

CUPE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2015-2017

Chapter 1

Building Workers' Power

AS ADOPTED
BY THE CUPE 2015
NATIONAL CONVENTION

Liberal Majority Government

On October 19th Canadians sent a clear message: Stephen Harper's regressive decade of divisive, anti-democratic politics is over. Harper's agenda was ruthless: painful cuts to public services and programs that all Canadians depend on, paired with massive tax breaks for the richest individuals and most profitable corporations. Canadians have spoken and Harper's agenda has been soundly rejected.

Sadly, many Canadians believe that the Liberals are a "progressive" party like the NDP. They will be disappointed when they are faced with the Liberals' fiscal conservatism and alliance with big corporations.

Under a Liberal government, we will not see a universal drug benefit or comprehensive seniors' care programs. We will not see a new federal minimum wage at \$15 per hour. The Conservatives surveillance legislation, Bill C-51, will survive. The Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement will be implemented. More good jobs will be lost.

The Liberals made some promises that could benefit all working Canadians and CUPE will keep the pressure on the new government to carry through on those promises. They have signaled support for enhancements to the Canada Pension Plan, more grants for students in post-secondary education and reductions in green-house gas emissions. They have promised to develop a new national early learning and child care framework in collaboration with provinces, territories and Indigenous communities. They committed to a new chapter in federal-provincial relationships which could lead to the speedy negotiation of a new health accord. We will press the Liberals to keep their promise to reinstate the tax credit for contributions made to labour-sponsored funds and to scrap changes to EI.

But the truth is that no Liberal government has lived up to such campaign promises in the past without immense amounts of pressure from civil society. CUPE will stand shoulder to shoulder with our partners in social movements to ensure that we hold the Liberals to their promises.

CUPE will represent our members' interests and the interests of all workers with the Liberal government at every opportunity. We will work to ensure that new transit and social housing is public infrastructure, that support for child care goes into creating high-quality affordable child care spaces and that health care is publicly delivered. We will pressure the Liberals to repeal the Conservatives' anti-union legislation. We will keep pushing on the inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls and for implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. And we will not be silenced by undemocratic bills like C-51.

This election makes it obvious that it is past time to reform Canada's electoral system. First-past-the-post delivers lopsided majority governments. In this election, just under 40% of voters marked their ballots for the Liberals, but that party got 55% of the seats in the House of Commons. The NDP received 20% of the votes, but only hold 12% of the seats. The Liberals have made a commitment to reform the electoral process. CUPE and all Canadians have an interest in making sure we have the most representative form of proportional representation in place for the 2019 federal election.

The stronger CUPE, the Canadian Labour Congress and our community allies are, the more likely we can keep the Liberals from acting just like the Conservatives.

CUPE's 2015-2017 Strategic Directions are:

- Building our union's strength through:
 - › Organizing
 - › Building bargaining strength
 - › Building strong and inclusive locals
- Taking political action, by building social movements and working to elect NDP governments that support our issues
- Protecting the planet
- Fighting for global justice

Context

As it was when CUPE members gathered in Quebec City two years ago, and in Vancouver two years before that, these are difficult times for working people in Canada. Together, corporations and their allies in government have sustained a vigorous and often successful campaign to erode workers' rights, benefits, pensions and union protection. We increasingly see government suppression of dissent and militancy. Corporations are relentless in their efforts in Canada and around the globe to drive down workers' wages, and to gain control over – and profit from – public services.

These same corporations erode the welfare state, our collective interests, and the common good with their unceasing pressure for lower taxes in the pursuit of higher corporate profits. The push for lower taxes leads to austerity budgets; and to privatization of public services such as utilities, health care, and education. This pressure to minimize taxes and maximize profits leads to growing economic inequality.

The attacks workers are facing in Canada are part of a global pattern. While oppression of workers is growing, global capital is facing fewer and fewer restrictions and controls. Workers from around the world, forced to flee wars, undemocratic regimes, environmental disasters, and economies built on oppression, create a pool of labour forced into the lowest-paid and most precarious jobs in developed economies.

International trade agreements focused solely on increasing corporate profits are enabling the marketization, deregulation and privatization of public services – our jobs. Short-term profit motives are taking the world to the verge of climate disaster that will destroy all of our economies.

Working people are fighting back.

