



PCS

Mark Serwotka, General Secretary  
Janice Godrich, President

**Re: PCS one day strike action on 5 November**

Brussels, 3 November 2004

Dear Mark and Janice,

On behalf of the European Federation of Public Service Unions, I wish to express all our support for the one-day strike on 5 November against the announced massive job cuts in the public sector.

At a time when the UK needs more and better public services not less, the proposed 100,000 job cuts in civil service are nonsensical both in social and economic terms.

Notwithstanding EPSU's opposition to jobs cuts, any proposal of this kind should, at the very least, be managed collectively to minimise job losses. This is far from being the case as the UK government announced the cuts last July without any prior consultation with the unions. Since the announcement, we understand that your attempts to negotiate have been unsuccessful.

Recently, EPSU's affiliates in Belgium, Italy, Greece as well as the Netherlands, have also resorted to strike and protest action against deteriorating working conditions and absence of real consultation and negotiation rights. In France and Portugal, public sector unions are planning, respectively, a one-day strike next Monday, and demonstrations next Wednesday. In both cases the question of rights to social dialogue and collective bargaining are central, along with the general opposition to policy of cuts and privatisation. These policies go against the EU treaty's provisions on social dialogue and the overall objective to improve living and working conditions. They also violate the spirit of the EU directive on workers' information and consultation rights.

For EPSU, this series of attacks mean that a coordinated European trade union response has become all the more necessary. This is why we will step up our campaign for a real recognition at EU level of the vital work that public servants do for the benefit of all citizens, as well as companies. Besides the damaging effects on the workforce, job cuts often pave the way to further privatisation, which EPSU is clearly opposing. Public services are the strength of the European Social Model that EPSU and its affiliated unions are striving to defend.

We wish you a very successful strike and positive outcome.

In solidarity.

Carola Fischbach-Pyttel

General secretary

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