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***The world is watching!***

**TIME to End Violence & Harassment in the Workplace!**

***Key Policy Recommendations***



**1 of 3 women experience violence at work. African women support the adoption of the ILO Convention and Recommendation to end violence and harassment in the world of work!**



**Noting that violence and harassment in the world of work** constitutes a grave human rights violation, affects the ability to exercise other fundamental labour rights, and that it is incompatible with the decent work agenda and is a threat to dignity, security, health and the well-being of workers;

**Acknowledging, women are the most vulnerable and highly susceptible** to any and all forms of violence and harassment due to unequal gender-based power relations, as proven statistically[1], 35% of women (i.e. 818 million women globally) over the age of 15 have experienced sexual or physical violence at home, in their communities or in the workplace.

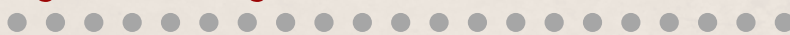
**Recognizing the commitments to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence** in existing national, regional and international instruments and development frameworks endorsed by African governments which include: the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), Africa Agenda 2063, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions;

**Affirm the urgency to firmly address the global menace of violence and harassment** in the workplace and welcome the commitment by the ILO tripartite constituents (governments, workers and employers representatives) to have the second discussion with a view to adopt the proposed Convention on Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work at the 108th International Labour Conference from 10th to 21st June 2019;

**We re-affirm the role of women's rights and civil society organizations as key actors in contributing to the goal of nurturing safe and decent workplaces and recommend the following KEY policy actions:**

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# Key Policy Recommendations



**African governments as the primary duty bearers have a responsibility to:-**

1. Respect, protect and fulfill their obligations and commitments to foster safe and decent workplaces by **adopting, ratifying, implementing (and providing adequate budgetary allocations) and reporting** on related conventions, policies and laws.
2. **Accelerate national legislation and mobilize all law enforcement authorities** to take practical actions to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence (GBV) in public and private settings and ensure services preventing and addressing gender-based violence are affordable, accessible, appropriate and user-friendly for GBV survivors.
3. **Facilitate inclusive and gender-responsive workplace environments that are safe and conducive to work free of any and all forms of violence and harassment**, particularly for those working in precarious jobs and marginalized populations of the world's labour force, including global supply chain workers, informal workers, migrant workers, domestic workers and others.
4. **Improve capacity and technical competence of law enforcers** on (i) substantive investigation, (ii) collection of gender dis-aggregated data, (iii) publishing and presentation of statistics and evidence and (iv) prosecution of perpetrators of violence and harassment.
5. **Monitor and enforce compliance by public and private entities** in providing comprehensive pathways for addressing violence against women and girls at the workplace including providing standard operating procedures, referral pathways, psychosocial support, comprehensive care and treatment and adequate facilities that are gender and disability sensitive.
6. **Put in place adequate safeguarding mechanisms** to end violence against women particularly violation and abuses that go unreported due to lack of information or cases where survivors are forced to go back to the perpetrators who are not brought to book or protected by the family or traditional leaders.
7. **Invest and leverage the use of ICTs** as an alternative means for the delivery of education and training particularly to women and girls by creating policies and enabling environment that prevent the use of social media and other forms of ICTs and media as instruments of violence against women and girls (cyber violence).

## **ADOPT a Strong & Inclusive Convention and Recommendation!**

It is a fact. Gender-based violence is the most dehumanizing, pervasive and oppressive human rights violation in the world. It is also a fact that women are the most vulnerable and highly susceptible to any and all forms of violence and harassment, be it at work, in their own homes and virtually in all spaces in their day to day lives.

In the world of work, violence and harassment is a human rights violation and a threat to the dignity, health and security of individuals. Examples of violence and harassment, which is very often gendered, include bullying and intimidation, psychological abuse, verbal abuse and threats of violence, stalking, coercion, economic and financial abuse, rude gestures, and put-downs. **Workers in low-paid, precarious, informal and unorganised jobs are at greater risk of experiencing violence and harassment in the world of work. Women are over-represented in these jobs.**

In 2015, acknowledging the urgency that governments, employers and workers' organizations must take to prevent, address and redress violence and harassment in the world of work, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office (ILO) placed a standard-setting item on "Violence against women and men in the world of work" on the agenda of the 107th Session (May/June 2018) of the International Labour Conference (ILC). Consultations with experts and feedback from the ILO tripartite constituents (i.e. governments, employers association and workers representatives) in 2016 and 2017, resulted in what is known as the *Yellow Report*[2] with proposed conclusions that was analyzed and debated during the *First Discussion*[3] at the 2018 International Labour Conference. **A majority of governments and workers' organizations were in favour of a Convention supplemented by a Recommendation to end Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.**

Between August and November 2018, governments, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers gave their comments and amendments to the proposed Convention supplemented by a Recommendation resulting in the publishing of the *Brown Report*[4]. **The background report referred to as the Blue Report**[5] was prepared by the ILO as the basis for the **Second Discussion of the text for the proposed Convention supplemented by a Recommendation at the 2019 International Labour Conference, with a view for adoption with a two-thirds majority.**

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Thereafter, countries will be expected to ratify the Convention and embark on its actual implementation that will ultimately lead to the beginning of improved and transformed lives for all workers. As a legally binding instrument, member states will be obligated to report regularly on measures taken to implement the Convention. The Recommendation will give detailed guidelines on how the Convention will be applied at national level.

**Rooting out of violence and harassment in the workplaces is a collective effort requiring intentional, consistent, and comprehensive efforts by governments, trade unions, employers and workers. Therefore addressing violence and harassment through a strong and inclusive international standard is key to the objectives of achieving decent work for all (Goal 8 of the SDGs), and women's rights and equality in the workplace (Goal 5 of the SDGs). The ILO tripartite partners have a golden opportunity to make a real, tangible and lasting impact on workers' lives around the world by ensuring that all workplaces are safe and decent.**

***Africa's women's rights organizations are keenly following to see that the Convention sails through with a unanimous adoption by the 187 ILO member states and that it is laden with the right approach to protect and uphold women's rights in the world of work. We are also keen to monitor ways in which governments and employers will implement their clearly spelt out responsibilities in the proposed convention and how trade unions will prevent, address and redress violence and harassment in the workplace.***

#### Reference Links

[1] <https://www.ituc-csi.org/gender-based-violence>

[2] [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_553577.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_553577.pdf)

[3] [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_631807.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_631807.pdf)

[4] [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_637108.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_637108.pdf)

[5] [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_673728.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_673728.pdf)

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