

**To the Delegation of the European Commission to Russia (Moscow Office):**

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To the European Parliament  
To the European Commission

## **S T A T E M E N T**

by participants of the international scientific-practical conference  
"The problems of public services under liberalization of national economies  
of Russia and Norway and membership in the WTO"

March 22, 2012

Moscow, Russia

On the occasion of the annual UN World Water Day, on March 22, 2012, the All-Russia Life-Support Workers' Union and "Fagforbundet" - the Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees - together with other member organizations of the global union federation Public Services International and the European Federation of Public Service Unions call on all trade unions and civil society organizations to support the campaign launched in Europe in defense of the Right to Water as one of the most important human rights.

This campaign is of great political and social significance not only for citizens of the EU member states. The trade unions of public sector across Europe and around the world, civil society activists will monitor the campaign and contribute to its success. Water is a **human right and public good** that should be open and accessible to all and which is necessary to protect and preserve for future generations. Therefore, trade unions and their allies in civil society argue that water and water resources **must always remain under state control**.

We call upon governments and parliaments of Russia and Norway, as well as authorities in other European countries and the European Union to immediately proceed with the implementation of the United Nations resolutions on the fundamental human right to water and sanitation, for which on July 28, 2010 the governments participating in the UN General Assembly voted. This resolution is not binding, but it is an expression of a global consensus. **National governments should allocate the necessary resources to ensure universal access to water and sanitation.** Most governments can afford such measures, but do not take them, hence the problem is a political, not a market one.

Despite the will of the peoples of several countries democratically expressed in the national referenda, we stress our deep concern over large-scale privatization of water resources in many countries in Europe. Privatization of water further increases the gap between the rich and the poor and brings a lot of people suffering and hardship. In addition, impermissible privatization of water will deprive the people of democratic control over the most important life resource. This is why together with the trade unions that participated in the Alternative Water Forum held in March 2012 in Marseilles, we

declare:

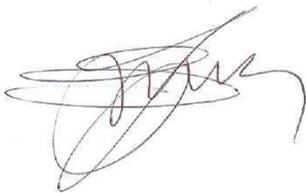
- **Privatization leads to complete failure.** It cannot provide the promised investment and slows down and delays the implementation of the necessary government programmes;
- The vast majority of countries are able to provide their entire populations with water and sewage services, **using public finance**;
- Employees and citizens **will not allow the principles of democracy to be undermined** by backroom deals, aimed at providing windfall profits for the few.

We also demand that the World Bank, regional development banks, other international organizations abandon the use of public funds to enforce privatization of water supply and sanitation under the pretext that turning water into the subject of market sales will improve the situation in the water services and expand their availability. Along with all the PSI and EPSU unions, we categorically reject this approach and believe that the **provision of water and sanitation is a basic responsibility of governments and should not be transferred to private operators for their profits.** These are **the most important public services** which our families, communities, economies, social and political stability and development depend upon.

**Water is a public good, not a commodity!**  
**Water is for life, not for profit!**  
**Water and sanitation are a human right!**

All-Russia Life-Support Workers' Union

Fagforbundet



President  
A.D. Vasilevsky



President  
Jan Davidsen