



JUSTICE

International
Solidarity
Report
2010-2011

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Across the globe we are witnessing a historic moment as millions stand up for justice. The outcome of the popular uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East are far from certain but the demands for social, economic and climate justice cannot be stopped. As they stand up to powerful and ruthless dictators. The courage of thousands of ordinary people has been inspiring. CUPE members have voiced their support and admiration and hope that these efforts will be successful. Solidarity among working people across the globe has never been more important.

We invite you to review the progress we have made with our global justice projects and our international work over the past year. In particular, we are pleased with efforts to assist our sister union, the Confederation of Private and Public Sector Workers (CTSP) in Haiti to rebuild their union office. And we are proud of the significant work of young Burmese activists as they build their movement for freedom and democracy.

We continue to build support for the Global Justice Fund. However there remains more work to be done before the fund is self-sustaining. It is essential to have a robust Global Justice Fund to continue the important work of international solidarity. The deliberate efforts of the federal government to silence social justice work means that we in the labour movement need to double our efforts. Our sisters and brothers working in international development, such as the KAIROS CUPE 4557 members, need our solidarity. We encourage CUPE members across the country to tell their MPs that the government must stop de-funding organizations that provide essential support to the most vulnerable.

CUPE will continue to stand in solidarity with workers around the world, whether they are our neighbours in Wisconsin or trade unionists in Egypt. Young people around the world are taking up the call for justice and CUPE will be there supporting the next generation of leaders at home and abroad.

We thank the CUPE locals and divisions who continue to contribute to the Global Justice Fund and encourage others to do the same.

In solidarity,

Paul Moist
National President

Claude Généreux
National Secretary-Treasurer



INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY OFFICER RHONDA SPENCE WITH SAMWU SISTER GATI MALETE MET WITH VANCOUVER MAYOR GREGOR ROBERTSON, COUNCILLOR GEOFF MEGGS AND CUPE 15 PRESIDENT PAUL FAORO.

Canada continues to move quickly on negotiating bilateral trade agreements in the global south and is poised to conclude the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union (EU). Agreements have been reached with Peru, Panama and Colombia and the federal government is close to a deal with Honduras. These trade agreements are based on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) model, and they are about corporate rights to increase investment and profit, with no regard for working people and the poor. Canadian mining companies will be the biggest winners at the expense of the environment and food security. Without adequate safeguards for human rights, indigenous people and small farmers will continue to be pushed off their land. This is of particular concern in both Colombia and Honduras.

TRADE AGREEMENTS

Honduras

Since the 2009 coup d'état in Honduras, human rights violations under the Lobo government continue. Reprisals against women have increased and in particular, the scale of violence against journalists and teachers has been dramatic because of their role in resisting the regime.

CUPE's partner organization CODEMUH has been a leader in the resistance, demanding protection for human rights. Maria Luisa Regalado, general coordinator of CODEMUH, participated as a witness to the Canadian Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development during a House of Commons

hearing on the human rights situation in Honduras. She talked about how trade, as seen through the maquila industry, has not improved the lives of Honduran workers.

Once again, as with Colombia, the Canadian government is pursuing a free trade agreement with a country that flaunts the rule of law and pursues an agenda of repression and violence against those working for economic and social justice.

Colombia

A courageous champion of human rights in Colombia stole the hearts of delegates at this year's annual CUPE Saskatchewan convention.

Speaking through a translator, the diminutive Berenice Celeyta talked about the struggle for human rights in Colombia, where 4.5 million small farmers, Afro-descendants and indigenous have been driven off their land by the paramilitary forces and displaced to make way for multinational resource companies. The paramilitary has ties to the Colombian military and government.

The Harper government's free trade deal with Colombia, which took effect last year, contributes to the problem because it will increase foreign investment, particularly in the mining sector. This means that more Colombians will lose their rights.

cupe.ca/trade

Berenice Celeyta, director of NOMADESC, a human rights organization in Cali, Colombia supported by CUPE, describes the last three decades as the most violent in the country's history.

She told delegates at the convention that each year, 8,000 people in Colombia are assassinated for political reasons. Many are trade union leaders, who oppose the government's plan to privatize health care, education, electricity, water and other important resources.

Workers who have fought against privatization have been detained, persecuted or even killed, and many of these crimes are sponsored by the state.

Berenice, who has moved her office several times in recent years because of death threats, remains committed to her work. She maintains that it is better to die for something than to live for nothing.