We have just been through a Canadian federal election. The results clearly show that ordinary working people want progressive change. We know, as workers, that our well-being is linked with that of workers in Greece, Asia, the Middle East, elsewhere around the globe, all of whom are battling rising inequality and austerity.

For progressive change to occur, workers have to be organized in a strong and progressive labour movement, locally, nationally and globally.

CUPE's response must be militant, forceful and sustained. We are in this for the long game. The labour movement must continue to put forward a vision of a just and equal society – a society that benefits the 99% and is built on collective values and solutions. We are proud to be trade unionists fighting for good jobs; living wages; safe, decent working conditions; benefits; and adequate pensions for all. We are fighting to expand public services so everyone has access to good child care, health care, and education, and can retire in dignity.

We have to bring our analysis and our strength to the defining struggle of our times: fighting to preserve the planet for our children and their children. The same forces trying to keep working people down are the powers that have brought us to the verge of climate disaster. Fighting for working people now and in the future is deeply interconnected with fighting to protect our planet from the disastrous effects of climate change.

There is no radically new direction or simple solution for working people to achieve our goals. We have to work hard to build our movement, forge new alliances, and strengthen social movements. And we must be prepared to fight through parliamentary and non-parliamentary actions.

CUPE's strength is in our members and in our social unionism values that motivate us to engage in struggles beyond our workplaces, organizing for broad-based social and economic justice.

How do we mount a broad coalition for positive change?

Building our union strength

- 1) Our strategy starts with strengthening our own union.

This starts with protecting CUPE members from contracting out, privatization of our work, restructuring, reducing public services, attacking the integrity of bargaining unit work and raiding.

- 2) We will organize more workers, focusing first on increasing protection for workers who are precariously employed. We will:
 - a) Develop an organizing strategy for precarious workers, to build strong and sustainable bargaining units.
 - b) Organize wall-to-wall within workplaces, to bring precarious workers into the scope of our collective agreements and strengthen our bargaining power in our workplaces. CUPE will identify collective agreements that exclude part-time, temporary, casual and other precarious employees from the scope of the bargaining unit. We will develop strategies for bringing these workers into the bargaining unit.
 - c) Strengthen the negotiating power of existing bargaining units by identifying strategic organizing targets in sectors and regions.

- d) Develop a protocol to connect organizing to a strategy and commitment to a first collective agreement which raises the floor for these new members by strengthening their rights, and winning better wages and benefits.
 - e) Increase the resources dedicated to organizing.
 - f) Develop material for each of our sectors that demonstrates the “CUPE and union advantage,” to be used in organizing.
 - g) Ensure that member organizers reflect the diversity of the workers we seek to organize.
 - h) CUPE National will bring a comprehensive national organizing plan to the 2017 national convention for debate. This plan will include local, sector, regional and national targets for organizing and regular reports on progress. Organizing plans will provide support for regions undergoing government-mandated restructuring and attacks such as the Quebec social services and health sector.
 - i) Develop pan-Canadian strategies and action plans for organizing and bargaining with private multi-national employers in sectors such as long-term care.
 - j) Make organizing a key theme of our second CUPE National Sector Conference in October 2016.
- 3) CUPE is proud to back up our members and all workers in their efforts to have decent wages, benefits and working conditions.
 - 4) We will continue to support our members in their goal of good, safe jobs with good wages, benefits and a pension. Our target for the lowest wage rate for CUPE members by the end of 2017 is \$19/hour. The NEB and the regions will develop a comprehensive and strategic plan to support achieving this target.
 - 5) Our diversity is our strength and we will continue to build on this foundation. Precariously employed workers and CUPE members are disproportionately women, young workers, workers with disabilities, racialized workers and those who are newcomers to Canada. We will build our power by being even more inclusive. We will analyze our own structures, policies and procedures for the ways in which they encourage and discourage participation, representation and opportunities for equity-seeking members.
 - 6) We will negotiate collective agreements that are strong and inclusive by:
 - a) Expanding our collective agreement scope clauses to include precarious workers – temporary, part-time, and casual – where they do not.
 - b) Focusing our bargaining on improving wages and working conditions for precarious members, and expanding benefits and pension coverage in our collective agreements to cover precarious workers.
 - c) Encouraging bargaining committees and pension trustees to eliminate any barriers to participation in pension plans for part-time, temporary, and other precarious workers.
 - d) Pushing for broader, public sector-wide defined-benefit pension and benefits plans, rather than single-employer plans.
 - e) Developing employment equity resources to support locals in negotiating employment equity with employers.
 - f) Developing tools to help locals bargain culturally-sensitive and appropriate language.
 - g) Rejecting two-tier collective agreements which create two or more sets of wages and working conditions in our bargaining units.

