

Break the silence. Join the campaign for an International Labour **Convention to STOP gender-based violence in the world of work.**




Today – United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) invites *you* to join our global campaign for zero tolerance of gender-based violence in the world of work.

Violence – and in particular violence against women – remains one of the most under-reported, yet destructive features of our world of work today. It costs lives and livelihoods. It destroys workers and families. It harms the reputation of businesses and costs billions to the economy.


Gender-based violence (GBV) in the world of work keeps women trapped in poverty, robs women of their autonomy and collective voice at work and prevents women workers building power.

BUT there is still no international standard that outlaws gender-based violence in the world of work.


GBV in the world of work reflects continuing gender discrimination and inequalities in society. For the large part, our workplaces remain segregated and women are still paid less than men in every country of the world, even when doing work of equal value. A majority of the world's female workforce is in non-standard forms of employment, often low-paid, insecure or informal. The glass ceiling may have a few cracks in it, but it is far from being shattered.

 *“Because of this system, each [worker] is made to work for two to three hours for free. If the workers don't make the extra hours, they grab the workers by the neck and throw them out. The ‘Personal Room’ is the room for the production manager and the compliance manager. When we do something wrong, they make us stand on one foot, until they believe we have had enough punishment. We feel bad that we work hard, and yet they make us work for free and punish us when they want to. We sometimes feel hopeless. How long can we work like this?”* Female factory worker, Bangladesh

The unequal power relationships that exist in our societies and in our workplaces are also reflected in the way that racialized peoples, indigenous workers, migrant workers, LGBTI workers and young workers experience violence disproportionately. And no workplace is immune from harassment and violence - whether it's the anchor woman at Fox news, or the leaf picker on a tea plantation.

 *“He was the director of a large organisation who had just delivered a speech to my college class. I'm a soon-to-be college graduate who's looking for a job in marketing. And he had a position available that was right up my alley. As it turned out, the job was right—but the situation was all wrong. He, a businessman more than 30 years older than me, was "attracted" to more than just the luster of my intellect, experience, and skill set.”* Job seeker – USA

The risk of exposure to violence is often greater in jobs and sectors where work is informal or precarious, where wages are low, where workers are unorganised or stopped from joining or forming trade unions and where management accountability is low.

 *"The man was a regular customer at our pub, and on several occasions he was kind enough to offer me a beer or two, but that day before he bought beer for me he told me that afterwards he wanted me to go out with him. He kept repeating that there was no way a woman can drink his beers and not pay for them in kind, and grabbed me by the neck and shook me violently."* Bar tender, Tanzania

Work-related violence is not confined to the physical workplace (whether factory, field, office or private home). It can happen on the way to and from work or at work-related social events, for example.

Domestic violence also has an impact on the world of work. [*Two thirds of women experiencing violence are in a job. This means that, like it or not, their path to escape probably collides with their workplace. They plan, they find accommodation, they seek police assistance, they attend court dates, they arrange counselling and medical attention for their children – they do all this while trying to navigate work.*](#) Lack of economic independence can also keep women trapped in violent relationships.

Trade unions, women and feminist organisations, human rights organisations, youth groups and others are coming together to work for an international labour law that will make it clear that violence and harassment are NOT part of the job.

Trade unions have approached violence and harassment in the world of work in various ways: through collective agreements, social dialogue, negotiation of workplace policies, and through advocacy for legislation, campaigns and awareness raising. They include measures undertaken in occupational safety and health, as well as specific measures, for example, that address sexual harassment in the world of work, or that provide special leave and support to workers experiencing domestic or intimate partner violence.

Let's work together for zero tolerance. Join the GBV campaign and stand with us in our call for an ILO Convention to stop violence and harassment in the world of work.

See what you can do by visiting:

- [ITUC GBV campaign webpage](#)
- [Campaign briefing tool](#)
- [Share your campaign updates and actions here](#)
- [Sign up to ITUC's GBV Facebook page](#)
- Or contact us: equality@ituc-csi.org