WORKERS UNITE FOR THE RIGHT OF EVERYONE TO A WORLD OF WORK FREE FROM VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT: #RATIFYC190

Survey and assessment on the implementation of ILO Violence and Harassment Convention No. 190 and Recommendation No. 206
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Violence and harassment at work, and in particular gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH), is a major problem in every region of the world and in every sector. It destroys lives, denies women the chance to fulfil their potential, and is caused by and contributes to violence and repression in society at large, often especially prevalent on the basis of people’s gender identity and sexual preference, ethnicity and social status. Every worker should have the right to a world of work free from violence and harassment and that is why this is a top priority for unions everywhere.

Concerted campaigning and lobby and advocacy by unions, in alliance with other movements, led to the successful adoption of the key ILO Convention C190, and its accompanying Recommendation R206, at the 2019 International Labour Conference. This report demonstrates how unions from every corner of the world are pushing for C190 to be ratified and effectively implemented by governments, and how they are campaigning for the legal reform to make the contents of the Convention and the Recommendation a reality for all.

The report points to the ways that C190 and R206 have been implemented, and how they are helping to strengthen social dialogue and collective bargaining towards the improvement of rights and working conditions for workers, in all their diversity.

The data from the ITUC’s first survey of 107 ITUC affiliates unions in 70 countries, reveal that:

- Violence and harassment have increased in recent years, and that GBVH increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Large numbers of unions across the world have taken actions on C190, with 97% of trade unions surveyed working to secure the ratification and implementation of C190.
- A total of as many as 50 countries will ratify C190 by 2023. 38 ratifications of C190 are likely to take place in the next two years, while to date 19 countries have completed their ratification process.
- Significant engagement in social dialogue and workplace negotiations/collective bargaining. Overall 91% of trade unions surveyed are engaged in social dialogue to align C190 with national laws and policies and 67% have negotiated workplace policies or collective bargaining agreements to align with C190 and R206.

With global and national data showing that as many as 7 in 10 of all workers have experienced sexual harassment and other forms of harassment or violence including GBVH in the world of work, there is an urgency in making C190 a reality. As demonstrated in this report, unions are responding to this urgency. They bring significant added-value by ensuring that laws and workplace measures such as the introduction of workplace policies and risk assessments addressing violence and harassment, are gender-responsive, effective and relevant to the lives of all working people.

The ITUC 4th World Women’s Conference (2021/2022) outcome document underpins our strong call to action to governments, employers and workers across the world to act:

- **Governments**, to fulfil their responsibilities through the swift ratification of C190 and full implementation of C190 and R206 into national legislation and regulations and by fully involving trade unions as social partners in social dialogue and collective bargaining.

- **Employers**, To engage trade unions in collective bargaining aimed at alignment of C190 and R206 at sector and workplace level and by ensuring that C190 and R206 are effectively applied across the entire supply chain.

Join the #RatifyC190 campaign, join us in our call to action to hold governments and employers accountable in ensuring the right of everyone for a world of work free from violence and harassment, including on the basis of gender.

Sharan Burrow,
ITUC General Secretary

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1 The survey was held online between 24 March and 26 April 2022. In Africa, 26 affiliates in 21 countries participated in the survey; a further 15 countries and 20 affiliates were from the Americas; 19 countries and 23 affiliates in Asia-Pacific; 7 countries and 8 affiliates in MENA; and 23 countries and 30 affiliates in the Pan-European Region. Eleven questions were asked using an online survey platform. Three questions were asked to all survey respondents (n=107). Only respondents active on campaigning for C190 were asked eight questions related to the implementation of their C190 campaign (n=104). Questions about government and employer responses were filtered to select one response per country (n=79).

THE CASE FOR MAKING C190/R206 A REALITY
ILO Convention No. 190 (C190) and accompanying Recommendation No. 206 (R206) were adopted with overwhelming support by International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2019. The ILO is the only UN agency with a tripartite constituency, comprised of governments, employers and workers representatives. C190 is ground-breaking in setting out international standards to both prevent and respond to violence and harassment, including GBVH, in the world of work. C190 is a binding instrument and R206 provides further guidelines concerning its implementation.1 Once governments ratify C190, they are required to implement laws against violence and harassment that tackle prevention, enforcement and support for survivors. In addition, C190 (and R206), sets out clear duties for employers to implement workplace policies, carry out prevention and risk assessments on violence and harassment, and to consult with workers and trade unions. With a strong focus on GBVH, C190 also addresses the need for strengthened measures to tackle it and to mitigate the effects of domestic violence in the world of work.

ILO C190 and R206 provide an integrated and comprehensive roadmap to prevent and address violence and harassment in the world of work, covering all workers, irrespective of their contractual status or type of employment. Through strong laws, obligations on employers and social dialogue it is now possible to realise a future where gender power inequalities at work are addressed and where ending violence and harassment can help contribute to decent and respectful work for everyone, an issue that has become of much greater importance since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key economic and societal arguments - the impact of inaction, benefits of action

Violence and harassment including GBVH in the world of work remains one of the most tolerated violations of workers’ rights. It affects workers in all of their diversity, and across all sectors of the economy.

Women, informal sector workers, domestic workers, racialised, indigenous, disabled and LGBTI+ workers are disproportionately affected by violence and harassment, particularly GBVH.

In the ITUC survey, 7 out of 10 trade unions surveyed think violence and harassment in the world of work has increased in the last five years. An overwhelming number of organisations in Asia Pacific (96%) and MENA (88%) report that violence and harassment in the world of work has increased over the last five years. In addition, 80% of organisations in Africa and the Americas and over half of organisations in the Pan-European Region (52%) report an increase.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an alarming increase in domestic violence and third-party violence and harassment in sectors such as health, transport, retail and education.

Domestic violence is an occupational safety and health issue affecting as many as 1 in 3 of women workers, it impacts on survivors safety and security at work and their capacity to work, be productive and have financial independence.

The economic and social costs of not addressing violence and harassment are high. Violence and harassment is a major barrier to progress towards equity and gender equality in the world of work, and it impacts on company performance and productivity. It bars workers’ access to sustainable and decent work and impacts their wellbeing, safety and health at work and the impacts the retention of valued workers. That’s why it needs to be eliminated.