- h) Identifying supports for bargaining to help locals meet these goals through regular communications about bargaining, such as telephone town halls.
 - i) Preparing and distributing annual regional reports to all locals on our progress in reaching our organizing and bargaining targets. These reports will assist the work of our sector committees.
 - j) Bringing locals and sectors into coordinated bargaining and consolidating locals where it provides our members with a strategic advantage in bargaining.
 - k) Fighting for improved employment standards and labour legislation for precarious workers in alliance with the Canadian Labour Congress, provincial federations of labour and other allies.
- 7) In 2017, CUPE will hold a national conference on the theme of “Building local union power” to showcase best practices and tools that help us:
- a) build strong and inclusive locals with bargaining power.
 - b) engage and mobilize our members.
 - c) meet our union’s strategic objectives.
- 8) Following the conference, CUPE National will help locals in all regions access the tools, resources and reports used at the conference.
- 9) CUPE is strong and effective when we mobilize our members to stand up for their rights and for social justice and equality.
- 10) Our members are our ultimate strength and we must reconnect with rank-and-file CUPE members. Our effectiveness as a union depends on engaging and mobilizing our members. To do that we will:
- a) Review and assess the Fairness program. Many locals have achieved a great deal of success with the Fairness program, but much remains to be done to ensure its implementation across the entire union. Learning from our successes and challenges, CUPE will continue our commitment to developing the Fairness program for increased success.
 - b) The review and assessment of the Fairness program will include establishing a consensus on the objective of the program, identifying opportunities for reporting back, and ensuring that the material uses clear language and considering whether other languages or formats would enhance accessibility.
 - c) Promote the use of the Fairness program in all locals.
 - d) Build electronic member communications capacity for mass mobilization.
 - e) Provide support to local unions to maintain and use electronic membership contact lists.
- 11) We will continue building strong locals by engaging all members in the union. We will do this by:
- a) Identifying the barriers, including communication, accessibility and financial, that prevent precariously-employed members from being more involved in our union, and developing ways of removing these barriers.
 - b) Developing member education and tools to support locals in implementing Strategic Directions and building local union capacity.
 - c) Creating more accessible opportunities for leadership training and development, including for young and new members.

- d) Encouraging local union leaders to bring more young members into active roles in locals, bargaining committees and other union structures.
 - e) Conducting our second national membership survey to inform and guide our union on building a more inclusive union, meeting our members' needs, and engaging our members. We will consult our equity-seeking members in the development of this survey.
 - f) CUPE will undertake a review of internal policies and services we provide to members and locals when dealing with criminal activity such as member-to-member sexual violence. This review includes both internal processes and our dealings with employers who have the legal obligation to provide safe workplaces.
- 12) More CUPE members will become involved when they see their union representing their interests both inside and outside the workplace. We will focus our efforts on campaigns aimed at increasing workers' power, fighting inequality, and transforming our economy into one that works for workers – not corporations. In addition to our ongoing campaigns (see Chapter 2), CUPE will undertake the following campaigns:
- a) For employment equity legislation in all jurisdictions, and employment equity clauses in CUPE collective agreements.
 - b) To close the gender pay gap by campaigning for pay equity legislation where it doesn't exist and campaigning to end the undervaluing of all care work, known as the "care gap."
 - c) For the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in consultation and as allies with First Nations groups.
 - d) For decent pensions for all, starting with defending our members' pensions from all attacks and for expansion of the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans.
 - e) For fair wages for all, and an increase in the minimum wage in all jurisdictions, and other improvements to minimum employment standards such as guarantees of hours of work to create stable and predictable employment.
 - f) For full employment standards, as well as labour and health and safety rights for temporary foreign workers.
 - g) Facilitating communication among CUPE members who are skilled trades workers on national issues such as support for apprenticeships in the public sector, the reinstatement of red seal programs and access for equity-seeking groups to the trades.
- 13) CUPE will continue our proud tradition of working with our members in their communities for social justice and equality.
- 14) CUPE will continue to defend public services, fighting privatization and contracting out in all its forms. This includes our campaigns against public-private partnerships which privatize infrastructure, facilities and services; social investment schemes which privatize social services; cuts to health care services and funding that force individuals to pay privately for care; defunding of universities, which drives tuition fee hikes and increases corporate control of campuses and for quality, affordable child care that families can rely on.