CUPE National President Paul Moist described Berenice as a fighter for freedom and a hero.

Sister Berenice's speech to the Saskatchewan delegates capped off a successful tour to Ottawa and Vancouver where she met with CUPE officers, staff and local leaders. Her organization plays a critical role in supporting the campaign for labour and human rights. CUPE will continue to press for an end to the violence in Colombia and demand that the perpetrators be brought to justice. With others, CUPE will continue to monitor human rights and hold the Canadian government and corporations investing in Colombia accountable.

CETA

The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union poses the biggest threat to Canada's public services as it aims to open up access for European multinationals at the provincial and municipal levels. CUPE opposes the deal as it aims to take power away from local governments and communities and gives too much power to large multinational corporations. It threatens Canada's public water system, local job creation and would cause prescription drug costs to skyrocket.

In January, CUPE researcher Blair Redlin joined with others from the Trade Justice Network delegation to Europe to help stop the deal. The delegation took part in protests, media interviews, met with provincial government negotiators and strategized with European allies at the office of the European Federation of Public Sector Unions (EPSU). Together they lobbied and provided briefings to members of the European Parliament.

This spring, CUPE President Paul Moist and National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Généreux embarked on a major tour with Council of Canadians chairperson Maude Barlow to alert the public on the dangers of this proposed deal and to say that Canadian communities are not for sale. Tour stops included Calgary, Montreal, Toronto, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Halifax and St. John's. The Harper government wants the deal signed by January 2012.



SECOND FROM LEFT, CUPE RESEARCHER BLAIR REDLIN JOINED WITH OTHERS FROM THE TRADE JUSTICE NETWORK AND THE COUNCIL OF CANADIANS DELEGATION TO EUROPE TO HELP STOP THE CETA DEAL.

CETA THREATENS CANADA'S PUBLIC
WATER SYSTEM, LOCAL JOB CREATION
AND WOULD CAUSE PRESCRIPTION
DRUG COSTS TO SKYROCKET.



BREAKING GROUND TO REBUILD CTSP UNION HEADQUARTERS IN HAITI.

SOLIDARITY

through
humanitarian
aid

Pakistan

Following the devastating floods in Pakistan, and on the recommendation of Public Services International (PSI) and the Pakistan Workers' Federation, CUPE contributed \$50,000 to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Haiti

A year after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, Canadian public sector unions have launched a project to provide financial and technical assistance to rebuild the headquarters of the Confederation of Public and



Private Sector Workers (CTSP) in Port-au-Prince. Plans for the new building have already been approved and construction will begin in the spring.

Led by CUPE National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Généreux, a delegation of trade unionists with specific skills and expertise travelled to Haiti in March to begin the work.

The CTSP represents over 8,000 workers, health, education, electricity, and municipal services. Currently, the CTSP is operating in a 10 by 12-foot tent. The new headquarters will help the union meet the needs of its members and play a proactive role in the reconstruction of Haiti.

Brother Généreux reported that Haitian workers and unions are now in the field, contributing to

the reconstruction with their fellow citizens under extremely difficult conditions. The contribution from Canadian unions to Haitian unions will have a direct impact in the field and will provide the necessary infrastructure.

A two-day workshop based on CUPE's Financial Officers training was given, including how to complete a ledger manually as well as with computer software such as Microsoft Excel.

In addition to CUPE, the unions involved in this project include: the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the Syndicat de la fonction publique du Québec (SFPO) and the Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS). These unions have

pledged a \$100,000 contribution, which represents the estimated project costs.

The inspiring collaboration between unions demonstrates that solidarity is more than just an ideal, it is rooted in concrete action.

cupe.ca/global-justice

HUMAN RIGHTS



Burma

With the support of the Global Justice Fund, CUPE 2440 (CUSO-VSO) is in year two of a project supporting human rights defender organizations. In January, Marian White, CUPE 2440 member and co-chair of the global justice committee, and CUPE's International Officer Rhonda Spence, travelled to Thailand to meet with Burmese organizations working on the Thailand-Burma border. They were able to gain a better understanding of the situation for Burmese activists working to record human rights abuses in Burma, and their campaign to end the military dictatorship and build a democratic state.

They visited Chiang Mai in the north east of Thailand and Mae Sot on the border with Burma, meeting with human rights, women's, environmental and youth organizations. All of these groups coordinate to document and publicize the dire situation of ordinary Burmese citizens. They

are building a campaign calling for the UN to hold a commission of inquiry into gross human rights violations, specifically crimes against humanity and war crimes in Burma.