In the ITUC survey, 7 out of 10 trade unions surveyed think violence and harassment in the world of work has increased in the last five years. An overwhelming number of organisations in Asia Pacific (96%) and MENA (88%) report that violence and harassment in the world of work has increased over the last five years. In addition, 80% of organisations in Africa and the Americas and over half of organisations in the Pan-European Region (52%) report an increase.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed a surge in domestic violence and workplace violence, including GBVH. In the ITUC survey, 8 out of 10 trade unions think GBVH increased during the Covid-19 pandemic. In Asia-Pacific (96%) of unions and in Americas (85%) of unions report an increase in gender based violence.
Argentina was the fourth country to ratify C190 on 23 February 2021. Alliance building and working alongside the feminist movement have been important features of the campaign, which built on a long history of union and feminist mobilising and campaigning. This included the #NiUnaMenos (NotOneLess) campaign against GBV and femicide that started in 2015 and the successful campaign for the adoption of the ILO domestic workers Convention (C189), bringing a strong focus on women disproportionately affected by GBV. In addition, affiliates of the three trade union centres (the ITUC-affiliated CTA Autónoma, CGT and CTAT) participated in the National Inter-Union Network against Violence at Work (la Red nacional intersindical contra la violencia laboral), including a study on violence and harassment in the world of work in 2021. The Network involves 106 grassroots organisations and involved numerous actions: from meetings, demonstrations, awareness raising to media events across many sectors and at the grass-roots. The ITUC, PSI and EI were amongst global union organisations that gave strategic attention to the campaign for ratification in Argentina, and whose affiliates and union members played a leading role in the feminist movement. Unions also made demands for ratification through tripartite structures with employers and the government.

Unions have called for comprehensive legislation, social dialogue and improved labour relations to be at the centre of the full implementation of C190. For the unions, it is an opportunity to put in place new measures to prevent violence and harassment and make it visible, while also avoiding a culture of litigation. Unions have also put a strong emphasis on linking GBV to other structural gender inequalities such as the care economy, emphasising the need for quality public care services. Lessons learnt from the campaign include the impact of extensive mobilisation, strengthened by strategy building between the three trade union centres. Effective communication and awareness raising campaigns both within trade unions and in the wider civil society and in alliances with feminists, and having a previous law on GBV in place, are other factors that facilitated early ratification.

"The most important achievement of the trade union campaign on C190 has not only been the ratification of the Convention…this achievement was preceded and accompanied by an activism that in our country was able to bring together all the trade union organisations, and that has been part of a broader mobilisation, this process has strengthened the role of women in the trade unions. This has contributed to strengthening the ties that weave our feminist networks, and has allowed us to begin to make socially more visible the structural factors that enable violence and harassment in the world of work, and the prevalence of situations that express gender power inequality in labour relations and in social relations in general...At this point in time, it is a priority not only to make progress in the production of legislative instruments in line with the definitions set out in the Convention, but also to ensure that the guidelines [in C190 and R206] can be reflected in sectoral joint agreements through collective bargaining. Yamile Socolovsky, CTA-T, Argentina."
WORKERS UNITE IN MAKING C190/R206 A REALITY.
OVERVIEW OF THE #RATIFY C190 CAMPAIGN
The campaign #RatifyC190 was launched as soon as C190 was adopted on 21 June 2019. Prior to that the ITUC’s global campaign “Stop GBV at Work, Support an ILO Convention” had mobilised workers across the world calling on their governments to support the adoption of the Convention. In both campaigns ITUC, along with the GUFs and allies, provided resources and information for the lobby and advocacy campaigns, and held global and national events, mobilisations and reached out to (social) media.

The #RatifyC190 campaign has had the biggest impact at the national level where unions and their allies have mobilised for their governments to ratify C190, often through high-profile public campaigns for the right of everyone for a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. Each year, key dates for global mobilisations include: International Women’s Day (8 March), the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November) in tandem with the 16 days of activism (25 November – 10 December) and the anniversary date of the adoption of C190 and R206 (21 June).

The ITUC has joined forces with unions across the world, with Global Union Federations (GUFs) BWI, EI, IFJ, IndustriALL, ITF, IUF, PSI and UNI Global Union, the International Domestic Workers’ Federation (IDWF), and civil society, social justice, human rights and feminist organisations to vigorously campaign for governments commitments to ratify and implement C190.

Thanks to strategic lobbying of the ITUC and a global petition with more than half a million signatures (carried out in an alliance between ITUC, Human Rights Watch, Action Aid, Care International and Avaaz), many governments made a public commitment to ratify C190 during UN Women’s Generation Equality Forum in France in 2021. The same Forum secured a collective commitment supporting the ratification of C190 (under two Generation Equality Forum Action Coalitions: economic justice and rights; and gender-based violence). The collective commitment on C190 has so far resulted in the support of 80 stakeholders including governments, UN entities, NGOs and philanthropies.

In the ITUC survey unions report that they carried out extensive dissemination of ITUC campaign toolkit (including the C190 share graphics, mini guide and newsletters) and used across many sectors and in social media. These materials have helped to raise awareness through simple messaging for unions and allies in civil society and feminist organisations, student bodies and education institutions.

The ITUC’s campaign logo in the lead up to the adoption of the Convention “Stop GBV at Work, support an ILO Convention” and the subsequent logo “Ratify C190, for a world of work free from violence and harassment” are well-recognised and consistently used logos reaching workers in all their diversity and particularly women in many workplaces across the world.

ITUC Campaign toolkit: https://www.ituc-csi.org/ratifyC190-campaign-toolkit
National campaign activities in support of C190 and R206 and lessons learnt

In the ITUC survey, 97% (104) of trade unions are involved in campaigns and lobbying to secure the ratification and implementation of C190.

The ITUC’s internal analysis survey found union campaigns for the ratification of C190 in 90 countries, spanning all parts of the world.

