



President of Croatia
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Mr. President,

**Public Services International calls on the Croatian Government
to urgently improve the working conditions of Croatian nurses and medical workers**

On behalf of 20 million public sector workers from all over the world, Public Services International (PSI) calls upon the Croatian Government to improve the working conditions of the Croatian nurses and medical workers. We support the Croatian Trade Union of Nurses and Medical Technicians (HSSMS-MT) and the Croatian Medical Union in the strike which was announced on Wednesday 18th September 2013.

PSI is extremely concerned by the difficult working conditions within the Croatian health care system. The system employs more than 30.000 nurses and medical technicians, but the figures show that the system lacks 12.000 nurses in order to meet the minimum requirements specified by EU standards and Croatian legislation. Throughout the years, the situation worsened and many nurses are working overtime without being paid. According to our sources, almost every nurse employed by Croatian hospitals has accumulated between 100 and 500 hours of unpaid overtime.

PSI has furthermore been informed that the Croatian government has decided to reduce wages in the health sector to the wage level of ten years ago. Croatian health care unions have tried to negotiate a new collective agreement without any result to date. These difficult conditions have forced many nurses to leave the country to try to find better opportunities in other European countries. However, there are over 2.000 unemployed nurses who are desperately seeking work. They are suffering from the decision of the Ministry of Health to ban the recruitment of new workers.

Nurses and medical doctors have announced that they are going on strike as from Wednesday 18th September, which will run until their demands are met. They have been subject to strong pressure from their employers, such as mobbing, threats and blackmail. PSI would like to remind your government that the right to strike is recognised by the Croatian Constitution, as well as international conventions.

We therefore support the Croatian medical workers in their fight and we urge your government to engage in meaningful social dialogue with trade unions in order to find a solution to this crisis.

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary