



**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION
OFFICE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS**
220E 42nd street, New York, NY, 10017 Phone +1/212/6970150

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**Statement by Ms. Elena Gastaldo
ILO Office for the United Nations**

**65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Third Committee - Agenda item 28: Advancement of Women**

Mr. Chairman,

The ILO's most contemporary and comprehensive contribution to the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women is the International Labour Conference Resolution on Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work, unanimously adopted by representatives of governments, employers and workers in June 2009. This Resolution calls upon the ILO to promote gender equality as a cross cutting issue in all four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda. The topics examined in the resolution include, among others, equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal value, work-family reconciliation measures, the need to increase the share of women participating in social dialogue, and women's entrepreneurship development.

The resolution also highlights the role that governments, employers' and workers' organizations have to play in achieving gender equality in the world of work. In particular, Governments can contribute to create a conducive environment through the ratification and implementation of the ILO equality Conventions, the adoption of non-discrimination legislation and gender-sensitive labour laws, and the development of gender equality policies and programmes, with special attention to the most vulnerable women in society, including indigenous, migrant, minority, young and rural women.

Mr Chairman,

This past June, at the 99th session of the International Labour Conference, the ILO discussed for the first time the issue of Decent Work for Domestic Workers with a view to the setting of new international labour standards regarding this so far largely unprotected group of workers. Women's and girls' participation in domestic work is high all over the world and its hidden nature makes them particularly vulnerable to discrimination in respect of conditions of employment, different hazards, verbal and physical violence and sexual abuse.

The setting of new international labour standards to address this issue will add power to governments' efforts to address violation of domestic workers rights, to reduce violence against women, and to give girls working as domestic workers a better chance for their future.

Mr. Chairman,

In December this year the ILO will release the second edition of the Global Wage Report. The report provides an overview of the short-term impact of the crisis on wages in different regions across the world. This year's edition will pay special attention to low-pay work, its determinants and implications for poverty and employment mobility. Low pay work is a concern because it increases the risk of poverty, even though not all low-paid workers are poor, and often becomes a trap instead of a stepping stone towards better-paid jobs.

Women are disproportionately represented among low-wage workers, and this report highlights that sex discrimination in wage structures and wage determination systems, and the undervaluation of female-dominated occupations, such as domestic work, are an important cause of low-pay work. The report argues that minimum wage policies, along with a judicious use of in-work benefits, such as tax credits and lump-sum payments, can contribute to curbing low-pay work and improve the condition of women in the world of work.

Finally Mr. Chairman, I would like to share with you the work the International Training Centre of the ILO continues to do to support the development of national capacities to address gender-based discrimination and promote gender equality.

In cooperation with the ILO Bureau for Gender Equality, it delivers training for gender audit facilitators to create constituents, national gender experts and UN staff's capacity in reinforcing gender mainstreaming. In addition the Training Centre is also delivering on-line and in-presence training courses on concepts and tools to mainstream gender equality in development processes, gender-responsive budgeting and non-discrimination. Among many projects, in partnership with the European Commission and UNIFEM, now part of UN Women, it delivers courses in support to national and international efforts to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in the global development agenda.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that the achievement of gender equality in the world of work would give visible results in poverty reduction, social inclusion and the achievement of the MDGs. The ILO, Mr. Chairman, stands ready to assist its Constituents in this regard.

Thank you.