National campaigns have engaged workers, and particularly women workers, in unprecedented ways, giving voice to workers who face the greatest vulnerabilities in the world of work, including those in the informal economy. This ensured the extensive participation of women in union campaign strategy building. For many unions, opening up spaces for women workers to discuss and tackle GBVH has become an important part of union organising and priorities, helping to break a culture of silence on the issue. Important lessons can be learnt from the campaign including women’s transformational union leadership in speaking for all workers. The ITUC survey underpins the multiple ways that unions have initiated advocacy and lobby activities for the ratification and implementation of C190. The most important ratification campaign strategies applied and carried out by unions are found below.
Awareness raising and training of trade unions

FROM THE ITUC SURVEY:

67% of unions have included awareness raising and training of union members in their campaigns. Some unions carried out one or more of the listed activities below and 39% of unions carried out all of them.

Grounding the campaign in the voices and experiences of union members, and particularly women workers, was crucial to the success of the campaign. A critical success factor of the campaign, are the hundreds of national and sectoral trade union training and capacity building programmes on organising, raising awareness on violence and harassment and campaigning for C190 across trade union membership, supported by the ITUC and its regional organisations, GUFs and international trade union solidarity organisations.

For example, the ITUC and its Regional Organisations have supported affiliates through awareness raising and training about the ratification of C190, including through online webinars during the Covid-19 pandemic. IndustriALL Global Union carried out research on risks of GBVH in the mining, garments and electronics sectors in 2022, leading to a global train-the-trainers programme for affiliates in Asia, Latin America and Africa, on negotiating workplace policies and carrying out gender-responsive risk assessment, amongst other issues.

“It took me many years to find my voice. But now that I have a voice, I use it to advance the rights of women workers, demand decent working conditions, and for the ratification of Convention 190 to eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work. We must use the power of our voices to name and shame the perpetrators of GBVH, act against them, and bring them to account.”

Rose Omamo, COTU, Kenya.
Social dialogue and collective bargaining

91% of trade unions surveyed are engaged in social dialogue to align C190 with national laws and policies.

67% of unions surveyed have negotiated workplace policies and Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) aligned to C190 and R206.

The ITUC survey shows an impressive level of engagement by unions in bringing the framework and definitions contained in C190 and R206 into social dialogue and collective agreements through tripartite negotiations with governments and employers and bipartite negotiations at national, sectoral and workplace level with employers.

Lobbying and discussions with governments about ratification and implementation of C190

62% of unions surveyed carried out campaign activities directed to governments.
Another important campaign activity involved lobbying and discussions with governments about the importance of the ratification and implementation of C190. According to the ITUC survey, 62% of unions carried out this activity. Trade unions found multiple ways to lobby and raise awareness with governments, including through alliance building, about the importance of C190.

The national alliance, comprised of many trade unions and civil society organisations, has really helped to build our collective strength as workers and we are now lobbying the government to ratify C190. Although the government supports ratification, employers remain opposed to it. We are making the arguments, holding meetings, are campaigning and engaging in dialogue with employers, so that C190 becomes a reality of women workers.

Ema Liliefna, KSBSI, Indonesia.

Building alliances and partnerships

ITUC survey

56% of unions surveyed have campaigned for C190 through alliances with others.

New and unprecedented collaboration around C190 took place between the ITUC and the GUFs by organising global C190 webinars and publishing a comprehensive C190 training toolkit.

Alliances were formed amongst trade unions (trade union centres and sectoral unions) and broad coalitions of trade unions and human rights and feminist groups were created in many countries.

For example, impressive alliances were formed in the USA (AFL-CIO) with human rights and civil society organisations; In Africa, a strong alliance of African women trade union leaders has provided support and sharing of experiences in lobbying governments to ratify C190; the Nagkaisa Labour Coalition of unions in the Philippines worked closely with the Women’s March and other NGOs; the CNUS in the Dominican Republic created an alliance between unions
and civil society; and the KSBSI and KSPSI confederations in Indonesia created the ‘END GBV in the world of work’ alliance; in the UK TUC was part of an alliance with women’s anti-violence and human rights organisations under the banner #ThisisNotWorking. In Bulgaria, the National Civic Initiative to Ratify C190 has helped raise broad-based public support for the ratification of C190, leading to extensive lobbying of employers and the government. In May 2022 this was being included for consideration in the Government’s Committee of Labour, Social and Democratic Policy.

ITUC-AP formed a coalition in 2021 with Action Aid International, CARE International and International Women’s Rights Action Watch-Asia Pacific in order to build a broader constituency to campaign and push for the ratification of C190 across Asia-Pacific. The coalition aims to engage with and lobby government to ratify C190; hold events, webinars, and awareness raising; share resources and advocacy materials; and train workers to negotiate for their protection from violence and harassment and prevention in the workplace.

Some alliances have been formed with stakeholders from government and employers. Examples include the Gender Platform formed in Bangladesh, comprising human rights organisations, international NGOs, unions, employers and government agencies, which has played a highly-visible role in raising awareness about the impact of COVID-19 on women workers, and the need to introduce a law on preventing sexual harassment and ratify C190. In Turkey, along with a model CBA, a social dialogue platform aimed at raising awareness about the ratification of C190 was created by the HAK-İŞ federation with the ILO, UN Women, UNFPA, unions, employers, and women’s organisations.

Globally, ITUC worked closely with Human Rights Watch, Action Aid, Care International and the Center for Women in Global Leadership amongst other organisations, and supported affiliates to make alliances with civil society at the national and regional levels. ITUC also partnered with the global campaign for 16 days of Activism from 2019 onwards.

The lessons learned from these alliances is that they have enabled the sharing of resources and expertise, build a collective voice and visible force around a common goal(s) and achieve a critical level of (social) media engagement. This added significant strength in underpinning the value and critical importance in making C190 a reality.

The National Civil Initiative is having a real impact in pressing the government to ratify C190, we are optimistic that we are on the eve of ratification of this first-of-its-kind legal instrument to address violence and harassment in the world of work and to create the effective prevention and protection mechanisms that are needed.

Ekaterina Yordanova, Chair of FTTVB, Bulgaria.
our model CBA has helped our affiliates to negotiate clauses on violence and harassment based on C190 and R206 in collective bargaining, and we are supporting women leadership so that women can participate in collective bargaining and decision making roles as they understand the need to end gender-based violence as well as domestic violence.

