

Dear readers,

If you read these lines, it very likely means that you are interested in union matters. You therefore know that acting together, be it in our society at large or in the workplace is more efficient than working alone in a jungle where only the "fittest" survives.

It is by acting together and presenting a unified front in collective bargaining that the generations which preceded ours have set the basis of the rights we enjoy today in Europe, and which the rest of the world can look upon with envy: work status, healthcare, pensions, holidays, social leave etc. None of these rights was ever given to workers as a present. Each of them was the result of harsh social fights, where unions and their leaders exposed themselves to risks, and were sometimes the targets of unfair treatment.

More than ever since the end of WW2, these rights, our rights, are at risk of being curtailed on the basis of flawed economic and political dogmas. The only way to protect ourselves is to act as a group, to show solidarity, to join a union (and preferably the right one).

I am proud and grateful to be a USF member. USF was on our side from day one when my SUEPO colleagues and I were targeted for carrying out union-related work. Three of us, myself included, were abusively dismissed. USF acted to defend our rights and I am convinced that it made a difference. It took four difficult years of legal fight before reaching a settlement and I felt greatly supported by SUEPO, USF, FICSA and their respective leadership and members.

A special note of thanks must go to USF Chair Nicolas Mavraganis and his predecessor Bernd Löscher as well as to all USF, SUEPO and FICSA members for their relentless efforts and support. I admire them for their level-headedness and tenacity. On a personal note, my thoughts go to my ex-colleagues Aurélien Pétiard and Michael Lund. They are the last two staff representative cases which remain to be solved and I hope, will be settled in a soon future.

**To those of you who are members of USF: be proud of being a member.
To those of you who are not yet members: do consider joining USF.**

You should know that USF is the largest union with EU institutions. It reliably informs its members and the public about subjects that have an impact on the working conditions. It then best represents you in the defense of your rights and interests during negotiations with EU Institutions. USF disposes upon a vast network of experts covering all kind of technical matters that may impact your working conditions and works with reliable lawyers should you need them. Importantly, it is reasonable in its demands and walks the talk: it always tells what it will do and it does what it said it will do. USF can be trusted to best represent you. Being member of USF is like paying your insurance for your car: you do it hoping you will never need it but the day something happens - and nowadays you see that the world is changing so better be well insured - you will be happy to be USF member and to benefit from its support.

Stay all safe in these troubled Covid times.

Laurent Prunier