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17th Session

Agenda Item: **Protecting Women from Harassment in the Workplace**

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
Protecting Women and Girls from Gender-Based Violence

The United Nations Women Executive Board,

Recognizing workplace harassment as an urgent threat that must be addressed since it is a violation of human rights,

Reaffirming the importance of the International Labor Convention (ILO) No.111 regarding Discrimination in Employment and Occupation to address discrimination, gender-based violence, and the gender gap in the workplace,

Alarmed by the Convention of No.190 by the International Labour Organization does not yet require Member States to incorporate zero-tolerance policies against harassment and discrimination, meaning these actions remain unlawful in countries without strong national legislation,

Bearing in mind that the ILO reported in 2024 that one in four women has experienced sexual violence and harassment during their working lives,

Noting that, in 2025, UN Women reported that among migrant domestic workers, 87% of harassment victims were women and girls, and 15% of them experienced sexual harassment,

Deeply concerned about complicated reporting systems for workplace harassment, especially for older generations, indigenous groups, migrants, those undereducated, underage, or with disabilities, as those who are in a vulnerable position are often overlooked or mistreated by being dismissed from reporting their harassment,

Conscious that reports on sexual harassment or sexual violence are not taken seriously, such as the “hand symbol for domestic violence” - raising one hand with the palm facing out, tucking your thumb into the center of your palm, and folding your four fingers over your thumb,

Expressing concern that there is a lack of safe, inclusive, and reliable spaces for women to report sexual harassment in the workplace without retaliation, ostracism, sabotage, and backlash,

Taking into consideration that, according to the National Women's Law Center, 72% of workplace sexual harassment victims experience some form of retaliation after reporting their harassment (such as receiving poor performance evaluations, their work products or behavior being scrutinized, being treated poorly at work, and the harassment increasing in severity), leading to employees failing to speak up when harassed,

Acknowledging that women and girls suffer from discrimination such as gender stereotypes when applying for jobs,

Having examined that migrant women who work as housekeepers and caregivers often suffer discrimination, abuse and harassment in the workplace such as receiving unpaid salaries, physical or sexual abuse and power harassment from their recruitment agency and designated employers,

Acknowledging that despite the ILO Convention No.190 (Violence and Harassment Convention 2019), workplace harassment disproportionately undermines women's safety and economic participation globally,

Reaffirming the importance of international collaboration and data sharing to monitor and develop evidence-based measures to prevent and reduce workplace harassment,

Taking note with appreciation of international treaties, conventions, recommendations, agendas and goals such as the ILO Convention No.100, ILO Convention No.111, ILO Convention No.156, ILO Convention No.190, Recommendation No.206, UN-CEDAW, UN Agenda 2030 along with SDGs Goals 5 and 8 being established in order to achieve and give guidance towards gender equality in the workplace,

Calling attention to the implementation of national laws, such as Japan's Act on Comprehensive Promotion of Labor Policies, in strengthening workplace protections against harassment and discrimination,

1. *Recommends* all Member States to raise awareness of sexual harassment or sexual violence and that it be treated as an urgent matter, emphasizing victims' rights by:
 - a. Implementing educational programs, such as digital models which teach about cyberbullying, online courses on digital safety, and leadership accountability programs which train department heads and Human Resources personnel on handling disclosures without re-traumatizing victims, in educational institutions and workplaces;

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- b. Holding campaigns such as environment and urban safety campaigns which focus on identifying potential high-risk public areas or local neighborhoods regarding sexual harassment to prevent its occurrence;
 - c. Developing preventive programs accessible to all citizens, such as campaigns raising awareness of the threat that workplace harassment involves, as well as medical, physical, and mental assistance to victims and people who fear suffering harassment in the workplace;
 2. *Requests* all Member States encourage employers, especially in the private sector, to take reported harassment cases seriously with efficient assistance, including:
 - a. Educational training courses made by UN Women, funded by the United Nations (UN), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank, and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), where Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and company counselors can refer to for guidance to address and take effective measures against workplace harassment in a manner recommended by UN Women;
 - b. Encouraging local authorities to set up an online platform or an office funded by UNDP, the World Bank, and international and non-governmental organizations where harassment victims have access to higher authorities to report the situation confidentially in times when their supervisors fail to address or take measures, such as gender policies and codes of conduct against workplace harassment;
 3. *Suggests* all Member States adopt a system, funded by the UN, UNDP, the World Bank, and international NGOs, where those in a vulnerable position, especially older generations, pregnant women, indigenous groups, migrants, those undereducated, underage, or with disability, can easily report workplace harassment cases, including:
 - a. Support system based on mentoring classes to make the adaptation process for vulnerable groups easier;
 - b. Free training classes offered by UN Women through the internet or within individual companies to further educate individuals on workplace harassment referred back annually;
 - c. Easily comprehensible directional pamphlet made by UN Women regarding reporting and support systems or offices they can contact in the time of need;
 4. *Recommends* Member States implement a standardized workplace training program funded by the UN, UNDP, the World Bank, and international NGOs, making use of certified human rights institutions and UN Women verified agencies as qualified training providers, increasing the prevention of workplace harassment by:
 - a. Providing training, workshops and conferences towards gender equality;