Fulya Pinar Ozcan, HAK-İS, Turkey.

Data collection and workers voice

A further important part of union campaigns, and reflected by workers during the negotiations by workers for C190 at the ILO Conference in 2018 and 2019, is ensuring an evidence base of the extent, causes and risks of violence and harassment: through research, data collection and by documenting workers lived experiences of violence and harassment at work. Lessons learned from union activities engaged in building an evidence base showed to be of great value when negotiating with and lobbying governments and employers.

ITUC survey: one-third of union campaigns have put a focus on collecting evidence, data and stories of women’s experiences of GBVH.

In some cases collecting data was the starting point for union campaigns and advocacy. Examples of this include participatory research in 2019 and 2020 carried out with garment workers in Cambodia and Indonesia and supported by the US-based Solidarity Center, provided ground-breaking evidence about GBVH. Participatory research is helping unions to build the skills and capacity of women workers to take leadership positions and carry out union campaigns.
Some unions have partnered with academic institutions to carry out research, for instance the national surveys on (sexual) harassment and on domestic violence by the CLC Canada (2022), the latter carried out in partnership with academic experts from the University of London (Ontario, Canada). Unions opened up spaces for women workers to speak out about their experiences of GBVH at work, which provided powerful evidence when making the case for ratification of C190 with employers and governments.

A campaign addressing the full diversity of workers and multiple discrimination

The ITUC survey shows that the trade union movement has involved a wide diversity of members in their campaigns and activities around C190.

57% of unions involved women and men workers in their campaigns, 45% involved young workers, 37% involved women workers, and 33% involved workers in the informal economy. Unions also involved disabled workers (27%), migrant workers (21%), LGBTI+ workers (17%), indigenous workers (15%) and workers of colour (13%). 42% of unions involved all of the above.
An ITUC-AP supported project helped to build the PWF's Women Chapter leading to an impressive campaign, awareness raising, advocacy and high-level engagement for the ratification of C190. This led the PWF to organise the first-ever tripartite+ high-level dialogue held on C190 (April 2021) with the Punjab Labour & Human Resources Department - including secretaries from eight ministries, the Employers' Federation of Pakistan, several large companies, the Workers-Employers Bilateral Council of Pakistan, ILO, law enforcement agencies, the Commission for the Status of Women, academic experts and the media. The stakeholders made a commitment: to support and advocate for the ratification of C190. As a result, the Punjab Labour & HRD department is mapping the laws in Pakistan with a view to identify where changes in the law are required to implement C190.

It is so important to have sustainable change so that we end gender-based violence and harassment. We will only achieve this when everyone is at the table. We have to work together in tripartite dialogue... and then you can take it down to every level and into the workplace.

Dur e Shehwar, PWF, Pakistan.

PWF also pushed for amendments to the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Bill (2022) to ensure the law covers all workers, including workers in the informal sector. PWF and its affiliated sector unions formed the C190 Action Group and produced campaign tools including a C190 campaign website - launched at a joint event with the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce - and a series of videos about women’s experiences of GBVH. Supported by their union, Pakistan women journalists campaigned for protections against violence and harassment and the implementation of C190 in response to a very worrying increase in online abuse, physical violence and the murders of two journalists.

Engagement with employers led to a joint letter being sent to the Prime Minister in June 2021 by the PWF and Sialkot Chamber of Commerce pressurising the government to take the formal steps to ratify C190. The PWF led negotiations with employers on a redress mechanism against GBVH with a very positive outcome: several factories supplying to multi-national companies have adopted the mechanism, covering some 4,600 workers.

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Dur e Shehwar, PWF, Pakistan.

The PWF provides legal aid and support to workers via their hotline, which was established in November 2020, following increased reports of layoffs, harassment, reduced wages and domestic violence during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the PWF has developed a mobile application for complaint registration on violence and harassment.

A positive outcome of the campaign is that in February 2022, the government included the ratification of ILO Convention C190 in the workplan for 2022. Looking ahead PWF believes that Pakistan’s ratification of C190 will be of huge importance.

Ratification of C190 will be good for everyone in Pakistan and it gives women important rights and protection... this is so important because women are mainly in informal work. As part of this we are sensitising women workers about sexual harassment, and organising domestic workers and home-based workers so that they can have protection from violence and harassment.

Dur e Shehwar, PWF, Pakistan.
Ratification campaign highlights, lessons learned and challenges encountered with ratification

Unions in 26 African countries currently have campaigns for the ratification and/or implementation of C190. An important strategic role was given to this at the ITUC-Africa Abuja Congress, where unions had agreed on a roadmap focused on social dialogue and awareness raising around C190. Through the women’s committees at national level and the ITUC-Africa Technical Secretariat in charge of Equality, actions have been targeted to governments and employers, as well as grassroots communities. An Africa-wide platform, linking national platforms of affiliates, enables leaders and activists to share experiences and find solutions to challenges they face.

Training and awareness-raising workshops have built the skills and knowledge of women trade unionists across Africa, including how C190 can be used to improve occupational safety and health and equality at work, and in making the link to ILO C183 on maternity protection. This has been important in building the capacity for and supporting trade union lobbying and awareness raising with governments.

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After a united union and civil society campaign, C190 was ratified on 29 November 2021. Alongside ratification, the Department of Employment and Labour published an updated Code of Good Practice on the Prevention and Elimination of Harassment in the Workplace on 18 March 2022, aligned to C190. Unions were involved in draft consultations on the Code and made it clear that it should be fully aligned with C190. In addition, unions demanded that the Code should not be seen as a replacement for binding measures in the law; for instance the obligations on employers to prevent GBVH and rights to access workplace support and leave for victims of domestic violence.

In July 2019, ITUC affiliates COSATU, FEDUSA and NACTU drew up an advocacy roadmap and campaign strategy for the ratification of C190 and built an alliance with civil society, women’s rights groups and other allies. The Alliance organised regular campaign events such as protests, marches and the national grassroots campaign #TotalShutdown, urging calling the government to end GBVH. Unions ensured the inclusion of all workers, including domestic workers and informal workers by cooperating close with their respective unions.