On the ground, CUPE support goes a long way to assist activists to build their network, share skills, and to break down ethnic barriers to build a more unified movement. Most of the organizations operate without legal recognition in Thailand and many of the activists are undocumented. This means that there is a need to operate under the radar as the Thai authorities are not necessarily sympathetic.

The Burmese activists take great risks when they travel into Burma to record what is going on. The majority do not have legal identification documents, some have refugee status and live in the refugee camps in Mae Sot and are eligible for resettlement. The resettlement of activists means there is a constant need to train new ones.

Mega-projects being built in Burma by China and India in particular make the situation extremely difficult to resolve. Major pipelines and a new economic free trade zone are about to be built. The military dictatorship is quite willing to continue to force people off their land to make way for foreign investment and to continue with forced labour. There has been minimal headway made on forced labour by the International Labour Organization (ILO) office in Rangoon.

Women and labour in South Africa

One hundred South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU) members met in Johannesburg in November 2010. This was an unprecedented national workshop on gender that was aimed at integrating the struggle for women's equality with the South African labour movement's broader fight for workers' rights, and against corruption in government.

cupe.ca/global-justice

Part of an ongoing multi-year project between CUPE and SAMWU that focuses on organizing women who are working on contracts for various South African municipalities, this workshop was an opportunity for SAMWU gender activists to learn from each other's successes and challenges.

The greatest success in signing up new members and re-municipalising (or contracting-in) services has been in the Eastern Cape province. Not only do workers in South Africa have low wages – especially when working contracts, often through labour brokers – but many also do not have access to transportation, communications, housing and other infrastructure that Canadian workers enjoy.

This spring, CUPE members attending the CUPE Manitoba and CUPE BC conventions were able to hear first-hand from SAMWU leader Gati Malete about the project and the current challenges facing SAMWU members. The fight against privatization and the union's leadership in promoting public services had a familiar ring and her remarks inspired delegates in their own struggles.

Comrade Malete has a long history of political and union activism and was previously the chairperson of SAMWU's national gender committee. Her discussions with CUPE delegates helps in deepening our connection with South African workers and to further build on the solidarity between our two unions.

Water justice

The water justice movement has been gaining ground with a series of significant international actions and victories. In July, the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly agreed to a resolution declaring the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a universal human right. The resolution, presented by the Bolivian government also calls for increased financial, technological and capacity-building support to countries in the global south.

Following closely on the UN decision, an appeals court in Botswana ruled that the Kalahari Bushmen have the right to access well water in their ancestral lands located in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. The victory came after an eight-year legal battle and is an important step

in further establishing access to water as a universal human right protected by law.

Throughout Europe, the movement to stop water privatization and to contract-in services from private hands continues to grow. Of particular note is the re-municipalisation of water services in Paris. France is home to the biggest water privateers, Suez and Veolia. In Italy, the campaign to hold a referendum against a recent law privatizing water services gained over 1.4 million signatures. This is nearly one million more than are needed to call a referendum. In Berlin, water campaigners were successful in forcing a referendum to release the contracts the city has with private water companies.

These victories are building momentum as plans for a 2012 Alternative World Water Forum that will run parallel with the next World Water Forum continue. CUPE, through the Public Services International will be part of these efforts as we work with our allies in Canada and around the world.