CUPE will establish and strengthen regional rapid response networks comprised of members from all sectors to support locals facing privatization, to provide training and tools to build our capacity to defend publicly-funded and publicly-delivered services, and to provide timely communication and organizational support.

CUPE's campaign to protect and extend public health care will include a campaign to defeat challenges to public health care delivery such as Dr. Day's case in British Columbia.

- 15) CUPE will strengthen our locals and increase member engagement through our health and safety program.
- 16) CUPE will kick-start renewed attention to health and safety at work by:
 - a) Declaring 2016 as "The year of health and safety".
 - b) Responding to members' increasing concern about addressing violence in the workplace, violence at home and the hazards of working alone.

- c) Ensuring our health and safety work addresses the particular situations of precarious and vulnerable members who cannot easily speak up for their own protection. We will push for Labour Ministries to pursue prosecutions of CEOs and Boards of Directors where they have failed to protect workers from violence.

Political Action

Build social movements

- 17) In working for the collective interests we share with many other people, we work most effectively with those who share our values and those who use the services we deliver. Our social unionism is reflected in our work with the Council of Canadians, the Canadian Health Coalition, provincial health coalitions, Droit à l'énergie, as well as many environmental and student groups, to name just a very few. CUPE works with and/or provides financial support to 100 different activist organizations.
- 18) We will continue to build, work in and lead coalitions in the campaigns described here and in response to new threats. These include campaigns for public services where our members work; campaigns for the rights of our members and their families and communities; and campaigns for working people who don't have union protection. CUPE will continue to fight against international trade agreements such as CETA, TPP and TISA. Through all of these efforts, our union is stronger.
- 19) Conservatives and the broader right wing have done everything they can to eradicate the social movements that oppose them – the women's movement; movements for rights for migrants and immigrants; the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movement; the workers of colour movement; the environmental movement; and the student movement. The union movement has to be a counter-force and sustain those movements by using our greatest strength, our members. CUPE will:
 - a) Step up our advocacy for funding for social groups, so they can be sustained (including calling for cuts to be reversed).
 - b) Support our members in their work in social movements and encourage more of our members to be part of social movements.
 - c) Encourage local unions to motivate and support members in this work at the workplace and at union events.
 - d) Communicate with our members about our work with social movements more effectively, by broadening our electronic contacts lists and using them for this work.

Putting forward workers' interests to electoral politics

- 20) The recent federal election saw the NDP lose seats, in part because the Liberal party successfully positioned itself to the left in the eyes of Canadians. CUPE remains committed to ensuring that the New Democratic Party represents workers' interests, and supporting the NDP to represent our interests in the political sphere. CUPE will participate in the NDP's review of this election campaign, offering critical but constructive input and advice.
- 21) We will continue to build our political party, the NDP. We must encourage more involvement in our party throughout the union. We need more union candidates, and increased electoral support for the party – the party the labour movement helped found. We will also encourage members to be involved in their local riding associations and AGMs to make sure CUPE's values are included and that the NDP supports CUPE

members. We will encourage and assist our members to stay in contact with local elected representatives between elections.

- 22) Even though we have just come through a hard fought federal election, there are always more elections in our regions and municipalities.
- 23) We will encourage members to get involved in school board, municipal and provincial elections and include in our target ridings those where CUPE members are running with their local's support. When we are involved in political campaigns, we can better defend the rights and interests of our members.
- 24) CUPE will initiate an evaluation of potential electoral system reforms and promote the most representative form of proportional representation for the 2019 federal election.