During the ratification campaign unions held regular meetings, lobbying events and dialogue with government and employers. Women’s leadership and mobilisation was made possible by education and training for affiliates, guidance on collective bargaining to end GBVH and organising of women at the grassroots. Unions called for gender-responsive approaches during the pandemic.
Trade unions in Algeria, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia are engaged in #RatifyC190 campaigns. In Algeria, the UGTA’s campaign included the establishment of a union committee to raise awareness about C190, advocating for a transformational change aimed at ending power inequalities at work and to lobby the government. In Palestine, the PGFTU initiated an impressive variety of activities to promote the implementation of C190: from raising awareness about violence and harassment, providing support through a Psychological and Social Counselling Centre to sending letters to the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Women to demand ratification. In addition, an alliance of civil society has been formed comprising 50 organisations from civil society, women and youth, disabled people and human rights groups. The PGFTU signed an agreement with the media union regarding campaigning for C190, has trained union members and affiliates and held campaign actions with sectoral unions, civil society organisations and in Palestinian universities. (See also Case Study 4: Morocco).

In addition, each confederation held their own campaigns in support the ratification of C190. For instance, FEDUSA’s #C190CAN campaign issued campaign materials, held webinars and disseminated a widely circulated petition.

“We will not eliminate violence in the world of work if we don’t take the lead to fully implement C190 and use the standards in collective bargaining. As women and union leaders we must stand firm and demand the implementation in all workplaces. We have the support from men for our cause to ensure that workplaces will become free from violence and harassment.

Martlé Keyter, FEDUSA, South Africa.

COSATU campaign comprised a rallying call to trade unions to intensify their campaigns, organised capacity building workshops, seminars/webinars, protest actions and lobbied the government and stepped up their advocacy efforts during the 16 Days of Activism. COSATU believes that C190 is going to be a gamechanger in South Africa and that unions must now play a role in ensuring negotiations for gender-responsive occupational safety and health and in equipping unions at local levels to bring the issues into bargaining with employers:

Affiliates of FEDUSA and COSATU have been active in ensuring that workplace policies and CBAs are aligned with C190. COSATU has held workshops across all regions in South Africa, aimed at raising awareness about C190 and empowering union negotiators to bargain workplace policies and CBAs to end GBVH. The motor industry union, MISA, affiliated to FEDUSA, trained its women and youth leaders to raise awareness in ending GBVH. And has been negotiating with employers through an industry-wide equality and diversity forum that addresses GBVH and in implementing employers’ obligations contained in C190 and R206. In 2022, MISA established a confidential help-line for any union member and employees in the industry to report and seek redress in cases of sexual harassment.
In December 2019 the national trade union centres CDT, FDT, UGTM and UMT, launched the “Coalition 190 for a World of Work Free of Violence and Harassment”, to raise awareness about the importance of C190, to strengthen advocacy and create multi-stakeholder support for C190. The Coalition includes an impressive list of stakeholders: women’s and migrant groups, disabled people’s associations, as well as trade unions, labour inspectors, lawyers, academics, artists, the government, employers organisations, human rights and civil society organisations, the ILO and gender experts. In March 2020 the coalition issued a joint memorandum to the government calling for the ratification of C190. Meetings were held with government representatives during which questions were raised about the ratification in parliament, the call for ratification was further underpinned with letters of UMT and CDT sent to the government.

In the light of the increase in domestic violence during the pandemic, Amal el Amri, UMT Assistant General Secretary, parliamentarian and President of the Union Progressiste des Femmes du Maroc (UPFM-UMT) amplified the call for the ratification of C190.

Coalition 190 continued its awareness raising work during the pandemic, holding webinars with participation from the government, employers, human rights and civil society organisations, ILO and experts. Unions have been using C190 and R206 in their negotiations with employers. Women trade union leaders from garment unions (affiliated to UMT and CDT) participated in training and awareness raising. With civil society, unions have introduced a confidential procedure for addressing sexual harassment, enabling women to receive support and break the silence around GBVH.

As a result of the advocacy around GBVH, union membership has gone up and many women stepped into union leadership roles in their factories. Women unionists have been supported by men in the trade unions and there have been positive outcomes in reducing sexual harassment in the factories.
Thanks to the engagement of the committee of Women Workers of the Americas, campaigns for the ratification of Convention 190 have been carried out across Latin America alongside awareness raising about wider structural gender inequalities including related to the care economy: to address women’s burden of care work, and mobilising for the ratification of Convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities. Learnings shared by unions in Argentina and Uruguay is that having existing legislation on GBVH in place formed an important base for the swift ratification of C190 in their countries. Investing in communication and awareness raising campaigns with unions and civil society, the formation of alliances and the coordination between trade unions to draw up a clear roadmap towards ratification, were all considered as important factors to have strong lobby and advocacy campaigns in place. (ITUC-AP has supported union campaigns in 14 countries (Australia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, India, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand and Turkey).)

The ITUC-Bangladesh Council (BC) has campaigned for ratification of C190 with a coalition of unions, civil society organisations and international NGOs to ensure a coordinated approach to ratification. The ITUC-BC’s Women’s Committee has designated focal points to coordinate C190 ratification actions such as training, public awareness and dissemination of campaign materials. At an event held by ITUC-BC on 8 March 2020, the Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment confirmed the government’s commitment to ratify C190.

In Indonesia, a Coalition on Ending GBV in the World of Work, made up of 59 unions, domestic workers’ and civil society organisations and formed in 2019, provided a strong platform for the ratification of C190. Activities include research, submissions to and meetings with the government and participation in tripartite meetings on C190 in 2020 and 2021. Pending ratification, unions engage in collective bargaining to implement C190 in the workplace. Emphasis is given to changing workplace culture. Young women trade union leaders have been pioneers in pushing their unions to adopt agreements and workplace measures. The KSPI and KSBSI have played a leading role in advocating for GBV-free factories. For example, affiliates of the IndustriALL Indonesia Women’s Committee agreed on model CBA Provisions on Zero Tolerance Policy aligned to C190 and have signed joint commitments with 27 companies.

