

Subject: Initiative to ratify C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention in the world of work– on the occasion of the upcoming International Women’s Day - March 8, reminding us of the respect for mothers and women

On the occasion of the upcoming International Women’s Day - March 8 and having in mind that women are often victims of violence and harassment - at work, in the street, at home, Confederation of Autonomous Trade Unions of Serbia requests that ILO Convention 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work is ratified as soon as possible.

Fight against various forms of violence and harassment at work is the focus of attention of international organizations – especially International Labour Organization, European Trade Union Confederation and trade unions from many countries; as well as national civil society organizations, social partners and particularly trade unions.

Care for workers’ financial-social status, economic security, decent work, OHS and equal opportunities for all workers in Serbia is the center point of the activities of the Confederation of Autonomous Trade Unions of Serbia and all its members.

ILO Convention 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work is the first comprehensive document which deals with the problem of violence and harassment at work in a thorough way, pointing out to specific characteristics, forms and negative consequences of harassment in the world of work.

Having in mind numerous international instruments, such as:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
- International Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,
- Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women,
- International Convention of the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants and Members of Their Families and
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and many others,

we are aware of our role and responsibility in the society to advocate jointly with all interested parties for the respect of fundamental human rights and elimination of violence.

The term “violence and harassment” in the world of work refers to a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment.

The term “gender-based violence and harassment” means violence and harassment directed at persons because of their sex or gender, or affecting persons of a particular sex or gender disproportionately, and includes sexual harassment.

The importance of Conventions is reflected in the comprehensive protection against violence of **all workers and all other persons in the world of work** (persons working regardless of their contractual status, interns and trainees, workers who are no longer employed, volunteers, persons looking for a job and candidates for a job, individuals who grant authorization, perform duties and responsibilities of employers), **in all sectors and at all places of work and stay of workers** – including places where workers rest, eat, live, attend their training and educational seminars; on their way from home to work and back, on a business trip, at training, various events and social activities.

Convention applies both to private and public sectors, in formal and informal economy, urban and rural areas.

In order to eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work it is necessary to respect, encourage and realize fundamental principles and rights at work, and those are: freedom of association and collective bargaining, elimination of any form of forced and child labour, elimination of discrimination in the employment and at work; as well as to support decent work.

Convention defines in detail measures and mechanisms for the elimination of violence and harassment, starting from prevention, identification, implementation of prevention measures and control. Workers and other interested parties should be provided with information and enabled to identify and suppress violence.

At the state level instruments of fight against harassment at work include: complaints and investigation process, peaceful settlement of disputes, court protection, protection from retaliation and revenge, protection of victims, witnesses and whistle-blowers; legal, social, medical and administrative support for the victims; sanctions for the executors; measures for raising the awareness agreed with representative trade unions and employers (consultations, educational campaigns, training, initiatives and the like).

Generally, women belong to the vulnerable group – exposed to gender violence, which they talk about reluctantly, don't report it and it stays hidden from the public eye because it is connected to unpleasantness.

Wishing for Serbia to be democratic, progressive and socially just society, Confederation of Autonomous Trade Unions of Serbia invites all interested organizations, enterprises and institutions to join our request for the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment.

PRESIDENT

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