's international work.

The kit includes a colourful leaflet that explains the goals of the fund. It also provides a contribution

form for locals and individuals to use in making a donation. Four case studies about ongoing work in different parts of the world are also part of the kit.

Coming soon: a CD with a dynamic presentation to show at meetings and educational events.

Equipped with the new kit, CUPE's national global justice committee members will be approaching locals, district councils and divisions and encouraging them to contribute to the fund and participate in project work.

Global issues thrust to forefront at convention

THE NEW Strategic Directions policy paper adopted at convention added a significant new element - a renewed push for global solidarity work.

This is the first time in recent memory that a major policy document has focused so clearly on CUPE's international intentions and goals. Some suggestions are already being implemented, but the process of debate and acceptance of the document will boost international solidarity and global justice work.

An emergency resolution supporting the democracy protesters in Burma was also adopted. "These protesters need and deserve our support and that of all trade unionists who care about democracy," said national leaders Paul Moist and Claude Généreux.

After convention, the Hospital Employees' Union called on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to pressure Canadian companies to cease doing business in Burma and provided a list of those companies that are

"enriching the military regime."

The national global justice committee report was well applauded by delegates followed by lively floor debate on associated resolutions covering several areas of concern.

As listed in the resolutions book, they dealt with the Americanization of Canada, fair trade, AIDS/HIV, immigration, international solidarity, Darfur, Afghanistan, peace, trade agreements and water.