

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)  
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ITUC OnLine

Keep up pressure on governments for the ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention

Brussels, 15 June 2012 (ITUC OnLine): On the first anniversary of the adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention, trade unions around the world are stepping up their campaign to get 12 ratifications by the end of 2012. The goal is challenging, yet achievable.

One year on from the historical adoption of the ILO Convention 189 at the International Labour Conference (ILC) on 16 June 2011, the ITUC is intensifying the campaign to get at least 12 ratifications by the end of 2012 and to strengthen domestic workers' unions.

The adoption of a Convention and of a Recommendation, which are aimed at extending fundamental labour rights to an estimated 50 to 100 million domestic workers worldwide, represents a landmark step in the fight against discrimination and abuses. However, that fight is still far from over, since governments need to ratify Convention 189 and to modify their national labour laws accordingly.

In December 2011 the ITUC launched the "12 by 12 campaign"(1) and mobilised over 100 affiliated organisations in 81 countries. The ITUC has been monitoring the ratification process with a focus on 12 countries, namely Brazil, Peru, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, South Africa, Senegal, Kenya, Philippines, Indonesia, India, Saudi Arabia as well as the EU.

The government of Uruguay was the first to ratify the Convention on the 25th of April granting international protection to 120,000 domestic workers in that country, and other governments are expected to follow soon, including the Philippines, South Africa, Mauritius, Belgium, Kenya, Brazil and Colombia.

"The goal of 12 ratifications by the end of 2012 is a real challenge, but it is achievable," says Marieke Koning, ITUC expert on gender equality and domestic work issues.

"The adoption of Convention 189 was such a breakthrough in the defence of domestic workers' rights, and now it is very important that we keep making pressure on governments for their prompt ratification and for the introduction of substantial changes in national laws."

During the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva, the ITUC, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) and the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN) organised a joint meeting to celebrate the first anniversary of Convention 189 and to inform about the ratification process in various countries and regions. On 16 June, worldwide actions of trade unions and domestic workers organisations will take place, urging governments to ratify C189.

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 308 national affiliates.

Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

For more information, please contact the ITUC Press Department on +32 2 224 0204 or +32 476 62 10 18.

(1) The '12 by 12' Campaign is an initiative of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in partnership with the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN), the European Trade Union

Confederation (ETUC) , Public Service International (PSI), The International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), Human Rights Watch, Anti-Slavery International, Solidar, Migrant Forum Asia (MFA), World Solidarity and Caritas.

For updates of the '12 by 12' campaign and the ratification process, follow us on Facebook and/or check out the ITUC '12 by 12' webpage which will soon feature a world map with information by country.

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