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## Joint call for action on Public Services Day, 23 June

### NGO and Trade unions call for millions more health workers and teachers

Today, Public Services International (PSI), Education International (EI) and Oxfam International announced a joint call to world leaders, demanding funds for tens of millions of qualified health workers and teachers worldwide to be trained and hired to deliver public health and education for all. The current gap means that governments are failing to provide the quality public health and education services needed to realise the fundamental human right to universal access to health services and education.

Members of Oxfam International, Public Services International (PSI) and Educational International (EI), two major global trade union federations, will mark Public Service Day on 23 June as a call for action on Quality Public Services.

"The facts are speaking for themselves: Globally today, there are shortages of at least 4.25 million health workers", says Ylva Thörn, President of Public Services International. "In some countries, there are only enough trained health workers to cover ten percent of the population. The reality is that mothers are dying needlessly while pregnant or giving birth, and children can be found working in fields or on the streets instead of being in classrooms."

Thulas Nxesi, President of Education International says: "At least 18 million primary school teachers are to be trained and hired before 2015 if all children on this planet are to receive quality primary education. Millions of teachers are missing in action because of lack of funding. How can we educate our future generations without teachers in classrooms?"

The joint call for action underlines the efforts of both NGOs and the trade union movement to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to end poverty. At the half-way point to the MDGs, the four health and education goals are off-track. EI, Oxfam and PSI believe that success will only be achieved by an important increase in investment in quality public health and education services. Without world leaders – starting this July at the G8 - demonstrating the political will and providing necessary funds, the MDGs will fail and the cycle of poverty will continue.

Jeremy Hobbs, Executive Director of Oxfam International says, "2008 is the year which will define the success or failure of the MDGs. In two weeks' time, eight of the richest and most powerful countries will meet in Japan at the G8 and talk about aid for Africa. Later this year, world leaders will come together in New York at the UN MDG summit and talk about the goals that are in jeopardy. We need leaders to come to these meetings with their cheque books, not their notebooks".

EI, Oxfam and PSI are also focusing their efforts on reducing inequities, including those based on gender, and improving the quality of public services. This means universal access to basic education and health services, adequate public sector financing, access to essential medicines, access to safe water and sanitation and responding to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

As 2008 is the year of the major conference on Financing for Development (in Doha on 29 November – 2 December 2008), PSI, EI and Oxfam are recommending that their members mark this Public Services Day by calling on their governments for increased funding for development and to ensure adequate resources for delivering quality public services.

Press Release

### **About Public Services Day**

The UN General Assembly, on 20 December 2002, designated 23 June of each year as United Nations Public Service Day (resolution 57/277). It encouraged member states to organise special events on this day to highlight the contribution of public services in the development process.

For **Oxfam**, contact Claire Seaward +44 788 7632 660 or +44 1865473211  
Oxfam is a non-government organization committed to reducing poverty. It is running a campaign called Health and Education For All: [www.oxfam.org/forall](http://www.oxfam.org/forall)

Oxfam's Health and Education For All campaign was launched in 2007. It is demanding that all people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, have access to decent health and education services. As part of this, they are calling for 6 million more health workers and teachers, access to medicines, and public services that are free at point of use. [www.oxfam.org/forall](http://www.oxfam.org/forall)

For **Education International**, contact Nancy Knickerbocker +32 2476850701  
Education International is the voice for the education sector world-wide, representing nearly 30 million teachers and education workers. EI is taking a leading role in the Global Campaign for Education. [www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org)

The Global Campaign for Education promotes education as a basic human right, and mobilizes public pressure on governments and the international community to fulfill their promises to provide free, compulsory public basic education for all people; in particular for children, women and all disadvantaged, deprived sections of society.

For **Public Services International** contact Rajendre Khargi +33 623632929  
PSI is a global union federation made up of more than 650 trade unions, representing more than 20 million workers who deliver public services in 160 countries around the world. PSI facilitates the QPS (Quality Public Services) Campaign. [www.world-psi.org](http://www.world-psi.org)

The QPS campaign urges action to ensure that public services are well resourced, with skilled staff, delivering services that are effective, participatory, accessible and in tune with community needs. Quality Public Services are essential if the world is to meet important social objectives such as the eradication of poverty and hunger.