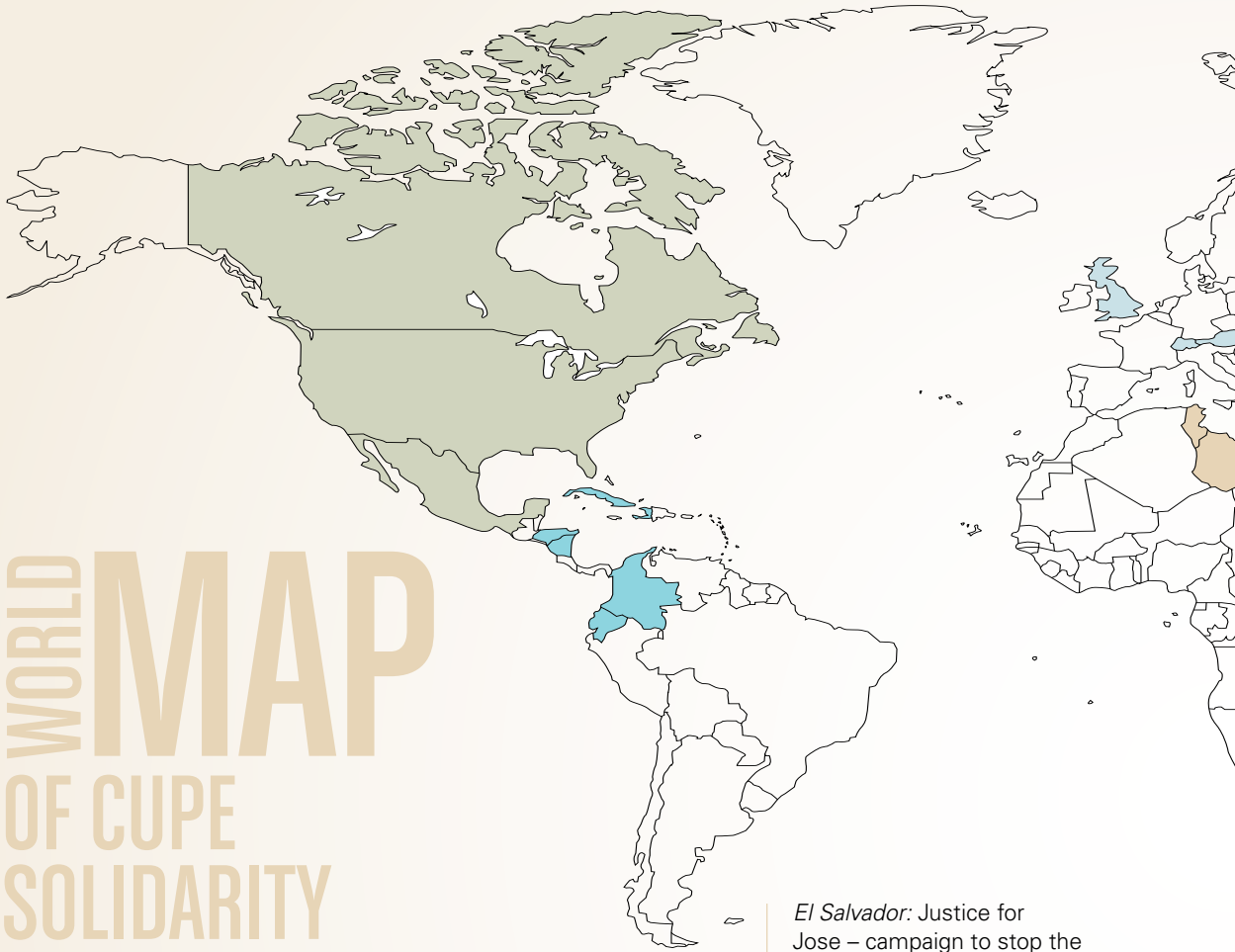
CLIMATE JUSTICE

CUPE participated in the 16th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP16) in Cancun, Mexico in December 2010. National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Généreux, national staff Pierre Ducasse and Matthew Firth, and national environment committee members Carolyn Unsworth and Carina Ebnoether represented CUPE.

Among the key events were 150 COP16 delegates from progressive movements coming together to discuss mobilizing for action on climate change. This summit within COP16 was put together by the Cornell Global Labor Institute. Brother Claude Généreux spoke at the event and provided delegates with an example of successful co-operation by describing work CUPE does on water issues with the Council of Canadians. Généreux also talked about workers' readiness to help build a more sustainable, climate-stable society.

Maude Barlow from the Council of Canadians implored delegates from the different movements to see each others' struggles as important as their own. Bill McKibben, the founder of the 350.org movement, outlined the urgent need for deep greenhouse gas cuts. McKibben, a long-time environmental activist, said labour's history of solidarity – of working together for the common good – is a principle that must guide all progressive groups working for climate justice.

cupe.ca/environment



WORLD MAP OF CUPE SOLIDARITY FOR 2010-2011

• South & Central America & the Caribbean

ACCESO International: Donation

Guatemala: Protest against assassination of trade union leaders

Ecuador: Condemnation of attempted coup

Haiti: Letter to protest the killing of union leader

Haiti: Support for CTSP building project

Honduras: Trevor Davies (Regional V-P for CUPE BC) OHS exchange with CODEMUH

Colombia: Support for NOMADESC and call for the end of violence and threats

Cuba: SNTAP (National Union of Public Sector Workers) global justice project

Nicaragua: MEC global justice project

• North America

Nationwide: Support for UNIFEM resolution 1325 on peacekeeping and women

Nationwide: Support for RadioLabour

El Salvador: Justice for Jose – campaign to stop the deportation from Canada of former student activist

