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**Statement by**  
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**ILO Office for the United Nations**

**64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**  
**Third Committee**  
**Advancement of Women**

Mr. Chair,

Last June the ILO's 98<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference held a general discussion focussed on putting gender equality at the heart of decent work. Delegates noted that despite the progress made since the last ILC general discussion on the issue in 1985, major challenges still remain.

Prior to the ILC discussion, the ILO launched in June 2008 a one-year campaign *Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work*. Throughout the year, twelve decent work themes have been examined through a gender lens and all the material developed for the campaign is available on the ILO website.

The outcomes of the discussion resulted in the adoption of the *Resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work*.

In line with the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the *Resolution* calls upon the ILO to promote gender equality as a cross cutting issue in all four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda, namely employment, social protection, principles and rights at work, and social dialogue and tripartism. The topics examined in the resolution include, among others, equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal value, work-family reconciliation measures, the need to increase the share of women participating in social dialogue discussion, and women's entrepreneurship development.

The resolution also highlights the role governments, employers' and workers' organizations have to play in achieving gender equality in the world of work. In particular, Governments can contribute to create a conducive environment through the ratification and implementation of the ILO equality Conventions, the adoption of non-discrimination legislation and gender-sensitive labour laws, and the development of gender equality policies and programmes, with special attention to the most vulnerable women in society, including indigenous, migrant, minority, young and rural women.

The follow-up actions outlined in the Resolution are being pursued by a wide range of ILO units in the field and at headquarters and will be taken into account in the application of the strategic outcomes of the ILO Programme and Budget for 2010-11, in particular in the context of the current economic crisis.

Mr Chair,

The labour market projections for 2009 show deterioration in global labour markets for both women and men. The Global Employment Trends for Women released in March this year confirmed that women are often in a disadvantaged position in comparison to men in labour markets around the world. The gender impact of the crisis varies considerably across regions and countries: in regions where women were more

likely to be unemployed than man before the current crisis, unemployment rate increases can be expected to be higher for women than for men. In these regions, where women usually face stronger barriers to labour market entry and have more difficulty finding employment, the crisis is exacerbating the existing differentials.

Given the serious prospect of a prolonged global increase in unemployment, poverty and inequality, the ILC in June 2009 adopted a *Global Jobs Pact* designed to guide national and international policies aimed at stimulating economic recovery, generating jobs and providing protection to working people and their families. Both the *Pact* and the *Resolution* recognize that recovery packages need to take into consideration the different impact the crisis has on women and men to guarantee the efficacy of the recovery measures.

The ILO is also putting special emphasis on the impact the crisis is having on migration, with a special emphasis on women migrant workers. Currently, the International Migration Programme of the ILO is developing a *Strategic Guide "A Framework for Action on Maximising the Contribution of Women Migrant Workers to Development"*. The guide aims at providing guidance to policy-makers on how to enhance the contribution of women migrant workers to development and to advance knowledge on the nexus between migration, gender equality and development. It includes best practices and recommendations to governments, workers' and employers' organizations on how to maximize the potential contribution of women migrant workers to development by enhancing their protection and optimizing remittance utilization for household welfare.

Mr. Chair,

Central to the efforts in assessing and monitoring the achievement of gender equality both within the Organization and in the world of work is the ILO Participatory Gender Audit. It gives added support to the United Nations Country Teams Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and has assisted UN Country Teams in Africa and Asia in integrating gender into the Delivering as One programme.

The International Training Centre of the ILO, in close collaboration with the bureau for Gender Equality of the ILO, delivers training for gender audit facilitators so that capacity is created for constituents, national gender experts and UN staff as for better assessing the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming strategy in support of gender equality and women's empowerment. In addition to this the Training Centre is also delivering on-line and in presence training courses on gender budgeting, gender poverty and employment, women workers rights, and non-discrimination. Among many projects, the Centre is currently running a large awareness-raising campaign on behalf of the European Commission on the need to overcome gender stereotypes in small companies, which has now reached 30 European countries.

In closing, Mr. Chair, the ILO reaffirms its commitment to contribute to the promotion of gender equality and Decent Work for All Women and Men, and looks forward to actively participating in the discussion on this item in the following days.

Thank you.