



Men's Development Network

Better Lives for Men, Better Lives for All

The Men's Development Network CLG.

49 O'Connell St., Waterford, X91 E866

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www.MensNetwork.ie   @MensNetworkIE

49 O'Connell Street
Waterford
X91 E866.

August 10th, 2021.

Mr Leo Varadkar TD
Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

Re: Ratification of the new International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No.190 on Violence and Harassment

Dear Tánaiste,

I am writing on behalf of the Men's Development Network to urge the Government to ratify ILO C190 – Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No.190) and implement R206 – Violence and Harassment Recommendation, 2019 (No.206). 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.

Throughout our work with men and boys, including programmes for those who have committed domestic violence (MEND), male victims of domestic violence (MAL) and the White Ribbon advocacy campaign, we recognise the urgent need for Irish ratification and implementation of Convention No.190 and its accompanying Recommendation No.206.

As a Men's Development Network, we recognise historic and ongoing male privilege and the preponderance of men in leadership positions in both public and private sectors. We believe that we have an important role in eradicating violence and harassment in workplace settings and call for Government ratification of the new international labour standards.

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. As a gender equality organisation MDN see the ratification of ILO Convention 190 as critical in addressing gender inequality.

We commend the Government's efforts in addressing interpersonal violence and abuse through ratification of the Istanbul Convention and drafting the Domestic Violence (Amendment) Bill, 2019. However, in our view, it is now time for Government ratification of Convention 190 and implementation of the accompanying Recommendation. June 2021 marked the two-year anniversary



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice



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of the drafting of Convention No.190. June 25th, 2021, also marked the entry into force of the Convention as a binding international legal instrument, having reached the sufficient number of state signatories. We wish to acknowledge the good work of Ireland's constituents to the ILO in the drafting of the Convention as well as Government commitment to being an early-ratifier of the Convention and targeted to ratify whilst a titular member of the ILO's Governing Body. We also understand that Ireland does not ratify international instruments until certain that national law accords with the requirements of the Convention.

We understand that the ongoing pandemic may have caused delays in the ratification process, however the challenges posed by COVID-19 underscores the importance of early ratification of this Convention. As people continue to work from home, there are reported increases in instances of cyber harassment and violence, in addition to the well-highlighted increases in domestic violence nationally and internationally. It is our view that ratification and implementation of Convention No.190 is an important response measure to ensure we build back better post-pandemic.

Please can you provide clarification in relation to the following matters:

- the causes for the delay in Government ratification of the Convention
- the status of the process in reviewing Irish and European Law to ensure it accords with the requirements of Convention No.190
- the status of the governmental commitment to early ratification of the Convention, given that it has already come into force worldwide

Finally, MDN are confident of our ability to support and assist the implementation of the Convention. We are happy to share our expertise and lead or participate in the consultation process as part of implementation of the Convention at national level. We call on Government to ratify this Convention as a matter of urgency and welcome the opportunity to discuss the points raised in this letter at a time of your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Seán Cooke
Chief Executive Officer

Colm Kelly Ryan
Head of Programmes/Advocacy



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