Hamilton.: Support for LabourStart and participation in LabourStart Global Solidarity Conference

Amnesty International

Canadian Council for International Cooperation and the Americas Policy Group

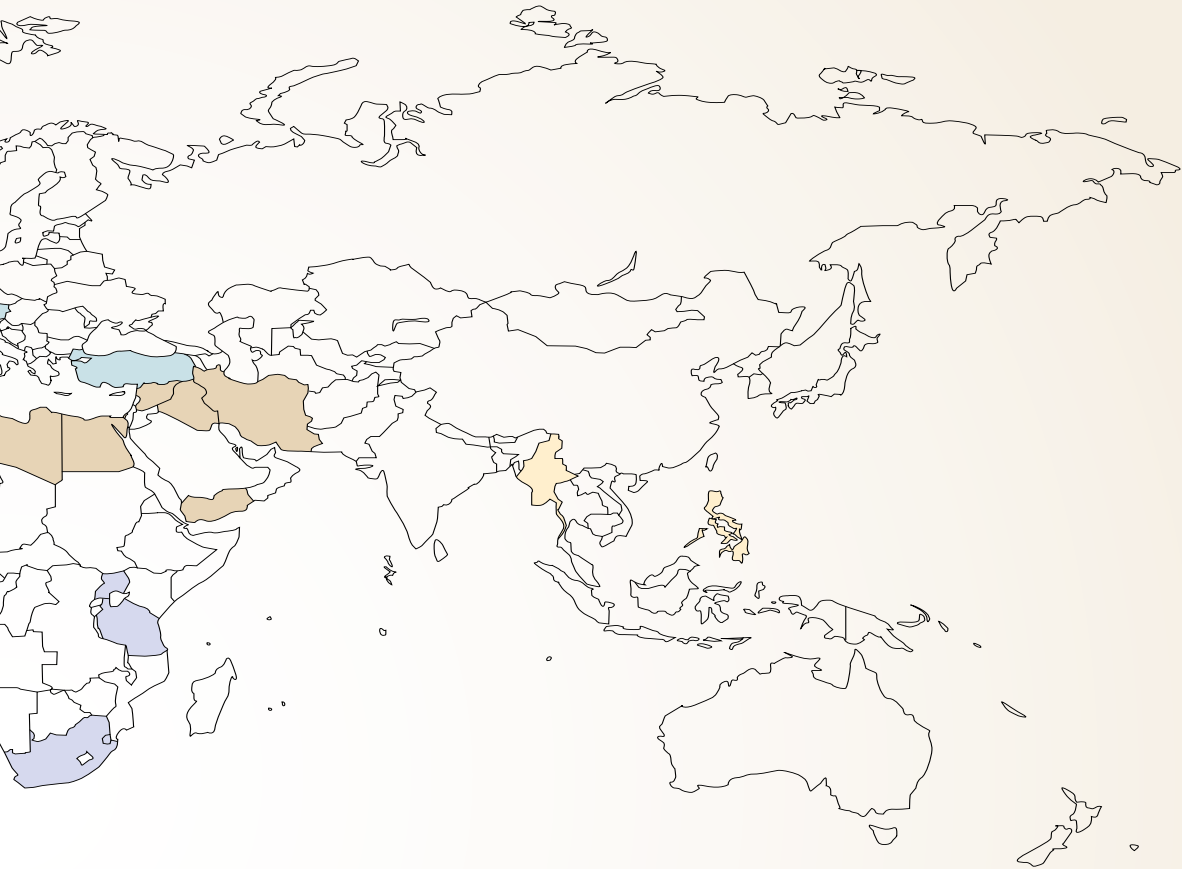
Maquila Solidarity Network

Common Frontiers

Women's Human Rights Institute

Saskatoon: Protesting the sanctions against Abousfian Abdelrazik, Human Rights Day

Nationwide: Mexico Days of Action rallies in Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver



International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG)

Toronto: People's forum and rally at the G8/G20 meetings

Toronto: Cesar E. Chavez Black Eagle Awards Dinner

Wisconsin, USA: CUPE delegates participate in AFL-CIO solidarity rally

CUPE delegates Tim Maguire CUPE 79 and National Executive Board VP for Saskatchewan Judy Henley attended the Caribbean-Canada Emerging Leaders' Dialogue of 2011

