

49 O'Connell Street
Waterford
X91 E866.

November 19th, 2021.

Call to Action for International White Ribbon Day 2021 – November 25th, 2021

Dear TD/Senator,

Earlier this year, a broad coalition of ActionAid Ireland, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Men's Development Network, Munster Technological University and White Ribbon Ireland – was formed to call on Government to ratify ILO Convention No.190. We as a coalition are writing to you ahead of the upcoming International White Ribbon Day on Thursday, November 25th, 2021. White Ribbon is a campaign in over 60 countries worldwide and is focused on ending Gender-Based Violence and Violence against Women. Since 2010, the Men's Development Network has been the lead organisation in the White Ribbon Ireland Campaign and this Campaign is dedicated to engaging men and boys to end Violence against Women and Gender-Based Violence.

This year as part of the White Ribbon Campaign, we have three asks for you as a legislator to make a difference in ending Gender-Based Violence and Violence against Women:

- (1) Wear your White Ribbon on International White Ribbon Day
- (2) Take the White Ribbon Ireland pledge by video, post on your social media and tag White Ribbon Ireland and the Men's Development Network
- (3) Call on Government to ratify the new International Labour Organisation Convention No.190 on violence and harassment in the workplace.

Firstly, we include with this letter a White Ribbon which **we ask you to wear on International White Ribbon Day on Thursday, November 25th**. International White Ribbon Day coincides with the first day of the United Nations 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence and wearing your ribbon is an act of solidarity and shows your support for the White Ribbon Campaign.

The second action which we would invite you to partake in is **to post a video on your social media** wearing the White Ribbon and recording yourself taking the White Ribbon Ireland pledge:

"I pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about Violence against Women and Gender-Based Violence"

The final action that we are inviting you to partake in is to **call on Government** and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to **expeditiously ratify ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment** (2019) and implement its accompanying Recommendation No.206 (Harassment Recommendation, 2019). Convention No.190 and Recommendation No.206 are the first international legal instruments to recognise the right of all to a workplace free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment.



Both nationally and globally women are more likely to experience violence and harassment in a wide spectrum of fields of employment, as highlighted by the #MeToo and Time's Up movements. Any form of violence and harassment within the workplace violates the victim's human rights and where this behaviour is gender-based, is an affront to gender equality. The ratification of these new international labour standards play an important role in ending violence and harassment and as part of International White Ribbon Day, we ask you to call on Government to ratify C190.

To date, Italy and Greece are two EU countries which have ratified the new Convention on violence and harassment in the workplace. The UK Government have also just put C190 before Parliament for approval and France and Spain are very close to ratifying. It is important for Ireland as a global leader in human rights to show its solidarity in the formalisation of the new international standards globally by being an early ratifier of the Convention.

Ratification is more important than ever given the rise of sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace together with the alarming surge in cases of domestic violence worldwide associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. C190 and the accompanying Recommendation 206 set out clear steps that governments, employers, and social partners can take to protect workers and mitigate the impacts of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and harassment, including when home is the place of work.

In addition, as part of the adoption of the Convention, we are calling on the Irish Government to update Irish legislation to oblige companies, through a series of effective incentive and disincentive measures, to take actions to eliminate all forms of harassment and violence against women in their supply chains.

Yours sincerely,



Head of Programmes
Men's Development Network/White Ribbon Campaign