In Nepal the C190 ratification campaign started as a women’s campaign and widened out to include all union members, resulting in

6 In the run-up to International Women’s Day in 2022, ITUC-Asia Pacific launched a dedicated “Ratify C190” website https://www.ratifyc190.org/ in partnership with advocacy organisations and produced their C190 song “Equality for You and Me” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKSJoHQTZOM. Affiliates were provided with social media cards and a statement calling for the ratification of C190 across the region. In June 2022, the regional #RatifyC190 campaign celebrated the third anniversary of the adoption of C190 with five days of action. Each day covered a different theme, with pre-prepared graphics, suggested posts and social media content.
a highly visible campaign with media impact. The ITUC-Nepal Affiliates Council has taken leadership with some positive outcomes and engagement with employers and the government. A strong focus has been given to actions in the transport sector. Focal points were designated for each affiliate and actions were coordinated by the leadership of ITUC-NAC. An C190 Action Group was launched in 2021 by the ILO and with an eye on future ratification and unions have started integrating C190 and R206 into collective bargaining.

Unions in Eastern Europe and Central Asia have been actively campaigning for the ratification of C190, supported by PERC (the ITUC Pan European Regional Council) which provided training and resources.

Unions in Kyrgyzstan launched a campaign for ratification (in 2020) at a union-led seminar attended by stakeholders and allies from civil society. They carried out a survey to provide evidence about the scale of violence and harassment, followed by union training including how unions can provide support to survivors of GBVH at work. The campaign resulted in the inclusion of C190 in the Tripartite Committee’s general agreement, marking an important step towards ratification. In Georgia, the GTUC held an awareness raising campaign and disseminated C190 information and bulletins and organised events. Along with training for union members, the union provides legal aid for members and carries out strategic litigation, enabling the union to publicise cases of sexual harassment. The campaign led to an amendment to the labour code to include sexual harassment as a form of discrimination. The GTUC has advocated for ratification through the tripartite social commission and with the Parliament’s Gender Equality Council.

In addition, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), with affiliates in 39 European countries, plus 10 European trade union federations, has held a three year campaign for ratification of C190 at the European Union (EU) and national levels. The ETUC and PERC carried out a joint survey across women trade union leaders, marking International Women's Day in 2021 with a strong message that 77% of employers had failed to implement measures to tackle GBVH. In June 2022, on the third anniversary of the adoption of C190 the ETUC launched an online petition to intensify the pressure on the EU to green light and push all EU Member states to ratify ILO Convention 190.

By June 2022, Ireland, France and Finland had completed or have nearly completed the internal ratification process.

ITUC collaborated with the GUFs in the lead up to the adoption of C190 and throughout the global ratification campaign such as under the banners #RatifyC190 and “It Can Change Lives” and produced campaign resources, information sheets, and posters. Like ITUC, the Global Union Federations initiate C190 actions and capacity building programs worldwide.

ITUC and affiliates campaigned too in collaboration with Human Rights Watch, Action Aid International and the annual for 16 days of Activism, coordinated by the Center for Women in Global Leadership which further added strength to the global campaign.

7 The joint global union publication “Train the Trainers Toolkit: Violence and harassment in the world of work” and “Facilitators Guide” in 2021 https://www.ituc-csi.org/c190-c206-toolkit, was the result of an excellent collaboration of ITUC and the GUFs. The toolkit, available in multiple languages, is helping to strengthen union advocacy and training programmes amongst affiliates at the national level. The toolkit was launched at a Global Unions webinar (25 June 2021) and supported by a joint statement. In addition, ITUC and the GUFs joined forces in response to the Covid-19 pandemic by organising the #GenderEqualNewNormal webinar series in 2020, which included coverage on the importance of making C190 a reality.
CURRENT STATE OF PLAY: PROGRESS TOWARDS THE RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF C190
The ITUC survey provides an impressive picture of the progress towards ratification of C190. By July 2022, 19 countries had ratified Convention 190, with indications that many others are close to follow swiftly, including Belgium, Chile, Finland, France and Ireland. In countries where ratification has already taken place unions have been holding their governments to account to ensure that national laws and policies, and the related necessary legal changes and collective bargaining, are aligned with C190 and R206.

As of July 2022, the current number of ratifications stands at 19. In a further 20 countries, unions indicate that they expect their governments to ratify it in 2022. In an additional 18 countries, unions anticipate ratification in 2023.

However, unions from 28 countries responding to the survey say that there is no indication yet of when their government will ratify C190. This underpins the shared concerns of unions in various countries: the inaction shown by these governments to ratify C190. This reflects the organised opposition at the global level by a range of countries: for instance, succeeding in 2021 and 2022 to delete language on ILO Convention No. 190 in the outcome document of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

In 2021 the ILO launched a global #RatifyC190 campaign to promote the ratification and implementation of C190 reaching out to governments, employers’ and workers’ organisations, civil society and private sector companies, as well as policy makers, businesses and partners. Celebrities will also lend their voices to amplify the campaign messages. On the ILO’s dedicated campaign page you will find a range of campaign resources: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/violence-harassment/lang--en/index.htm

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Affiliates report mixed levels of support for and/or opposition for C190 from governments and employers. Hence, both the positive and still disappointing expectations concerning government and employer support for C190 illustrate the critical importance of having C190 lobby and advocacy campaigns in place and for the years to come.

Legal and legislative changes required to implement C190

Changes in relevant laws are essential for the full implementation of C190, with half of unions having campaigns for legal change as part of the full implementation of C190. In the ITUC survey, over half the countries (52%) need to change their labour laws to implement C190, followed by changes in occupational safety and health laws (37%), equality and non-discrimination laws (37%), domestic violence (35%), the informal economy (35%) and criminal laws (24%).

IN THE ITUC SURVEY

52% of countries need to change their laws to implement C190.

Campaign highlights and lessons learnt on legislative reform

The adoption of C190 and R206 led many unions to advocate for stronger laws. However, unions face challenges because some governments are reluctant to implement legal changes to fully implement C190 or draw on the guidance in R206. It is not surprising that many unions have included in their campaigns demands on governments to identify and make legal changes, while some unions carried out
their legal mapping as a basis for advocacy and social dialogue with governments. For example, mapping exercises carried out by the International Domestic Workers’ Federation in Latin America, enabled domestic workers to campaign for specific protections for domestic workers in the law. Public Services International carried out mapping of laws in Africa, Inter-Americas and Europe, giving unions information to support their advocacy for legal reforms concerning obligations on employers to establish workplace policies, complaints systems and risk assessment. In South Asia, priority was given to legal changes to protect Community Health Workers who faced significant vulnerabilities and heightened risks of violence and harassment during the pandemic.

