



**Intervention by Georgia Papoutsis, Policy Coordinator of the
International Cooperative Alliance
at the Standards-Setting Committee on Ending violence and
harassment in the world of work
108th Session of the International Labour Conference**

Mister Chair, congratulations to you and to all participants of this Committee from the International Cooperative Alliance; the voice of the Cooperative Movement at the global level, representing 1.2 billion of cooperative members and the 10% of employment of the total employed population.

On behalf of the cooperative movement, we wish to welcome the decision of the standard setting committee that the instruments should take the form of a convention, supplemented by a recommendation while we do support the call for a new ILO Convention and Recommendation on “Ending violence and harassment at work!”

We are aware of the fact that although both women and men experience violence and harassment in the world of work, unequal power relations in society and at work often result in women being far more targeted for violence and harassment. We also know that according to the 2018 World Bank report, 59 countries do not have any specific legal remedies against sexual harassment at work. The list of facts is endless...

BUT they clearly always show the great need for a binding convention with specific legal remedies against sexual harassment at work but also the need of a convention that has a strong focus on gender-based violence.

We are all here actors and drivers of change for a world where there is zero tolerance towards sexual exploitation and abuse!

And on this note, I would like to mention, that already last year the International Cooperative Alliance approved at its general assembly in Buenos Aires a Declaration on Decent Work and against Harassment. by which the cooperative movement at large:

Commits itself to respect, promote and act diligently to support the fundamental tenets of decent work towards a more inclusive future of work,

defends the basic principles of dignity and equality in the new and emerging forms of employment;

prohibits within its sphere of influence all sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances or conduct of a sexual nature that is intimidating, hostile or offensive – remaining consistent with the Statement on the Cooperative Identity,

affirms its obligation to respect and promote the UN's zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse;

strongly opposes every other kind of workplace misconduct, including intimidation, oppression and discrimination, as well as any abuse of power;

if we really want to end violence against women and girls at work! - Let's speak up and act collectively!

Thank you!

It will be important to maintain the strong focus on gender-based violence that occurs throughout the text adopted by the Committee in 2018, in recognition of that gender-based violence is a reflection of prevailing gender inequalities in the world of work and victims are overwhelmingly women. A failure to recognise this would risk that measures adopted to address violence and harassment in the world of work prove to be wholly inadequate.