Protect the planet

- 25) The private market won't solve global warming; nor will "green" consumerism. Combatting climate change will take nothing less than transforming our economy away from our reliance on fossil fuels and toward renewable energy; increasing public transit; and protecting public water and other public services. Only public policies that prioritize public action and accountability have any chance of preventing disaster. Action on climate change solutions and investment in a low-carbon economy, as well as mitigating and adjusting to climate change, will be good for the economy over the short and medium term, with the potential to generate millions of jobs and to boost the economy. A green economy will be a more equitable economy. CUPE will:
 - a) Continue to educate our members about the causes, effects and remedies for climate change.
 - b) Continue to promote the LEAP Manifesto and encourage local unions to sign on.
 - c) Work in coalitions with other unions, First Nations and environmental groups, nationally and internationally, to protect the planet from climate change. We will offer concrete support to First Nations and others taking action on the front lines to prevent further environmental degradation resulting from oil and gas extraction.
 - d) Attend COP21 as part of the union delegation.
 - e) Educate CUPE pension trustees about the risks of climate change to pension investments.
 - f) Help locals undertake workplace initiatives that reduce pollution and the use of toxins, and that tackle global warming.
 - g) Work to ensure that global warming mitigation and climate change adaptation strategies – climate resilience strategies – at all levels of government are based on public solutions and public services.

Global Justice

- 26) International solidarity is an essential component of any CUPE fightback strategy. The global economy has created the situation where millions of workers have been forced to leave their homes in search of work in other countries. Often, these same workers are marginalized in Canada because experiences of global poverty and inequality have rendered them more vulnerable and easier to exploit than other workers. We have seen the right wing Conservative government use the Temporary Foreign Worker Program as a tactic to undermine the wages and working conditions of all workers in Canada.
- 27) Solidarity in our workplaces is critical, and we must stand in solidarity with workers all over the world who are fighting for decent jobs and living wages so they are no longer forced to separate from their families.
- 28) CUPE's new International Solidarity Policy Statement, adopted by the NEB in December 2014, sets our union in motion to:
 - a) Expose and campaign against human rights violations.
 - b) Support struggles to defend and recognize labour and trade union rights.
 - c) Challenge global corporate aggression.
 - d) Ensure Canadian government accountability.
- 29) The current international crisis, with millions of refugees fleeing Syria and their homes in other countries, illustrates the failure of the Conservative government to address serious flaws in immigration and refugee policy, focusing on exclusionary barriers and military intervention rather than humanitarian assistance.
- 30) International solidarity is a call to action and an essential component of any fightback strategy we develop in our union. We have assessed our international work and will focus on:
 - a) Increasing our activity in our global union, Public Services International, which enables us to speak directly to global power at the United Nations and the World Bank.
 - b) Integrating international issues and international solidarity actions into all aspects of our union work.
 - c) Engaging in worker-to-worker solidarity exchanges, relationships and grassroots organizing, as well as stabilizing CUPE's funding of this critical international work.
 - d) Continuing to speak out on important international issues.

Resources

- 31) The National Executive Board is proposing a change to the National Defence Fund which will allow the union to fully support strategic priorities by increasing the resources available in the National Defence Fund while at the same time ensuring that our Strike Fund remains strong and available to all CUPE members.
- 32) The NEB proposes the creation of a National Strike Fund Task Force to review National Strike Fund related issues:
 - a) The strike pay waiting period;
 - b) The amount of weekly strike pay;
 - c) The impact of strike fund regulations on members who work in precarious employment;

- d) Accessibility to the national strike fund when the right to strike is limited by law (Eg; essential services legislation);
- e) Who determines strike related duties and activities;
- f) Policies of other unions on these strike-related issues; and
- g) Such other related matters as determined by the NEB, including the history of strike support within CUPE.

The task force will be chaired by the National Secretary-Treasurer and will consist of a total of nine members approved by the NEB. The task force will seek input from CUPE locals and report to the membership regularly by way of National Officers' Quarterly Reports.

The task force will report to the National Executive Board no later than September 2016 in order for the NEB to prepare a presentation to all Provincial Division Conventions in the spring of 2017 and to the National Convention in 2017.

- 33) The strategic priorities outlined in this document need resources if we are to meet membership needs and expectations.

Chapter 2

Strategic Directions Creating the Foundation of Power

CUPE members delegated to our biennial national convention, debate and adopt strategic directions and resolutions that mandate CUPE's work and policy orientation. For decades, we debated individual, single issues at conventions. As the political and economic landscape became increasingly complex and hostile to labour, it was evident that more strategic and unified approaches were necessary to support CUPE members, and to address challenging times.

In 2003, CUPE began to develop comprehensive road maps – Strategic Directions – and invited members to discuss, debate and adopt detailed programs of policies, strategies, direction and action. We continued this approach over the past twelve years and six national conventions. Each Strategic Directions paper re-commits to the previous, and ultimately shapes the core work of our union, and maintains a strong foundation from which to move forward into the future.

The chapter that follows is a summary of the strategic directions adopted at conventions, to date. At this convention, Vancouver 2015, we reaffirm our commitments to the following areas, in addition to the new priorities set out in Chapter 1.

Strategic Directions themes

Policies adopted by delegates at a national convention form the critical direction for our union in matters of collective bargaining, social policy and political action. The following shapes the policies mandated by our strategic directions and resolutions, and forms the basis of our ongoing efforts.

Strengthen our representation and bargaining power

As a union, CUPE first and foremost, represents and works on behalf of CUPE members “to advance the social, economic and general welfare of workers”, and includes improving wages, working conditions and job security.

Throughout the last twelve years, we strengthened our bargaining power by educating and empowering members, building solidarity with each other, and expanded our internal resources and tools.

Our strategies evolved over time as economic and political conditions become increasingly challenging. Major initiatives moved us forward: solidarity pacts, campaigns, conferences, and comprehensive political action and lobbying plans to defend our rights.

Some of the enduring strategies:

- Build our membership, and renew and grow the labour movement.
- Survey our members regularly to gain comprehensive knowledge of changing demographics and diversity of CUPE membership.
- Provide solidarity support and resources to locals in bargaining, and to locals under attack.
- Consolidate bargaining strength through sector-based strategies: national sector council, coordinated bargaining, bargaining councils, sector coordinators and common tables.
- Develop tools, databases and systems to help compile and analyze collective agreement information, and to establish priority bargaining issues.
- Articulate strong arguments to raise wages, and underline the needs of lowest wage workers; improve workplace pensions, health benefits, and job security language; and implement job evaluation and pay equity.
- Advance equality in the workplace and protect workers against discrimination and harassment.
- Solidify collective agreement rights for part-time, casual and precarious workers.
- Build member strength and capacity through union development and education; promote skills, and activist and leadership training; and, renew the steward's role as the backbone of our union.
- Increase union power by organizing and resourcing campaign efforts at the local and division levels.
- Establish cost-share campaigns and organizing supports.
- Protect members' health and safety.

Build solidarity

The power we have as a union is our collective strength. Our ability to campaign, strategize and act in concert to safeguard democratic and civil rights; lift our communities out of poverty and fight income disparity; and raise the standard of living for everyone, comes from our ability to mobilize in unison around our common interests and goals.

We strive "to establish strong working relationships with the public we serve and the communities where we work and live." Our strength is in our numbers and in our determination, resilience and courage. Over the past twelve years we developed approaches to:

- Outreach to CUPE members by expanding our communication tools and technology, mobilizing, and building solidarity.
- Organize to increase union density and grow CUPE.
- Build our capacity through education and training.
- Strengthen our membership through district councils, and strengthen our provincial divisions.
- Outreach to the community to build strong alliances around common causes; connect and build our coalitions; support and strengthen community.
- Grow our alliances with other unions and the CLC.

Build international solidarity

We must build solidarity globally, in an era of globalization. CUPE's Constitution commits us to promote peace and freedom in the world, and to work with free and democratic labour movements everywhere.

- Secure and expand the *Global Justice Fund* to support efforts to strengthen long-term relationships of solidarity with sister unions, and social movement organizations around the world.
- Support global campaigns and actions addressing the most critical issues of our time, in countries most in need of our solidarity; including the defence of human rights and labour rights globally, and strengthening our alliances with migrant workers and migrant justice organizations in Canada.
- Maintain a strong public sector in Canada, and support the expansion, defence and strengthening of the public sector in other countries.
- Act in solidarity globally with a clear and critical understanding of Canada's role in the world, particularly on issues of foreign policy and military aggression, "anti-terror" legislation, and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Advance equality

Advancing and protecting equality is critical to ensure our union remains strong. Workers who are marginalized by sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, racism, colonialism, ableism and other forms of oppression, face particular challenges in the workplace and in their communities. We work to eliminate discrimination in the workplace and negotiate equality language at the bargaining table.

We have established comprehensive pay equity and job evaluation programs and supports, as well as education and training on diversity awareness, human rights, anti-oppression and increased representation for our equality-seeking members.

