

CFNU attends UN meeting highlighting women's ongoing struggles for equality

The 54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW54) was held in New York in March 2010. For CFNU attending the Commission (under the umbrella of the Canadian Labour Congress and the International Trade Union Confederation) was an opportunity to assess the progress made and remaining challenges in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action fifteen years after its adoption in 1995.

Unfortunately, the global trade union movement (which was represented by Public Services International, Education International, and the International Trade Union Confederation – representing over 200 million workers around the world) found little cause for celebration.

A statement delivered to the Commission's Plenary Session on behalf of the trade union movement reviewed the continued struggles of women in the workplace, in the home, and in

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CFNU endorses CUPE -CLC petition for G8/G20

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions has endorsed a world-wide petition for G8/G20 and universal access to HIV treatment, prevention, care and support. The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and its affiliate, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), announced the expansion of the Days of Action campaign with the launch of an online petition demanding universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The online campaign aims to collect as many thousands of

signatures as possible from throughout Canada and the world in time for the April 26-28, G8 Development Ministers meeting in Halifax.

A simple click of the mouse can insist that the G8/G20 Summits next June deliver on their 2005 commitment to universal access.

Make your voice heard: "I Support Universal Access to HIV & AIDS Services"

With this web site, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is also paving the way for union members and

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The new US health care bill: victory and defeat

The US health care bill has passed. It is on the one hand claimed to be the greatest public policy achievement in a long time. On the other hand, it is a massive climb-down from what was needed and first proposed. Even as celebrations continue, some say the bill was compromised to death.

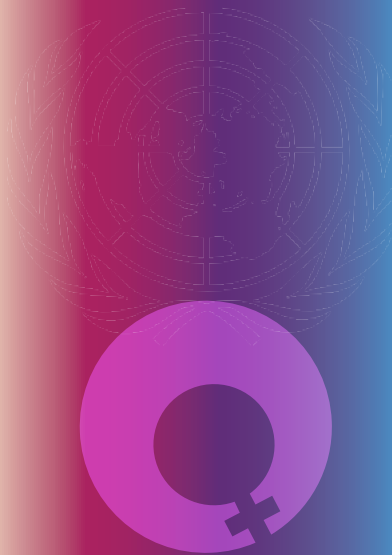
Mass-Care (The Massachusetts Campaign for Single Payer Health Care) in a letter to supporters acknowledges that "millions of uninsured residents in other states will receive life-altering assistance." (Massachusetts has had legislation providing its residents essentially what this bill will provide for some time now.) However, the letter goes on to highlight the

legislation's weaknesses. There are no meaningful cost controls, it will encourage underinsurance, and, as a result, the health care debate is far from over. Costs that could reach over a third of the average income cannot be controlled without a single payer system, which this round of reform fails to create.

A blog post by Donna Smith, one of the patients featured in Michael Moore's movie about the US health care system, SiCKO, provides a sharper criticism.

Smith acknowledges that the health care debate has plumbed new lows in the normally acrimonious political climate of the United

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International Women's Day

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society: to gain access to decent work and quality public services, especially health and education; to enjoy clean water and reliable energy; to participate in decision-making; to be leaders; and to be represented in *all* occupations.

Trade unionists called on the UN and governments around the world to:

- Actively promote women's economic empowerment through education;
- Provide access to decent work, full employment and social security;
- Redress workplace discrimination and inequalities;
- Implement equal pay for work of equal value (pay equity).

A shining light on the conference was the GEAR campaign. On a positive note, there is optimism

that the consolidation of existing UN agencies addressing gender equality into a single stronger UN gender equality entity will bring positive change.

Active representation from the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign (<http://www.un-gear.eu/Campaign.shtml>) was a shining light on the event!

To read more about UN CSW54 visit: <http://equality1.typepad.com/blog/>

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civil society from throughout the world to fashion their own personal messages to the G8/G20 leaders in addition to signing the petition.

The CUPE gesture strengthens the call for all Canadian unions to encourage their members to sign on and join global efforts to do the same. The signatures of the online petition will be merged with those collected by the World AIDS Campaign, a long-standing civil society partner of the Global Union AIDS Programme (GUAP), and presented to G8/G20 leaders.



An online action center is being made available by the Canadian Labour Congress to provide campaign materials, a G8/G20 calendar of information, as well as a Facebook fan page.

Sign the Petition for Universal Access on HIV & AIDS:
<http://cupe.ca/action/hiv-aids>

Visit our Action Center to support universal access to AIDS and HIV treatment, prevention, care and support: <http://www.canadianlabour.ca/action-center>

The CLC site also encourages individuals to join the campaign on Facebook for updates, photos, information and news. Join or look us on Facebook.

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States with the anti-side invoking McCarthy-style accusations of communists under the bed, while the pro-reform side claims to have solved the problem, creating a new era of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." (The acrimony might look familiar to Canadians aware of Tommy Douglas's famous fight with the doctors of Saskatchewan fifty years ago.)

Smith employs the ultimate test: would patients such as those devastated by health care costs and insurance company greed in SiCKO now be better off? No, apparently.

Those who died due to denials from their insurance carriers would still have died. Others would still go bankrupt facing health care bills. There was only one person who would be better off, the student who lost coverage and faced high tuition bills.

Not much has changed then for many who need help. The insurance corporations still call the shots, make the profits and still own the process. And the people who are sick will still pay for that.

We should remember that some 32 million Americans will have

coverage they did not have before. That's a step but not the grand achievement activists were seeking.

Canadians are watching the debate in the United States, not just because we are concerned about the welfare of our American neighbours but also because we recognize that we are fighting a cross border battle with the same interests eager to get at our own health system.

You can read the blog here: <http://www.guaranteedhealthcare.org/blog/donna-smith-sicko-patient>