

## **Federal public service unions united to defend collective bargaining rights, file complaint with International Labour Organization (ILO)**

Canada's 17 federal public service unions met earlier this week to decide their next move in response to the tabling of Division 20 of Bill C-59, the Budget Implementation Act (BIA), which gives the government the authority to unilaterally amend the sick leave provisions of the collective agreements covering employees of the core public service. Today, the unions are also jointly filing a complaint with the Geneva-based ILO asserting that the measures included in the December 2013 omnibus BIA - Bill C-4 - contravene ILO conventions that protect free collective bargaining and the right to strike.

"Our solidarity pact remains in place. We are united and even more determined to defend the constitutional rights of our members," said Ron Cochrane, the union Co-Chair of the National Joint Council. "We are taking all steps at our disposal including appealing to the body that enforces international conventions on labour rights."

The unions emerged from their meeting with a comprehensive coordinated legal plan to respond to bills C-4 and C-59 and stop the continuing attack on the fundamental constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, and a common approach to bargaining to push back the federal government's latest move to impose a predetermined outcome on negotiations.

"Bill C-59 is all about trying to force us to accept a "go to work sick" plan by threatening to impose it if we do not agree," Cochrane said. "It runs completely contrary to the Public Service Labour Relations Act (PSLRA) and it's a violation of the collective bargaining rights that citizens have under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And, like Bill C-4, it contravenes international conventions. We will not be intimidated by the federal government's bully tactics."

The 17 federal public service unions have also agreed to plan coordinated actions to mobilize federal public service employees in the face of the assault on collective bargaining rights.