

Francisco Braz - leader of Portuguese union STAL - in Memoriam



(20 August 2020) Our comrade Francisco Braz, member of the EPSU Executive Committee unexpectedly died 19 August 2020. He was 70 years. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and his trade union colleagues in STAL, the Portuguese and broader labour movement in this difficult time. Francisco was a trade union delegate in the 80's and became the President of STAL, the Portuguese trade union for workers in municipal services or in full the Sindicato Nacional dos Trabalhadores da Administração Local e Regional, Empresas Públicas, Concessionárias e Afins in 1989. He served in that function until 2015 celebrating the 40 years of the union in April of that year. He was currently the president of the national assembly of STAL.

Under his leadership STAL joined EPSU in 1998 and Francisco assisted in the organization of the EPSU Congress in 2000 in Lisbon. Francisco was a member of the EPSU Executive since that time. He was known for his sharp analysis of the socio-economic situation in Portugal and the European Union and relentless in his

critique of the corporate and political powers in capitalist economies and of the austerity policies that hurt public services workers so badly. He was deeply concerned about the state of our democracies and the need for the unions to defend and promote collective bargaining. These concerns were reflected in the resolutions of STAL adopted by the EPSU Congress 2019. I am sure that I speak for the EPSU community in saying that we will miss a great and outspoken unionist.

I met Francisco for the first time towards the end of the 90's. We were introduced by a mutual friend the late Dave Stirzaker (NALGO, now Unison). Francisco was convinced of the importance of European trade union cooperation and the need to build a strong and critical voice at European level for public service workers. I learned to know Francisco as a man with strong values and as a great person, offering his hospitality and wit. While serious you could have a very good laugh with him. He campaigned for the right to water in Portugal and the EU, fought the privatization of water and waste companies and was actively involved in the Portuguese campaigns to reject the wave of trade agreements like TISA and CETA. He stressed the need to focus again on reducing working time and for Portugal to protect the collective agreement to have 35h. Francisco will be deeply missed . I will miss a very kind and exceptional man. My thoughts are with his long-time companion Guida and family.

EPSU has sent a letter of condolences to his family and to the union.

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