

CPSA SOLIDARITY DAY MESSAGE
OCTOBER 4TH 2019

The Caribbean Public Services Association (CPSA) today observes what is intended to be an annual event – CPSA Solidarity Day. The theme for this year’s observance is “Public Sector workers safeguarding public services”.

The CPSA has also adopted a slogan for this special event which is “CPSA: United and Strong”. In light of all the difficulties being experienced by public sector employees, the CPSA saw the need to set aside one day each year when affiliates will simultaneously organize activities which will not only highlight their own existence but also that of the CPSA as a regional public sector trade union organisation, one which was formed 49 years ago.

Today’s economic, political and social global challenges make the objectives of the CPSA as relevant as they were half a century ago. The Caribbean which is so vulnerable to Climate impacts and other Shocks ought to continue to find innovative and progressive solutions.

Consequently, the need to intensify and strengthen unity among Public Sector Trade Unions assumes even greater urgency. Some of the severe existential threats confronting public workers such as the erosion of human rights, threats to pensions and fringe benefits, political victimization, low salaries and wages demand collective resistance. Though affiliates will be at different levels in terms of their development and ability to combat the problems, the CPSA provides a platform for united action. As a matter of priority it offers the requisite technical assistance to assist affiliates.

The CPSA has a track record serving as a central or coordinating agency for discussion with Governments in which respective affiliates are engaged. Notwithstanding financial constraints, great success has been realized in the Training and Education of ordinary and Executive members of affiliates, women and young workers. Reports show that tremendous benefits have been accrued from those activities utilizing the knowledge and skills of internal personnel resources.

The CPSA over the past decade has been consistent in its pursuit of campaigns in addressing precarious work, gender equality and equity, governance and transparency issues, economic issues, poor working conditions and disaster management all of which impacts on public services.

Our collective efforts have brought about positive results. We must however bear in mind that our detractors will not cease in their action of victimization and attacks on our leaders who speak out in defense of members. Arrests and

legal persecution as well as denial of appointments are new strategies being used by some governments in trying to silence our leadership.

While it is recognized that each affiliate must retain their sovereignty, the power of collective action cannot be underestimated. It is only through unity we will get stronger and will then be able to cement our respective unions and the CPSA as a force to be reckoned with.

As leaders who have been entrusted by our members to represent their interest we will seek to do so without compromising or betraying that trust and the principles of trade unionism as set out by our fore fathers. Together we will continue to unite ourselves to ensure a non return to the conditions of the 1930's and the periods of colonization of our region.

The onus is on all public officers to seriously rally behind their trade union leaders as they seek better working conditions, justice and fairness for all. The CPSA anticipates greater collaboration with Governments of the region, other employers and partners to chart a course for greater climate justice and decent work, particularly with regards to collective bargaining.

Unity is strength. United we stand, divided we fall. Let us erase possible failure from our minds and prove to the world that we will succeed in our endeavors.

On behalf of the CPSA Executive Committee and it's Secretariat I take the pleasure in wishing all affiliates and public officers a successful Solidarity Day.


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THOMAS LETANG
GENERAL SECRETARY