

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Global trade union body calls for International Convention to protect Domestic Workers

Brussels, 31 October 2007 (ITUC Online): The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has asked trade unions world-wide to seek governmental support for an International treaty to protect domestic workers. The question of a possible International Standard for the tens of millions domestic workers in the world will be discussed next month at the Governing Body of the Tripartite International Labour Organization (ILO).

"Domestic workers lack protection under both international and national laws" says the document tabled for discussion by the ILO Governing Body. "They represent an important and growing segment of the labour and their work is enabling others to improve their living standard" it adds.

Domestic workers are a vital link in every country's economic chain, carrying out essential tasks for millions of households.

Domestic work is often not recognized by national legislation. Domestic workers therefore do not enjoy the protection of the labour rights laid down in such legislation, so the door is open for all kinds of abuse by their employers.

A large number of domestic workers are migrant women. In their countries of origin, many of them hold qualifications that are considerably higher than those required for domestic workers but the social reality and the obvious need of money to survive push those women to accept to travel and to work as domestic workers.

The ITUC which is the world's largest trade union body is seeking action by its affiliates worldwide to obtain support by their governments to develop an international instrument. The ILO Governing Body will have to decide whether to put this on the agenda of the International Labour Conference in 2010 with the prospect of having a treaty adopted in 2011.....

"Domestic workers must have protection just like others workers" said Guy Ryder, ITUC General Secretary. "We strongly urge the ILO Governing Body to take the right decision in this matter", he added.

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates. Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> <http://www.ituc-csi.org/>

For more information, please contact the ITUC Press Department on: +32 2 224 0204 or +32 476 621 018.

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