● **Africa**

Uganda: Condemning the oppression of LGBT citizens

Support for Swaziland global day of action for democracy and labour rights

South Africa: Condemnation of police shooting of a SAMWU shop steward

South Africa: SAMWU global justice project

Tanzania: Brother Trevor Thame CUPE 50 went with Youth Challenge International to work with local youth on issues related to sexual health

● **Europe**

Switzerland: Quality Public Services Conference

Switzerland: PSI committee meetings

Vienna: HIV/AIDS meeting

Turkey: Letter of protest of imprisonment of trade unionists

England: Support for UNISON defence of public services

● **Middle East & Asia**

Iraq: Banning of unions in electrical sector

Middle East: Support for independent trade unions

Gaza: Condemning attack of Israeli Navy on the humanitarian aid convoy to Gaza

Iran: Support for workers

Philippines: Solidarity with ACT and COURAGE

Burma: Burmese Human Rights Defenders global justice project

GLOBAL UNIONS



CUPE NATIONAL PRESIDENT PAUL MOIST WITH GATI MALETTE.

CUPE has stepped up its involvement with our global union, the PSI, with CUPE National President Paul Moist serving a three year term as the Titular Head of the Canadian PSI affiliates. Brother Moist is responsible for representing Canadian unions for the Inter-Americas region at the World Executive Board. He is also the co-chair of the Inter-Americas regional executive board with Sister Juneia Batista from Brazil.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT SINDA CATHCART, INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY OFFICER RHONDA SPENCE, NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER CLAUDE GÉNÉREUX, DIVERSITY VICE-PRESIDENT YOLANDA McLEAN, CUPE RESEARCHER KELTI CAMERON AT THE PSI MEETING IN COLOMBIA.

ITUC Congress vital to international labour strategy

At the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) world congress held in Vancouver in June 2010, CUPE was represented by Brother Moist as part of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) delegation. The theme was *Now the People: from the Crisis to Global Justice* and brought together trade unionists from around the world for the first time following the global economic crisis. Delegates discussed the impact of the global financial meltdown on workers and began to strategize on a plan to put people first. CUPE joined the CLC in a meeting with the European Trade Union Confederation to discuss CETA.

Global meeting in Colombia advocates for public services

A few months later in September, the PSI Americas regional conference (IAMRECON) was held in Cartagena, Colombia. The CUPE delegation led by National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Génèreux included Sinda Cathcart, CUPE 3967, Diversity Vice-President Yolanda McClean, Research Officer, Kelti Cameron and International Officer Rhonda Spence. The delegation participated and presented at workshops on the environment, utilities, health care, post-secondary education, municipal issues and water and sanitation. By hosting the meeting in Colombia, PSI sent a strong message to the Colombian government about the urgency to stop the violence against Colombian trade unionists and to respect labour and human rights.

PSI takes action for quality public services

In October 2010, CUPE National President Paul Moist, International Officer Rhonda Spence and Senior Economist Toby Sanger were part of a PSI conference held in Geneva to launch a global campaign to win public and political support for quality public services. Through forums, workshop presentations and discussions, the conference aimed to chart innovative strategies to improve and expand quality public services around the globe. A charter for quality public services and an action plan were developed and have since been adopted by the Council of Global Unions.

www.world-psi.org

Financial support for independent trade unions through the ITUC

Iran

CUPE continues to support the demand for democracy in Iran and to support labour activists through letters of protest and calls for demonstrations against the repression of the Iranian government.

Being elected to a leadership position in a union guarantees a prison term or dismissal and in some cases execution. Activists at the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company are regularly arrested as the government attempts to disrupt their organizing activities.

Almost all elected representatives of the Syndicate of Workers of Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Company have been in and out of jail since 2009.

These attacks on labour activists and organizations in Iran are taking place while the government is engaged in massive neo-liberal policies of privatization, and subsidy cutbacks to the most basic needs of the Iranian population.

Mexico

When over 40,000 electrical workers were fired in 2009 by the Mexican government in order

to privatize the company and liquidate the Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME), CUPE members responded in solidarity by participating in a delegation to Mexico and sending financial support to the union and as part of the Tri-National Energy Sector working group.

The Mexican government has systematically and repeatedly violated Mexican law and international standards to crush independent trade unions. In February 2011, UNI Global Union called for days of action on the anniversary of the massive explosion at a mine in northern Mexico that killed 65 members of the Mexican Miners' Union five years ago.

