

Speaking Points for Jarkko Eloranta, JHL, Finland on behalf of the EPSU Executive Committee

Introducing the **Resolution on Climate Change, What priorities for sustainable development ?**

Resolution nr. 5, agenda point 16, Scheduled for Morning, Wednesday, 22 May

- On behalf of the EPSU Executive Committee I introduce the resolution on **Climate Change, what priorities for sustainable development ?** With the adoption of the resolution we will confirm that addressing Global warming and protecting our environment are priorities for the union movement.
- Why? Recently the work groups of the International Panel on Climate Change produced two reports. The first report gives a dire warning based on the science that global warming is caused by humans, by us and how it effects nature and our societies (**IPCC-Wgr II, Impact, Adaptability, Vulnerabilities**) Droughts and water scarcity on the one hand, loss of biodiversity flooding on the other and extreme weather, impact on crops, harvests will impact on food prices effecting poor and working families. Uncontrollable climate change will effect our workplaces and communities; The second report underlines what can still be done to prevent that global warming reaches 4 degrees or more by the end of the century leading to an uncontrollable Impact. (**IPCC Wgr III, Mitigation**)
- With the resolution, EPSU firmly supports bold actions to address Climate Change and to strive towards sustainable development. Being Europe's trade union federation representing environmental services workers we want to be in the forefront of this struggle for a better and Another Europe in which our environment is not destroyed, which helps to contain global warming and provides quality jobs and public services.

And we build on work we have done over the last 5 years.

- What have we done in the **past Congress period** ? EPSU commissioned a study on the Impact of Climate Change on Public Services. It shows the many ways in which workplaces are effected. EPSU has argued for ambitious and binding targets for electricity from renewables, for improving energy efficiency and for reducing CO2 emissions. We had EU commissioner for Climate Action Connie Hedegaard addressing our Executive. We pushed for EU action to focus not only on mitigation but also on adaptation. This requires investment, and this has become a priority in the ETUC Investment Plan. We worked with ETUC in the Spring Alliance, a group of environmental, development, social NGOs and trade unions demanding the EU works for sustainable development. We worked with the ETUC in the Resource Efficiency Platform and have participated in an ETUC project on Green Work places. We have been part of coalitions and alliances with environmental and social action groups working together for change – as part of the Network for Green and Social procurement, the Alter-Summit process, civil society coalitions around trade, EU transparency in lobbying. We worked with the European Trade Union Institute on the issue **Beyond GDP**, leaving behind austerity and an economic model focused on profit-maximisation and growth at all costs. With the resolution we confirm that we want to continue this struggle as part of a broader movement.
- The resolution states our analysis that one of the structural causes of global warming and the destruction of the environment is the current neo-liberal economic model. That same economic model increases inequality, leads to exploitation of workers, seeks to privatize our public

services. This needs to change and focus on human needs, redistribution of income and wealth, and a greater role for public services which provide the very services needed. Collective solutions rather than individual consumption, think of public transport to deal with congested cities and CO2 emissions.

- We fight on many fronts. At the global level, with PSI and the ITUC to obtain Just transition principles in a global agreement to reduce CO2 emissions. We also want other countries to address global warming, like Russia, the US and China. And let us not make a mistake: China is doing this and has added more solar and wind than others. It leads before the US and Japan and way beyond the EU regarding investment in renewables.
- In Europe we need to address Russia, Turkey, the EU, the Balkan countries for less waste, more resource efficiency and an energy policy of near zero carbon in 2050. And we have supported legislation on the disclosure of non-financial information on social and environmental subjects by companies.
- Our strength is also at the workplace, we can contribute to making the transition. That is also why social dialogue is crucial.

To highlight some of the action points:

- We will work for investment in public services to address climate change and in adaptation measures. We will strengthen our arguments why we need public services to do this
- EPSU will continue to support binding targets for energy efficiency, for renewables and CO2 emissions. Electricity prices will rise. We will ask of governments and EU institutions to address fuel poverty and promote the right to energy as a societal responsibility
- We will develop our positions on taxing environmental polluting services and products and carbon
- EPSU will take up the issue of climate change and the role of public services in adaptation in our sectoral work and social dialogue
- We will continue to address what we call “Beyond GDP”, a different view of growth and distribution of growth and wealth, taking account of developing countries as well.
- We will develop material to assist work place representatives in addressing environmental issues and continue our work on social and environmental responsible businesses.

This resolution received many amendments demonstrating the importance it has for many affiliates. Many thanks. We have accepted most or with some rephrasing. Those we have rejected considered different concepts or issues we wanted to address.

Dear Congress,

It is in this Congress period, in these coming 5 years, that decisive actions are needed to keep global warming below the 2 degrees increase at the end of the 21st century. The signs are not good. If our societies do not manage, climate chaos will be the result. That has a negative impact on our and many next generations to come. We do not want that. On behalf of the Executive Committee I ask you to approve the resolution for EPSU to act to make public services and workers rights' part of the solution.