



Resolution

What is public belongs to everyone, what is private belongs to only a few!

Reverse privatisations! Recover what belongs to everyone!

The pandemic unleashed a brutal attack by big capital and the forces that serve it against the individual and collective rights of workers. They carried out the plunder of wages and the impoverishment of workers while at the same time they responded to the slowdown of economic activity by draining huge public resources to big capital, leaving untouched or increasing profits and the concentration of wealth. An attack in which precariousness weighed in its favour, a true gateway for dismissals and unemployment and poverty that affected millions of workers. The glaring inequalities and injustices in each country and on a global scale have deepened, with privatisations and liberalisations weighing in strategic sectors, particularly in the health sector. In some cases, it exposed the effects of under-funding, lack of resources and the deterioration of working conditions, careers and wages. In other cases, people have suffered the consequences of fissures opened by the dismantling or absence of public and universal healthcare services. The pandemic accelerated the latent crisis and lay bare, in a brutal and cruel way, the exploitative, oppressive, predatory and aggressive nature of capitalism, its profoundly inhuman and destructive character.

The pandemic also highlighted the class nature of the European Union, whose response lacked the solidarity and cooperation that was required - which countries such as China, Cuba or Russia showed. This while maintaining the chorus of constraints and options that limited and limit the response in terms of health, production, employment and wages, namely the Stability Pact, the rules of the Single Market, the Euro and an ECB that can only lend to banks for them to charge usuriously to States.

A response that was and continues to be determined by the interests of big capital and big powers, those whom the so-called “recovery plan” serves and the very insufficient resources of the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework, adding more external debt and dependence, leading to the sacrifice of fiscal sovereignty and pressing for a return to the path of exploitation and impoverishment of the times of the troika, which is completely unacceptable and has to be strongly denounced and fought, particularly now that the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council is drawing near.

On the other hand, the times we face showed the indispensable and fundamental role of the State, of Public Administration workers and public services. With emphasis on healthcare workers, who carried out the direct combat against the pandemic, through the NHS, unlike those who do business with disease, who left COVID-19 to the NHS in the hope of seeing new and larger public resources channelled to address other situations, showing that the right to healthcare cannot be transformed into a business and that this can only be guaranteed by strengthening the own resources of the NHS.

A fundamental role also of workers from education, local administration, assistance and civil protection forces, social support services, among others, confirming that only collectively and with strong public services, properly funded and with the necessary means, can we overcome this threat, fight inequalities and ensure that no one is left to their own fate.

It is undeniable that responding to the needs of the population requires strengthening the role of the State, with the affirmation of social property and the role of the State in the economy; a State at the service of the people and the implementation of social rights and not the restriction of rights. The failures and shortcomings were not due to the excessive weight of the State, but rather to a State that was weakened by decades of right-wing policies, worsened during the years of the troika, which were not stopped after 2016, weakening services and the social functions of the State.

The virus is an excuse for the grossest violations of workers' individual and collective rights: forced vacations, changes in working hours and functional content, imposition of hour-banks and adaptations, cuts in wages, non-compliance with health and safety rules at work, serious constraints to action, organisation, representation and participation of workers and their trade union structures.

The workers responded with courage and determination in the fight against the pandemic, often at the risk of their own lives, but this did not have any concrete impact on improving their working and living conditions. The rejection by the PS, relying on the abstention of PSD, CDS and IL, of the PCP, PEV and BE bills that provided for the granting of the insalubrity, hardship and risk allowance, is a striking example of this.

The workers and their class-oriented trade unions waged a tough battle of resistance to prevent democratic rights from being suspended during this period, facing the reactionary campaign that demanded it following the declaration of a state of emergency by the President of the Republic. It was by exercising political and social rights that the Constitution of the Republic gives them that workers were able to stop these attempts, notably with the holding of the May Day celebrations, but also other forms of struggle meanwhile held.

The neglect by successive governments to the national scientific and technological system, the public disinvestment in public research and development, the channelling of support and their subordination to capital, the precariousness of its staff, associated with the "export" of many scientific workers to the great powers and their research centres, sacrifices our scientific-technological-productive sovereignty. A path which is inseparable from the destruction of the social functions of the State and increases external dependence, particularly in areas as sensitive as health. On the other hand, public control of production and the results of scientific and technological development is urgent, a way of ensuring that these are used in the interests of workers and people and sovereignty.

