

31/10/2012

Dear members,

Following multiple announcements put out by certain unions calling a strike on November 8th and a general meeting on Monday 8th November, we would like to set out our position and to clarify the situation.

The intolerable confusion concerning the originators of the call to strike on November 8th

The messages to the Commission about the call to strike on November 8th come from only three unions: USF, PLUS (TAO and Save Europe), and Generation 2004.

For R&D, recourse to strike action has always been a decision too important to be taken lightly, precipitately or when we are divided. The consequences of a failed strike would be disastrous, whether from a political point of view or from the point of view of the media.

Our Executive Committee meeting last week and then the wider meeting of October 24th comprising all our R&D sections in the other sites and institutions, analysed the situation and discussed the options concerning strike action, and pronounced itself against the strike on November 8th.

With our partners in the Alliance (European Solidarity, Conf-SFE-CISL, SFIE), and the Union Majority (FFPE, RS USHU et U4U) in coordination with those in the other institutions and particularly the European Parliament, we reckoned it premature to call a strike for November 8th and we tried without success to convince the originators of the strike call to put in place a united and coordinated action.

We thus refuse to participate in a strike improvised precipitately and without full agreement, without the slightest coordination with the other institutions since NO other institution is following the 8th November strike call.

NEVER before has a strike been called in such confusion! We think we need to organise ourselves better so as to have clear and coordinated positions.

Solidarity with staff of the Council

The only explanation given for the suddenness of this strike call is to show solidarity with our colleagues at the Council.

We give our support absolutely to these members of staff.

In tight coordination with our section R&D Council we count on giving the best response possible to the attacks of Member States, without thereby contributing to the weakening of the action at the Council by precipitately launching a strike at the Commission which has the support of a small minority. The effect of such a strike would be to dilute the action of Council staff, and the overall image which would appear at all levels, including in the media, would be one of weakness, a lack of unity and a lack of cohesion. This risks cancelling out all the useful effects of the action at the Council!

So, in coordination with all the institutions' unions, we are launching a call for the setting up of a **solidarity fund**, asking all staff in all the institutions and agencies to support their colleagues at the Council with a financial contribution on the occasion of their strike on November 8th, as well as any future action which will be necessary.

This is an absolutely essential step! In effect, there can be no question of allowing just the staff at the Council to carry the weight of the strikes which are going to be necessary in the battle against the Council! Those who wish to destroy the institutions and the European Civil Service deserve a firm rebuttal! This is brought about by the greatest unity of action of unions within ALL the institutions!

This requires us to coordinate our efforts, and not confused and indecisive flailing around!

The attacks on our Civil Service require coordinated, united and common responses at the level of all the!

In spite of the reassuring message from Mr. Sefcovic to all staff, the seriousness of the attacks led by the Council against our Civil Service and the irresponsible attitude of several Member States requires firm reactions, without the least ambiguity and at all levels.

A failed strike, uncoordinated and without clear objectives, would be the best gift we could offer to the enemies of the European Civil Service. In such a case, either or both of the representatives of the Member States and the media would not fail to exploit it against the institutions and their staff, thereby feeling in a much stronger position to impose their destructive will.

Wholly on the contrary, a truly coordinated strike involving all the institutions launched with full support of all the unions is the true message of strength that we need!

We are going to strengthen contacts and coordination with a view to following closely the evolution of Member States' positions at the Council, with the rapporteur of the European Parliament's Committee on Legal Affairs, with Mr van Rompuy on November 14th, and finally looking at the proposals of the Cypriot presidency on the financial outlook (which are now on Internet), organising a growing mobilisation and truly common action leading up to the Summit on November 22nd and 23rd dedicated to the MFF.

We will continue to work within the framework of the Common Front at the level of all the institutions to defend a common, coherent position.

In this important period for the future of the European Civil Service, we owe it to ourselves to keep staff informed as well as possible on the challenges that lie ahead, and above all not to deceive ourselves on our objectives!

Rallying of all staff is fundamental to ensure the future of the European Civil Service. Staff of all the institutions is a prerequisite for a successful large-scale strike!

Let us rally ourselves for our Future!