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**PUBLIC SERVICES INTERNATIONAL**  
**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING EB-156**  
**Virtual meeting 26-27 May 2021**

**Resolution**

**DECLARATION OF SOLIDARITY WITH COLOMBIA**

The PSI World Executive Board, meeting on 26-27 May 2021 expresses its solidarity with the Colombian people and calls for a democratic solution to the current crisis and an end to government repression.

**WHEREAS** the Colombian people have been on general strike since 28 April 2021, a strike that was called in response to the presentation of a tax reform by the government of Iván Duque who used the justification of the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to seek revenue by increasing taxes on basic food and essential services such as water, electricity, gas and sanitation. The proposal also required that low-wage workers who are currently exempt should start paying income tax, a change that would affect at least 3 million people. The strike was also called to demand negotiations on a list of emergency issues presented by the National Strike Committee to the government.

**HIGHLIGHTING** the massive participation of broad sectors of the population in the streets of Colombia, including PSI affiliates in that country, particularly young people, demanding a response to the most important demands of those affected by the economic measures of the current government.

**RECOGNISES** the triumph of the Colombian people, who, through the exercise of direct and participatory democracy, after several days of daily mass demonstrations and violent repression by Colombian security forces, forced President Duque to announce the withdrawal of the reform bill, and the Colombian Finance Minister, Alberto Carrasquilla, resigned the following day. However, despite these two major victories, the trade union movement, social movements and the Colombian people continued to take to the streets, demanding the implementation of a national living wage, the repeal of Decree 1174 of 2020 (which introduced a disguised labour reform), mass vaccination against COVID-19, zero tuition for university students and sufficient funding for public education, the withdrawal of Bill 010 that would deepen privatization in the health sector, guarantees for the right to protest, a basic monthly income, an end to gender-based violence and respect of sexual diversities, among other issues. Bill 010 was removed by the Colombian Congress on 19 May, in the face of continuous social mobilization.

**CONDEMNS** the brutal police repression with which the government of Iván Duque has responded to social protest. The National Strike Committee has condemned the at least 2,387 cases of police violence, 50 deaths, 578 injured (including 40 victims of aggression in the eyes), 524 disappearances, 1,200 arbitrary detentions, 21 cases of sexual violence against women

and 87 cases of gender violence, since the beginning of the mobilizations, constituting a humanitarian crisis of great proportion.

**WHEREAS** the UN and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) have requested that the Colombian government allow visits to the country to observe the human rights situation, in order to follow up on the widespread accusations of excessive use of force against demonstrators. As of the date of the PSI Executive Board Meeting EB-156, the government is refusing a visit of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which represents a clear and serious violation of human rights in Colombia.

**DEMANDS** that the government of Iván Duque guarantees the right to social protest and cease the brutal repression with which the police have responded to the demonstrations of the Colombian population, immediately accept the request for a visit by the IACHR and advance the negotiation of the emergency list presented by the National Strike Committee. The intervention of the international community has the support of trade unionists who, in a joint statement issued on 19 May along with PSI and other trade union federations, called for approval of the IACHR's request and also requested that a hearing with this consultative body of the Organization of American States (OAS) be held during this mission.

**PSI Executive Board CALLS FOR** solidarity from PSI affiliates, in support of the courageous Colombian people and in particular for our affiliates in the country.