CUPE maintains its strong commitment to defend all workers. Equality and accessibility for our members is a major focus for our union, and we continue to implement diverse strategies to advance them, including bargaining, campaigns, political action, court challenges and education, and through supporting and working with other social movements.

We will build greater equality within our union, in our workplaces and in society.

- Strengthen our union by pursuing equality work at the center of our union.
- Support and educate equality-seeking members, and create anti-oppression awareness for our entire membership and staff.
- Protect workers' rights and fight against discrimination and harassment.
- Increase participation of women and other equality-seeking members in CUPE, at all levels.
- Expand our core human rights work on women's issues, Indigenous issues, the rights of racialized workers and persons with disabilities, and issues for LGBTTI members.
- Develop tools and resources necessary to bring equality perspectives to all of our work.
- Develop action plans and policies that will be responsive to and respectful of our diverse membership.

Safeguard public services

The defence of public services and public sector workers has never been more important. CUPE is at the forefront in taking on privatization. Across the country we protect and promote publicly owned, operated, financed and managed education, municipal and social services, health care, child care and other public services.

Our core work is to:

- Defend against contracting out and privatization of public services.
- Protect good public sector jobs.
- Educate members and the community about the impacts of privatization and free trade agreements on public services.
- Negotiate at the bargaining table, take actions such as a general strike, and join with allies.
- Develop comprehensive strategic anti-privatization campaigns with research, education, media strategy and political action.
- Promote public services as the foundation of strong communities.
- Strengthen labour's image as a key defender of strong communities.

Protect the environment

CUPE has made significant progress in developing our environmental policies, research and actions. We have taken steps to help reduce our carbon footprint and continue to build our capacity to lobby for social and political change to meet our collective responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimize our impact on the environment. We are committed "to use the world's natural and human resources for the good of everyone while promoting respect and conservation of the environment and the creation of sustainable communities and jobs."

- Lobby the federal government to commit to global environmental accords.
- Develop CUPE policy and action plans.
- Create environmental and green jobs strategies, tools and education.
- Collaborate with environmental and civil society allies to protect the environment and to build sustainable communities and workplaces.
- Adopt the Aboriginal perspective that decisions we make today must consider the next seven generations and what is best for those generations.
- Green CUPE's work.

Build political action and activism

CUPE strongly advocates for progressive, protective social and economic policies and programs. We continue to develop sophisticated approaches to our activism, defend what we have gained, and break new ground. We work vigilantly to increase wages, benefits, and access to secure pensions, support public investment in public services and public sector jobs, increase safeguards for our financial systems, implement progressive taxation, and promote fair trade.

CUPE commits to defend and add to the civil rights and liberties of workers in the public service and to preserve the rights and freedoms of democratic trade unions.

- Actively participate with the NDP, labour alliances and community coalitions such as Common Causes, on our shared goals.
- Develop major fightback and resistance campaigns against the right-wing agenda, and lobby at all levels of government.
- Build education tools and strategies for lobbying.
- Grow our activist base in all sectors to defend workers' rights, protect the environment, and strengthen our communities.
- Develop a strong workers' agenda with a clear class analysis, and an alternative economic approach.
- Protect and expand the social safety net that includes EI, medicare, public services, pensions, and child care.

Building workers' power

CUPE will continue all of our core work as mandated by CUPE members at each of our national conventions. Strategic Directions and resolutions form the body of our work and are well established in CUPE policy. We are equally bound by our Constitution to continue these efforts. Our commitment, solidarity and power will allow to move forward together.

It is now time to recommit to, and renew, CUPE's agenda – building workers' power to give voice to CUPE members. Free collective bargaining may be under threat, but we will vigorously defend our fundamental rights as workers and citizens. We will continue to tirelessly safeguard and increase the strength of public sector workers and workers everywhere.

We will uphold all human rights, striving for dignity and equality among workers, among all Canadians, and for people around the world. We will continue to protect the fundamental right to healthy and safe environments now and into the future.

CUPE members, activists, leaders and staff will rise to the challenges before us in a spirit of strength, solidarity and commitment. We will continue to embrace everything we stand for as a union and also as citizens of the world. At this national convention in Vancouver, in 2015, we will set in motion our plan of action for the next two years. We have come far and there is much still left to accomplish. With dedication and resilience, CUPE will rise to the challenge.

In solidarity.

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