JTUC-RENGO’s popular campaign for the ratification of C190 in Japan led unions to advocate for the enactment of new laws on power harassment in 2019 and a new law enacted in June 2021 prohibiting sexual harassment and harassment related to pregnancy, childbirth, and childcare. The laws are being implemented through company CBAs for which unions provide bargaining guidance. The government of Canada is committed to ensuring that its laws are in line with C190 in advance of ratification of C190. Unions pressed for amendments to the Labour Code and accompanying Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations, implemented in 2021, with measures aligned to the provisions in C190 on workplace policies, prevention and risk assessment, and domestic violence, and protections for women, men, Indigenous people, LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities.

Similarly, in Denmark trade unions led a united five-year campaign for a stronger law on sexual harassment, resulting in a groundbreaking binding Tripartite Agreement on Sexual harassment agreed on 4 March 2022 between the trade union centre FH, the employers and the government. In Italy in 2022, following the ratification of C190, the three main union confederations CGIL, CISL, UIL made demands for strengthened employers’ obligations to prevent and address violence and harassment, including the enforcement of duties related to occupational safety and health and psychosocial risks.

Some union campaigns have addressed the need for laws on domestic violence as a workplace issue, an example of which is the high-profile campaign to win rights for survivors of domestic violence by the Australian Council of Trade Unions ACTU, resulting in the introduction of 10 paid domestic violence leave in the law in 2022. In the UK, where the government has already ratified C190, unions have made it clear that the laws on domestic abuse are still not aligned with C190, particularly on workplace support for survivors of domestic abuse.
The French law to ratify C190 was passed by a unanimous vote of the lower and upper houses of parliament in 2021, with a high-profile campaign demanding an ambitious ratification of C190. A critical success factor was the creation of the alliance formed by the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) and global NGOs, including Human Rights Watch, CARE and Action Aid. The coalition (www.stopviolencestravail.org) produced campaign materials and a petition and held joint webinars and information sessions. The coalition built on the feminist mobilisations that emerged from #metoo, coordinated by #allofus, which has organised demonstrations of over 100,000 people on 25 November each year. The CGT developed a comprehensive “Fighting Gender-Based Violence” toolkit aimed at raising awareness of the law and collective bargaining, guidance on campaign and negotiations to end GBVH. New alliances with CGT, CARE and Action Aid were formed with Human Rights Watch in France in 2021, which added further pressure for legal change. French unions with civil society and feminist organisations jointly issued a letter to the government in June 2021, setting out demands for an ambitious ratification.

"This coalition allowed us to make the ratification of C190 a demand of the women’s movement which has grown considerably stronger after #metoo, and thus avoid the issue of gender and sexual violence being limited to a societal issue, unrelated to work. Sophie Binet, CGT, France."

The demands for legal change include sanctions for employers who do not have a workplace policy; new legal protections, including 10 days paid leave for survivors of domestic violence; a requirement for the government to train and expand the role of staff advisors/counsellors in tackling GBVH; and a requirement for French companies to identify, prevent and respond to GBVH risks in their supply chains, under the 2017 Due Diligence Act.

"The French government has ratified the Convention in the Parliament at a minimum, without incorporating measures contained in the Recommendation 206. We want to win concrete rights for victims, the obligation to negotiate on sexual and gender-based violence with trade unions and sanctions for employers who do not apply the law. Sophie Binet, CGT, France."

Meanwhile, agreements on professional equality between unions and companies signed in 2021 and 2022 in the public sector and with companies such as Orange, Renault, La Poste, SNCF, EDF and Engie, among others, contain new provisions on ending sexism, GBVH at work, prevention and risk assessment, teleworking, along with paid leave and other workplace supports for victims of domestic violence.
Campaign highlights and lessons learnt on social dialogue and collective bargaining

There has been an impressive level of engagement by unions in bringing the framework and definitions contained in C190 and R206 into tripartite negotiations with governments and employers and bipartite negotiations at national, sectoral and workplace level with employers.

C190 and R206 have become important national bargaining issues. In Senegal, C190 is included in the cross-sectoral National Inter-Professional Agreement (agreed in 2019), involving five trade union confederations. In Indonesia, agreements in the medical, garments and agricultural sectors, signed by affiliates of KSPI and KSBSI (in 2020), use the language of C190 and R206. Similarly, in the Philippines, C190 has framed agreements concluded in 2020 in transport, construction, metals, logistics and education sectors, and an agreement in the transport sector includes provisions on paid domestic violence leave. A model Enterprise-Based Mechanism has been negotiated by eleven local unions and a manual contains guidance on C190 and R206, with good practice examples for bargaining. In Colombia, a CBA was agreed with seven unions in the public sector in 2021 on the prevention of sexual harassment and other forms of violence. In Lesotho, landmark agreements to address GBVH with a Code of Practice and independent complaints procedures with a supplier in the garment sector, signed in July 2019, drew on the language of C190 (IDUL, UNITE and NACTWU). In Turkey, a model agreement drawn up by HAK-IS in 2021 has become a framework for new CBAs, for example, in the garment sector, and draws on the definitions and scope in C190 and R206, including domestic violence and the importance of prevention and risk assessment.