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- b. Mandating that all newly recruited employees attend and participate in the training program during the first two months of their employment;
 - c. Incorporating mandatory learning assessments at the conclusion of the program, requiring employees who do not pass to retake the training;
 - 5. *Suggests* the UN Women collaborate directly with the private sector to assist them in the elaboration of guidelines regarding job application processes and workplace conditions by:
 - a. Guiding in the accessibility of documents to prospective applicants regarding work conditions and requirements;
 - b. Ensuring that all applicants understand the conditions of the job they are applying for;
 - c. Guaranteeing that all job offers are aligned with human rights and the ILO Conventions;
 - d. Ensuring employees' safety, integrity, and equal treatment in the workplace;
 - 6. *Encourages* all Member States to address workplace harassment by:
 - a. Strengthening collaboration among international organizations, including the ILO and UN Women, as well as national labor ministries, to promote the implementation of international labor standards, including ILO Convention No. 190 (Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019), and to support Member States in ensuring the right to a workplace free from violence and harassment;
 - b. Encouraging national labor ministries to collect, share, and publish annual anonymized reports on workplace harassment, including data on the number of complaints received, investigation outcomes, and trends across both the public and private sectors, in order to identify patterns, monitor progress, and strengthen evidence-based prevention policies;
 - 7. *Suggests* that Member States collaborate with one another to promote the safety and well-being of women migrant workers by:
 - a. Strengthening a system for monitoring immigration, emigration, and their working conditions;
 - b. Encouraging the formation of private sector cooperative organizations;
 - c. Establishing an annual forum for governments, employers, and workers to exchange information and best practices regarding the number of migrant workers, their employment sectors, working conditions, and challenges, including experiences of workplace harassment, with the aim of strengthening international cooperation and prevention efforts;

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- d. Improving awareness of labor standards enshrined in the ILO Conventions No. 111 and No. 190, through annual guidance offered by the labor ministries of the Member States for employers;
8. *Suggests* all Member States collaborate with private sectors, such as the financial, law, and medical sectors, to address workplace harassment by:
 - a. Creating an agency that monitors the cases of workplace harassment in the different companies of the private sector;
 - b. Publishing periodic reports on workplace harassment prevention measures, investigations, and outcomes to strengthen transparency and accountability;
 - c. Receiving advice from professionals on gender equality in the workplace recognized by UN Women about how to improve gender equality in the workplace and training with UN Women experts to tackle workplace harassment and the gender gap;
 9. *Encourages* all Member States to cooperate with local communities to increase women's participation and representation in the workplace by:
 - a. Facilitating women's access to the workplace through campaigns coordinated by the government and local communities;
 - b. Giving technical assistance and training to women applicants when applying for job openings;
 - c. Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) occupations and opportunities for women in rural areas through campaigns and collaboration with primary and secondary schools;
 - d. Including STEM subjects in the curriculum of the students no matter their gender in primary and secondary education;
 10. *Recommends* all Member States introduce in their private sector gender policies that require employers to take reasonable steps to stop sexual harassment in the workplace at an early stage by:
 - a. Signing international treaties, conventions, and recommendations regarding gender equality in the workplace such as the ILO Convention No.100, ILO Convention No.111, ILO Convention No.156, ILO Convention No.190, Recommendation No.206, UN-CEDAW, and UN Agenda 2030 with special reference to SDGs Goals 5 and 8;
 - b. Encouraging labor ministries to be aligned with the ILO standards and international legislation so that they can cooperate with companies to address workplace harassment;

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- c. Complementing the existing legislation on workplace harassment, such as defining harassment and discrimination as unlawful acts;
 - d. Including zero tolerance against workplace harassment in domestic laws;
 - e. Setting a quarterly questionnaire by employers about harassment or what they think of the work environment for their employees;
 - f. Holding regular one-on-one meetings by employers in the workplace according to a quarterly survey;
11. If employers find offenders of women in the workplace, the employers should punish following domestic labour law, and the ILO Convention No.190 in case of countries that do not have this type of legislation;
12. *Recommends* all Member States refrain their private sector from asking for private and personal information such as marital status, relationship status, or family dynamics during selection processes by:
- a. Developing codes of conduct for every private company that include basic information about how to conduct selection processes;
 - b. Holding companies accountable for the importance of ensuring the protection of personal data during selection processes;
 - c. Following the guidelines offered by the ILO as well as the ILO Convention 111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958;
13. *Encourages* NGOs or national governments to monitor the evolution of workplace harassment in the world of work, free from violence and harassment in the private sector by:
- a. Performing trimestral spot checks and audits at companies to evaluate and keep a continuous track of their performance and commitment to gender equality policies;
 - b. Hosting training and prevention programs for employers and employees to boost a gender inclusive workplace environment;
 - c. Recommending the private sector develop strong codes of conduct and gender related policies aiming to achieve gender equality in the workplace;
14. *Suggests* the UNDP, the World Bank, international and non-governmental organizations to voluntarily fund and support Member States in order to tackle workplace harassment through:
- a. Allowing the programs and initiatives proposed above to achieve long-term stability and survival;

- b. Setting up legal protection funds for victims and survivors of workplace harassment by guaranteeing them legal financial aid;
- 15. *Suggests* Member States and the Ministry of Labor implement victim support groups that are locally and regionally organized through:
 - a. Installing 24/7 hotlines which allow victims of harassment to freely call to seek help, immediate attention, report their cases, or for those in need of immediate protection from escalated dangerous situations;
 - b. Allowing survivors to have complementary online counseling, providing free legal consultation via online meetings with professionally trained counselors at any location of their choice.