Teleworking was implemented, which some intend to use in a widespread manner without any critical monitoring. Obviously, there is no question about taking advantage of technological progress to improve working and living conditions. What is at stake is the creation of illusions based on advantages for those who were forced or have decided to work from home, dangling with the time saved in transport or strengthening individual autonomy, concealing the consequences of permanent availability, the increase in time and pace of work, the transfer of social costs to the worker himself, the intrusion of privacy under the pretext of the need to control work performed at home, the social confinement imposed on workers. Forms of work presented as "new", which are, after all, old-fashioned in terms of workers' rights, seeking to increase exploitation and prevent their organisation and struggle.

The government says that there will be no regressions, while at the same time it does not end the wage freeze in the Public Administration.

There are today important lessons to be learned and not be ignored in the future and in the struggle that we will have to continue: the importance of workers, the centrality of work; the decisive role of the State, of the social functions and public services, in particular, of the National Health Service as the only instrument capable of safeguarding the right to healthcare; Public Schools, Social Security, public management of essential goods and services (water, energy, waste); the contradiction of those who promote the weakening of public services and structures of the State and now demand and live out from these same structures and public funds; the need for public control of strategic sectors and companies, such as TAP, which would have been destroyed if it depended on private groups, and the importance of reinforcing the public response in road transport, especially in the interior of the country, were made clear, and support the older population today completely dependent on welfare or private structures. But there is also the need of public control over CTT, ANA-Aeroportos and Novo Banco.

The response to the health, economic and social crisis that we face will have to be built with the affirmation of the collective interest and of the public sector as its guarantor, a position that demands broad unity, organisation and struggle from the workers and the people.

This is the meaning we want to give to the initiative **“What is public belongs to everyone, what is private belongs to only a few! Reverse privatisations! Recover what belongs to everyone!**, held during the international week of struggle of the Trade Union International of Public and Allied Services (TUI - Public Services), a structure of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

We salute the WFTU on its 75 years, highlighting its character as an international class-oriented and democratic organisation, oriented towards promoting the action of the working masses in defence of their emancipating interests and aspirations.

The trade unions and structures representing workers and users, meeting on October 13, 2020, in Lisbon, reaffirm their readiness to intensify the fight against privatisations, to reverse them, by valuing Public Administration, public services and the State Business Sector and for the fulfilment of the following demands:

- 1 - Creation of a strong State business sector (namely, in financial activities, industry, transport, communications and other strategic sectors, with public control of the sectors fundamental to the national economy; reinforce investment in research facilities, associated laboratories, in State laboratories, in universities and polytechnic institutes and, at the same time, give all these pillars of the scientific and technological system the necessary means to fulfil the defined mission;
- 2 - Reinforce and improve public and Public Administration services; ensure the existence of quality public services, corresponding to the needs of the population; guarantee public control and management of water, sanitation and waste and the recovery of privatised services; implement a transport and mobility policy that promotes public transport and guarantees the rights of the workers and population;
- 3 - Reinforce and improve of Public Administration services, which involves defending existing jobs, hiring more workers, valuing and respecting rights; the general increase in wages and the increase of the national minimum wage to 850 euros;

- 4 - Valorisation of professional careers, replacement of the legal appointment relationship and repeal of SIADAP [evaluation system]; guarantee, promotion and enforcement of collective bargaining rights; fight precariousness, applying the principle that a permanent job corresponds to an effective employment contract; implementation of the insalubrity, hardship and risk allowance;
- 5 - Ensure and reinforce the right to public, solidary and universal Social Security and fight against its privatisation;
- 6 - Defend the universality and quality of the National Health Service and its efficient management; increase and improve the use of resources and end waste; restructure the hospital network, with a return to public management of hospitals managed under PPP's; reject the creation of new PPPs and demand an end to public-private promiscuity;
- 7 - Defend quality Public Schools for all, free and inclusive, organised to promote students' academic and educational success and to combat school dropout, which requires investment in terms of human, material and physical resources.
- 8 - Demand an end to the ongoing process of municipalisation of the State's social functions, namely education, healthcare, social action, with the final aim of privatising them;
- 9 - Continue the struggle to reverse the privatisation of EGF [environmental and waste management].

The trade unions and structures present here also decide to entrust the commission promoting this initiative to deliver this resolution to the parliamentary groups and the government.

Lisbon, October 13, 2020