Workers around the world took part in actions Feb. 14 to 19 to demand that the Mexican government respect the right to freedom of association and stop the campaigns of persecution. CUPE participated in demonstrations organized in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver.

Tri-National Energy Workers Network Meeting

The fourth meeting of the National Energy Workers Network took place in January in Los Angeles. Charles Fleury, CUPE 1500, Mark Hadder, CUPE 998, and Dave Shier, CUPE 1000 joined

with more than 20 unions and civil society groups from Mexico, the U.S. and Canada. Talks included the impact of trade, privatization and energy integration on jobs, health and safety, environment, human rights and the right to secure sustainable energy.

Brother Fleury gave a presentation on the impact of deregulation, restructuring, and free trade and the issues related to private sector control in the area of renewable energy. In the U.S. deregulation has increased corporate monopoly, reduced the workforce by 40 per cent and new facilities are operated by non-union workers. In Mexico, violations of labour and human rights are of grave concern with the continued campaign to eliminate independent labour unions. Numerous issues for aboriginal peoples were underscored including environmental and land claims in Canada and forced displacement in Mexico.

Recommendations include further support for Mexican unions and research into the energy companies from Canada and the US who do business in Mexico. Environmental, peak oil and health and safety issues top the list for the meeting next year.



HIV/AIDS: TREATMENT AND RESPECT FOR UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS, TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

When it comes to an effective plan to tackle the AIDS epidemic, respect for universal human rights and prevention are inseparable from treatment strategies. Fighting stigmatization and investing in prevention and education are also big parts of the equation. This was the message coming from CUPE delegates attending the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna in July 2010.

The conference theme “Rights Here, Right Now,” acknowledged that universal prevention and treatment wouldn’t be possible without achieving universal rights. Science and human rights groups agree they must work together.

Every day, there are 7,400 new infections, and 5,000 people die. Of the newly infected people, 97 per cent come from low-to-middle income countries, making this a social justice and human rights issue.

According to the World Health Organization, even though global infection rates have gone down in the last few years, infection remains high among stigmatized groups such as sex workers, injection drug users, and men having sex with men (MSM).

MSM have 19.3 times greater risk of being infected than the general population. With homosexuality criminalized in 80 countries, we know that prevention for MSM is far from comprehensive. Statistics show that countries where HIV infections are rising are also countries where homosexuality is illegal.

The same is true for injection drug users. Treatment is not available due to stigmatization. For example, for every 100 injection drug users in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, only one receives treatment. Forty per cent of countries reduce or limit access to HIV treatment to these people.

Delegates at the conference included: Sue Roth, CUPE 1063 and a member of CUPE’s Global Justice Committee; Gloria Lepine, CUPE 3550 and a member of CUPE’s National Aboriginal Council; and Michael Butler, executive assistant to the national secretary-treasurer. They were joined by Trevor Gray, member of CUPE 4308, working for the Prisoners HIV/AIDS Support Action Network in Toronto and Victor Elkins a Hospital Employees’ Union member representing the Canadian Labour Congress.

CUPE identified the HIV/AIDS issue as a priority in our strategic directions document adopted at the last national convention. Our most recent action was an online petition to support the call by African unions for universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment and services ahead of the meeting of G8 leaders in June 2010.





THAILAND-BURMA HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT.

Standing for democracy in the Middle East and North Africa

Nowhere has the movement for democratic rights been more dramatic than the recent uprisings throughout the Arab world. Starting in Tunisia and moving to Egypt, then Jordan, Bahrain, Yemen, Libya and Syria, ordinary people are demanding economic and social justice as well as political freedom.

Since 1957, all of Egypt's unions have been state controlled under the government-run Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF).

That changed, however, at a meeting in Tahrir Square, right in the midst of protests against the Mubarak regime. Four of the country's largest unions formed the Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (EFITU).

At that meeting they staked out their first goal: a minimum wage increase.

The current minimum wage is 35 Egyptian pounds per month, about \$5.75 Canadian. Most troubling it hasn't increased since 1984. You would be hard pressed to find a better example of what can happen in the absence of strong, independent unions.

While the events of the past few months have been exciting to watch, it's clear our Egyptian sisters and brothers still have a considerable fight in front of them.

Speaking OUT



CUPE has been quick to support actions in the Middle East and North Africa by writing letters and offering support for independent unions. At the time of writing this report, the situation in Libya remains uncertain. While Bahrain, Yemen and Jordan have made tentative steps towards change, much more needs to be done.

