



DECLARATION

11th Gathering of the Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality:

Achieving Balance in the World of Work

Mexico City, Mexico | June 18–20, 2019

We, parliamentarians from 22 countries in the Americas and the Caribbean, have convened in Mexico City, Mexico from June 18 to 20, 2019, on the occasion of the **11th Gathering of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality**, titled *Achieving Balance in the World of Work*.

During the working sessions of the gathering, we analyzed the status of women’s empowerment in the labour force and exchanged legislative strategies to build a more gender-balanced future for our region. Given the decisive role of parliaments and their members in advancing evidence-based solutions for more inclusive economies, we reaffirmed our personal and collective commitment to transforming the discriminatory practices and stereotypes that create obstacles to this shared goal, thus promoting equality of rights and opportunities. We undertook these dialogues with awareness that the impacts of climate change and natural disasters, as well as social, economic, and political instability, threaten human rights, motivating us to build societies that are more just, equitable, and resilient.

As matters for priority action in this regard, we identified: recognizing, reducing, and redistributing women’s valuable unpaid care and domestic work; closing the gaps in legal frameworks in order to promote substantive equality; eradicating workplace sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination that limit economic opportunities and rights; advocating for the collection and use of disaggregated data for policymaking that better meets the needs of all women in their working lives; and fostering positive cultural transformations that reinforce equitable and sustainable working conditions for the economies of the future.

Recognizing:

1. That women’s paid and unpaid work provides significant, measurable benefits to national economic development and to public and private life, but is often undervalued;
2. That to successfully mitigate the many challenges facing our region, we will require the talents of women and men, and their equal access to decent and rewarding work, and equal pay for work of equal value;
3. That the international frameworks agreed to by our States, among them the SDGs, CEDAW, ratified ILO conventions, as well as various inter-American mechanisms, provide a roadmap that can be used to design legal reforms and national budgets that incentivize gender equality in the labour force;
4. That laws, policies, and other regulatory frameworks which appear to be “gender neutral” can in fact have discriminatory effects in practice; thus, differentiated and/or positive actions, such as quotas or targets for women, can help to redress unequal playing fields and historical injustices;
5. That comprehensive, high-quality data – disaggregated by gender and other social characteristics – should inform all policymaking as a means of avoiding unintended biases and better respond to the

realities facing women and men from different socioeconomic backgrounds throughout the life cycle;

6. That qualitative data on women's lived experiences provides more nuanced understandings of the diverse realities faced which is essential to the analysis of barriers and opportunities for advancing women's economic empowerment;
7. That parity in women's representation in leadership positions promotes better policy, better economic performance, and more equitable workplaces;
8. That women as a group are overrepresented in precarious, insecure, part time, undervalued, informal, and low wage work, and may further be hindered by systematic occupational segregation, gender pay gaps, gender-based violence, limited access to financial markets and resources, and family-unfriendly policies; and that one's individual experience of systemic inequality is differentiated based on positions of power and privilege;
9. That priority attention must be given to vulnerable groups who may experience unique barriers to labour markets, including people living with disabilities, Indigenous, Afrodescendent, and ethnic minority peoples, among others;
10. That upholding the rights of paid domestic and care workers, whether employed formally or informally, requires critical action;
11. That universal social protection policies, when gender-responsive in their design, can be powerful mechanisms to reduce poverty and guarantee women's right to an adequate standard of living; these policies may relate to unemployment insurance, non-contributory pensions, affordable childcare infrastructure, paid parental leave, minimum wages, and skills training, among others;
12. That unpaid care and domestic work are responsibilities that continue to disproportionately burden women, and that these are a root cause of unequal access to productive opportunities such as paid work and education;
13. That co-responsibility for domestic, care, and reproductive work should be actively promoted and redistributed among men, women, the State, the private sector, and/or unions and other relevant bodies;
14. That gender-based violence in all its forms is a pervasive violation of human rights and an obstacle to economic autonomy at an individual level and economic growth at a national level;
15. That sexual harassment in the workplace is alarmingly common across all industries, as evidenced by individuals who have come forward in the context of #MeToo and other social movements, and this problem must be urgently addressed with comprehensive prevention measures;
16. That sensitivity training for personnel involved in the implementation and compliance of anti-violence and anti-discrimination measures can help to ensure that women or men who come forward to report workplace violations are not stigmatized or re-traumatized, but rather treated with respect and dignity;

17. That our societies are currently undergoing significant challenges in economic, technological, and demographic terms that necessitate creativity, innovation, entrepreneurial spirits, and proactive planning to ensure decent jobs for young women and men whose skills will need to respond to the evolving characteristics of labour markets;
18. That the private sector and other employers are pivotal actors in the advancement of gender equality in the world of work, and that partnerships with these entities can be leveraged to design, finance, and/or strengthen initiatives that promote more inclusive workplaces;
19. That cultural and policy shifts that promote a healthy balance between individuals' work and personal lives can lead to a more productive, healthy, creative, and prosperous workforce with adequate time for learning, leisure, and other self-development;
20. That meaningful consultations with diverse civil society groups, and their active participation in political decision-making on socioeconomic matters, are key to the creation of regulatory frameworks that promote the enjoyment of expanded choices and more fulfilling lives for all members of society;
21. That partnerships and coordination with, and among, regional and international organizations dedicated to gender equality facilitates the construction of more impactful agendas for gender equality; and that the member organizations of the Inter-American Task Force on Women's Empowerment and Leadership will continue to pursue the agenda to increase women's leadership in economic, political, and social life.

In view of the above,

We commit to:

1. Reviewing the status of international conventions for gender equality in the labour force, including ILO conventions pending ratification, and taking steps to harmonize our countries' legislation in line with our States' agreements.
2. Visibilizing the work of women around us and challenging harmful gender stereotypes.
3. Identifying provisions in our national laws that are directly or indirectly discriminatory to women in the world of work, and consulting with women's organizations to close this gap.
4. Forging new expectations around work-life balance in all sectors, including politics, and modeling these to the extent possible.
5. Advocating for the generation and use of gender-disaggregated data for all legislative decision-making.
6. Taking steps to strengthen social protection systems, ensuring that they are guided by principles of universality, co-responsibility, and gender equality.
7. Investing in gender-responsive infrastructure and training that will help to prepare youth for the rapidly transforming labour markets of the future.
8. Initiating or supporting actions to institutionalize an anti-sexual harassment policy that is appropriate for our parliaments.
9. Implementing good practices in our offices that build cultures of respect and inclusion for all employees.

Adopted in Mexico City, Mexico, June 20, 2019.