Provisions on occupational safety and health and risk assessment in C190 and 206 put a new emphasis in bargaining on the prevention of violence and harassment and gender-responsive risk assessment. In South Africa and important part of COSATU’s strategy is the involvement of OSH committees in...
workplace safety planning. IUF’s Action Programme for Equality 2017-2022 has a strong focus on OSH, and an IUF Women’s Project in Africa is equipping women to negotiate OSH measures in CBAs, with the aim to implement gender-responsive OSH policies and risk assessments. In Canada, the USW has run training and produced an action guide “Raising the bar on women’s health and safety” to ensure the integration of GBVH into OSH. Safety representatives have been trained to carry out gender-responsive risk assessments and to address GBVH and domestic violence as OSH issues. In line with C190 and R206 the European Transport Workers Federation (ETF) issued guidance for union negotiators in transport unions in carrying out gender-responsive risk assessments, including specific domestic violence risk assessment. In addition, ILO tripartite agreements play an important role. A recent example is the 2021 ILO Code of Practice on occupational safety and health in the garment and textile sector, which addresses the OSH-related aspects of violence and harassment and is aligned with C190 and R206. The important role of OSH in preventing violence and harassment is further strengthened in the light of the landmark decision at the ILC in 2022 that occupational health and safety be confirmed as a fundamental right.

Some agreements provide protection for informal workers. In Kenya, the KEDHEIJA called for urgent negotiation with public authorities for the security and safety for informal market traders during the pandemic. The Nigerian Labour Congress provided training for a ground-breaking Code of Conduct in 2020, drawing on the language of C190, with safety measures for women market traders and their children in the informal economy. The Pakistani Homebased Women Workers Federation agreed an MOU with the public authorities in 2021 on social protection for workers facing increasing levels of GBVH during the pandemic. The International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) is implementing a C190 project in West and Central Africa focused on informal transport workers. In June 2022, the ITF launched a transport toolkit for unions to support grassroots campaigning for the ratification and implementation of C190 in the transport sector, covering issues relevant to the informal sector such as women’s safety and access to sanitary facilities. It builds on a highly successful women’s advocacy programme including in India and Nepal.

The ITF C190 campaign in West and Central Africa is supporting women workers to raise awareness, lobby governments and recognise opportunities to bargain safe workplaces for women with employers. This work became more critical with the pandemic crisis disproportionately impacting women in precarious and informal jobs and is being used as a tool by women to build back better.

Neha Prakash, ITF.
Unions are also negotiating specific clauses on domestic violence in their CBAs. For example in Argentina, protocols to address domestic violence were agreed in the pharmaceutical sector in 2019, in the tourism sector in 2020 and in the education sector in 2019. In Brazil clauses on domestic violence are included in sectoral CBAs in 2020 in the banking and postal sectors. In 2020 Canadian unions agreed CBAs for the public and private sectors, with new clauses on training, prevention and protection of workers from domestic violence in education, research and postal sectors.

Increasing attention is also being given to protections for telework/remote working in particular during the pandemic. IndustriALL issued guidance on telework in 2021 and UNI drew up Principles on teleworking/remote working in 2021 with guidelines for negotiators and the employer’s duty of care to prevent and address violence and harassment and domestic violence during teleworking/remote working. An agreement between unions and Vodafone Italy set out provisions for on wellbeing at work during remote working, including protections and leave for survivors of domestic violence.

In relation to third-party violence and harassment more unions have been addressing the issues since the escalation of the problem during the pandemic. The Australian retail union SDA held a campaign “No One Deserves A Serve” to address aggression from customers in the retail and fast sectors, resulting in jointly agreed workplace policies and CBAs. The Finnish Commerce Federation and Service Union PAM signed an agreement in 2019 setting out employers’ responsibilities and guidelines on how to assess and prevent risks of violence and harassment, including from customers.

Some unions are putting digitalisation onto the CBA agenda in response to online abuse and sexual harassment. For example, the National Association of Journalists of Peru (ANP) gives legal and other support on tackling cyber harassment and abuse faced by journalists. A European social partner framework agreement on digitalisation, agreed by ETUC and employers in 2020, addresses risks from worker surveillance, prevention of violence and harassment, and the right to switch off.

With the definition of the world of work in C190 including travel to and from work, unions negotiated safety measures for workers who travel at unsafe times. Safety measures introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic for essential workers during lockdowns were agreed, for example, in the retail sector in Georgia. An innovative example, is a downloadable mobile app “TOOQ” which was launched in 2021 by the Arab Trade Union Confederation. It gives protection from any kind of violence in the world of work, including travel to and from work. An SOS alert enables a victim to ask for help during an emergency. The app includes a forum for users to exchange ideas and experiences and links are given to specialized associations and centres in the users geographical area.
Aligning global agreements with C190

Global Framework Agreements (GFAs) in sectors such as garments and textiles, agriculture, hotels and banking aim to implement international labour standards across global supply chains. The adoption of C190 is a further lever for GFAs to implement C190. However, challenges remain for global and national unions in ensuring that GFAs are updated and/or amended in alignment with C190 and R206, and that violence and harassment is addressed by companies in human rights due diligence processes. Global unions argue that actions need to be spelt out in more detail through binding Codes of Conduct, guidance, training, effective implementation and monitoring.

An example is the Orange-UNI GFA agreed in 2019 just after the adoption of C190. It names domestic violence as a workplace issue and makes direct reference to C190, although to date implementation of the agreement has been slow. In the H&M-IndustriALL GFA of 2015, discussions were held by IndustriALL and H&M in 2022 to raise awareness about C190 and R206 and how the standards can inform prevention and remediation with suppliers of H&M in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Turkey and Vietnam, amongst others. National Monitoring Committees, made up company and union representatives, received training in 2022 on C190, preparing them to take pro-active roles in monitoring and remediating cases of sexual harassment.
STATUS C190 RATIFICATIONS

SOURCE: ITUC C190 SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT, AUGUST 2022

#RatifyC190

WELL DONE

COUNTRIES WHO RATIFIED C190 - BY JULY 2022

COUNTRIES ON TRACK TO RATIFY C190 - BY 2022/2023

FOR A WORLD OF WORK FREE OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

#19

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- #RatifyC190 website: https://www.ituc-csi.org/GBV
  Facebookpage: https://www.facebook.com/StopGBVatWork/

- #RatifyC190 campaign newsletters: https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/c190_newsletters.pdf


- ITUC contact information: equality@ituc-csi.org

ITUC & GUFs.


- ILO – INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

  - Campaign for ratification and implementation of C190: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/violence-harassment/lang--en/index.htm


ILO ACTRAV


16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
(CENTER FOR WOMEN'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP)

- Campaign webpage with C190 resources: https://16dayscampaign.org

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