Solidarity with our neighbours to the south

Halfway across the world, and a little closer to home for us, more workers took to the streets of Madison, Wisconsin.

Perhaps one of the most disturbing repercussions of the global economic crisis has been the attacks against the rights of working people in the United States. Rather than hold Wall Street accountable for the financial disaster, right-wing politicians in many states have been quick to use the situation to strip public sector workers of their rights.

Under the guise of tackling a state budget deficit, Wisconsin's Republican Governor Scott Walker is trying to quash public sector collective bargaining rights. Governor Walker, however, terribly misjudged the resolve of workers and Wisconsinites' support for them.

CUPE has been there in solidarity, sending letters of protest to government officials in Wisconsin and Ohio. CUPE National President Paul Moist travelled south to join the thousands of protesters who have been standing up for justice. CUPE has also provided on the ground organizing support in the fight back.



THOUSANDS MARCHED IN MADISON, WISCONSIN, AND CUPE WAS THERE.

COAST TO COAST

In every region of the country CUPE members have been active with international solidarity work. From local unions taking the lead on international projects to individual members participating in international programs, interest in CUPE's international work is on the rise.

As a new initiative our global justice partners were invited to three provincial conventions. Our partners were warmly received and delegates were able to hear first-hand about the work they support. At almost every convention resolutions supporting the Global Justice Fund were passed.

In western Canada delegates to the Saskatchewan and Manitoba conventions passed resolutions in support of the Global Justice Fund.

Saskatchewan delegates heard from Berenice Celeyta, human rights defender in Colombia, and a financial contribution to her

organization was matched by the national union.

In Manitoba and British Columbia, Comrade Gati Malete from the South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU) gave a keynote speech, reporting on the effectiveness of CUPE's project with SAMWU on addressing privatization and improving women's participation in the union. Sister Gati met with several members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia and with Vancouver's Mayor Gregor Robertson.

Convention delegates in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec and British Columbia



BERENICE CELEYTA – COLOMBIA.



SUPPORTING ABOUSFIAN ABDELRAZIK – SASKATCHEWAN.



MARY LABANG, KACHIN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION – BURMA.

heard CUPE National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Généreux report back from his recent trip to Haiti, where CUPE and the Confederation of Public and Private Sector workers (CTSP) have now started on the project to rebuild their union office.

Campaigns to support public water have been front and centre in many of our activities. From Newfoundland to British Columbia members have been working to get rid of bottled water in our workplaces and other public facilities. These efforts link directly to the international water justice movement and has inspired the Global

Justice Committee in Nova Scotia to consider planning an international project on water.

Across the country, delegates debated and discussed resolutions on the Canada European Union proposed Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). CUPE Quebec activists work closely with the Quebec Federation of Labour on international issues and the fight to stop CETA is very strong in Quebec.

The Global Justice Committee in Ontario is actively educating members on a number of international issues. Their most

recent effort was a conference on mining issues – looking at human rights abuses and environmental problems in regions where Canadian companies are operating.

CUPE members from coast to coast are engaged internationally. Some find international solidarity work to be their way to give back, others learn about issues and get to know workers from other countries. The work that CUPE does globally gives members a real opportunity to connect. We know that connecting with workers in solidarity is the way to win both here at home and around the globe.



NEXT STEPS



A small price to pay for global justice

The global movement for social, economic and climate justice is inspiring millions around the world. Our collective action at home and abroad is critical as we face enormous challenges to gain economic security, defend human rights and sustain our environment. We take hope from the courageous actions of our sisters and brothers in every country, who continue to stand up despite repression and violence to build a fair and just society.

To stay abreast of CUPE's global justice work you can subscribe to the Global Justice newsletter at cupe.ca/globaljustice. Check cupe.ca regularly to read web postings on a host of international issues.

Support for CUPE's international work and our solidarity projects through the Global Justice Fund is growing. With that support we can play a greater role in calling for change. International solidarity makes all the difference in protecting the life of one worker and sparking the movement of millions.

As CUPE Saskatchewan activist Nick Bonokowski said on the motion to support the Global Justice Fund "it's a small price to pay – less than a cup of coffee." He added members should be very proud of CUPE's work for global justice.

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SOUTH AFRICAN MUNICIPAL WORKERS' UNION DEMONSTRATION.

WE TAKE HOPE FROM
THE COURAGEOUS ACTIONS OF
OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS
IN EVERY COUNTRY.

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