

Civil Society Joint Statement

Urging the Royal Government of Cambodia to Ratify the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)

Today marks the two-year anniversary of the adoption of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment (ILO C190). On 21 June 2019, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC)'s delegation joined with other governments, employer representatives, unions, and civil society organisations from around the world in voting to adopt C190 and ILO Recommendation No. 206 at the International Labour Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland. Six countries have already ratified C190, and it will enter into force this 25 June 2021. ILO C190 is the first international binding labor standard to recognize the human right to a world of work free from all forms of violence and harassment including gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH), and affirms that all workers have the right to be treated with dignity and respect on the job, irrespective of their contractual status in both the formal and informal sectors. ILO C190 also recognizes the changing nature of where work is conducted by not only covering the physical workplace, but also commuting to/from work, work-related communications, and where workers are paid, take a rest break, or take a meal break.

We urge the government to make 2021 the year that Cambodia takes an important next step to reaffirm its commitment to ending violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and sexual harassment. The UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) specifically recommended that RGC ratify C190 in its 2019 Concluding Observations from its review of Cambodia's implementation of the CEDAW treaty. In ratifying C190, the government will have successfully responded to this CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observation.

The CEDAW Committee further expressed concern about the absence of a comprehensive law that defines and effectively prohibits violence and harassment, including all forms of GBVH and sexual harassment, arising from or linked to work, particularly considering the prevalence of such violence in the garment industry and while commuting to and from work. The Committee recommended that RGC "adopt and implement comprehensive legislation to prevent and respond to all forms of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment," in the world of work, and "establish an independent complaints mechanism to ensure that victims have effective access to redress and that perpetrators are held accountable." Such legislation needs clear definitions of gender-based violence and harassment including sexual harassment, plus specific processes that conform to ILO C190.

Ratification of ILO C190 by the government is more important and urgent than ever so that Cambodia may contribute to delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially in the context of COVID-19 response and recovery. COVID-19 has worsened the working conditions of all workers including through greater degrees of financial insecurity,

unemployment, stress, the burden of unpaid care work for women workers, and risks of domestic violence that impacts work. ILO C190 and its associated ILO Recommendation 206 provide a clear legal framework for all the necessary measures to identify hazards and assess the risks of violence and harassment, and to take effective measures to protect the safety, health, and well-being of all workers, including in the COVID-19 context.

This joint statement is endorsed by:

1. Cambodian Food and Service Workers Federation (CFSWF)
2. Independent Democratic of Informal Economic Association (IDEA)
3. ActionAid Cambodia
4. The Cambodian NGO Committee on CEDAW (NGO-CEDAW)
5. Solidarity Center Cambodia (SC)
6. CARE International in Cambodia
7. Klahan
8. Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions (CATU)
9. SILAKA
10. Women's Resource Centre (WRC)
11. Cambodia's Independent Civil-Servants Association (CICA)
12. Cambodian Tourism Workers Union Federation (CTWUF)
13. Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC)
14. Gender and Development Network (GADNet)
15. Rural Friend Community for Development (RFCD)
16. Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC)
17. Confederation of Cambodian Workers Movement (CCWM)
18. Free Trade Union of Workers of Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC)
19. Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (CENTRAL)
20. Labor Rights Supported Union of Khmer Employee of Nagaworld (LRSU)
21. Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP)
22. Women Peace Maker (WPM)
23. Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Federation of Cambodia (BWTUC)
24. Trade Union Federation for Worker (TUFW)
25. National Independent Federation Textile Union of Cambodia (NIFTUC)
26. Worker Friendship Union Federation (WFUF)
27. Independent Trade Union Federation (ITUF)
28. Coalition Free Trade Union of Women Textile (CFTUWT)
29. Union Coalition for Workers (UCW)
30. Cambodian Women Labor Union Federation (CWLUF)
31. Sok Leang, Researcher in Gender and Sociology
32. Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (Comfrel)
33. Women's Network for Unity ((WNU)
34. Association of Domestic Workers (ADW)

35. Association to Support Vulnerable Women (ASVW)
36. Banteay Srei (BS)
37. Cambodian Health and Education for Community (CHEC)
38. Reproductive Health Association Cambodia (RHAC)
39. Lady Saving Group (LSG)
40. Legal Support for Women and Children (LSCW)
41. Social Action for Community and Development (SACD)
42. Urban Poor Women Development (UPWD)