

Dockworkers in Chile set to strike; Nurses at Boston's Brigham and Women's hospital prepare strike action

Workers Struggles: The Americas

17 June 2026

The *World Socialist Web Site* invites workers and other readers to contribute to this regular feature

Latin America

Dockworkers in Chile set to strike

The Dockworkers Union of Chile (UPC) announced a national dockworkers general strike for this Thursday, June 18. At issue is the refusal by the right-wing Kast administration to respond to their demands for higher pensions and wages and benefits for widows.

The strike will involve 6,000 dockworkers and would severely impact Chile's export trade.

The strike call takes place in the context of increasing tension between the dockworkers and their own union.

Despite the massive support for the strike call by dockworkers, the bureaucracy has already intimated that it may postpone this week's walkout, as it did in April, at the height of Chile's summer agricultural exports, under pressure from exporters.

Such a move would invite a rank-and-file rebellion, such as the one that took place in the port of Valparaiso, one of Chile's largest, in 2018.

Ecuador police attack demonstration demanding Noboa's impeachment

On June 8 Ecuadorean gendarmes attacked a rally, at the offices of the National Election Council in Quito, collecting official signature forms to circulate among the citizenry. In addition to workers and their families, the crowd included students and pensioners.

The right-wing Noboa administration is directly responsible for a social and economic crisis affecting jobs, education, living standards and personal security.

Chanting "Noboa Out!" the demonstrators denounced the mass layoffs taking place across the country and the government's campaign to replace formal jobs with precarious work, including the Noboa administration abandoning child-labor laws (currently, almost 300,000 children are employed, 7 percent of the youth, a historical record).

Also at issue are the Noboa administration's attacks on democratic rights, specifically its defiance of popular votes opposing mining and oil exploitation in the Yasuni region.

The police attacked and injured workers, pensioners and even children with tear gas.

Panama protests over reopening of copper mine

Hundreds of workers, peasants and students marched and rallied in Panama City protesting against the Jose Raul Molino administration's plan to reopen the Donoso Copper mine (aka Cobre de Panamá) in Colón Province.

The mine was shut down nearly three years ago by Panama's Supreme Court, which declared the mine's contract illegal following several weeks of massive demonstrations by workers and peasants.

As part of the protest, demonstrators chanted slogans against all surface metal mining and against President Mulino. In response to the protests, the Mulino administration attempted to assure the citizenry that the government would thoroughly weigh the environmental issues involved in the mine's reopening.

The protesters rejected Mulino's assurances, pointing out that the Canadian firm First Quantum Minerals, and its Panamanian subsidiary never actually left the mine, by

permission of the government, supposedly to care for the mine's safety and to export whatever minerals had already been extracted from the site (including gold, molybdenum, and silver). The demonstrators claim that the mine never really ceased operations, despite the Supreme Court order, with the consent of the Mulino administration.

United States

Nurses at Boston's Brigham and Women's hospital prepare strike action

Some 3,000 nurses at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts voted June 16 by 99.6 percent to authorize a one-day strike, as seven months of negotiations have not resolved staffing ratios or a cost-of-living adjustment. The Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA) is asking for a 15 percent cost-of-living increase, but despite 17 bargaining sessions, hospital management has refused to make an offer.

Kelly Morgan, who is chair of the Brigham and Women's union chapter, told the *Boston Globe*, "We've always had the step increases. Then we negotiate an across-the-board increase [to help nurses keep pace with inflation]."

Nurses also want to limit management's use of temporary travel nurses in order to improve retention of bargaining unit nurses. An 18-month contract expired March 31.

The MNA reports that Brigham CEO Anne Kilbanski makes over \$8.4 million annually, while the hospital's top 14 executives take home a combined \$35.9 million.

Tucson transit workers vote by 99 percent to strike

Workers with Tucson, Arizona's Sun Tran transit system, and its contractor RATP Dev USA, voted by a 99 percent margin to strike as the contract with Teamsters Local 104 heads toward expiration on June 30. The union representing bus and streetcar drivers, along with mechanics and other transit workers claims that the major issue concerning workers is safe working conditions.

Whether or not this claim by the labor bureaucracy implying that living standards are a subordinate issue is indeed the case, there have been nearly 20 violent incidents involving the Sun Tran system in the past year. The two sides will return to the bargaining table on June 21.

RATP Dev has some 25,000 employees in 16 different

countries. It's parent, RATP Group—based in France and an employer of tens of thousands of workers, is 50 percent owned by the French government. The company's net profit in 2025 was \$250 million.

Canada

Vancouver outside workers job actions continue

About 600 full-time outside workers including water and sewage operators as well as maintenance, infrastructure and construction workers, all members of the Greater Vancouver Regional District Employees' Union (GVRDEU) are in the second week of a ban on overtime, standby and acting role jobs in pursuit of a new contract. The last contract expired some 17 months ago. Workers are demanding health and safety improvements, job security against contracting out and recruitment and retention processes to maintain staffing levels.

The union members operate Metro Vancouver's five wastewater treatment plants, monitor air quality and build infrastructure, along with park and housing site maintenance. Metro Vancouver is the regional government that provides and co-ordinates services for 21 municipalities across British Columbia's Lower Mainland.

Most workers in the key water and sewage installations have been designated as essential workers and cannot strike. As a result, pickets have targeted non-essential construction and maintenance work sites for limited strike action. Union officials have stated that they may call out non-essential workers on a full strike if management fails to move to meet their demands.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact