



WIDF STATEMENT – WOMAN SITUATION ON WORK

On behalf of WIDF I would like to address to this UN plenary about the women situation on work and wages, the problems that they are facing and their effects on the integration of their families.

We are living today in a grave conjuncture of an international financial crisis, which omens have been increasing and that is today a harsh reality to global economies.

Recession has reached the economies of the USA, Japan and Europe. It is aggravating the situation of women day by day, with the increasing deprivation of their jobs. The number of fired people in every parts of the world is astonishing.

The last unemployment's rate in the United Kingdom shows that women are losing their jobs twice faster than men. During the last three months of 2008, the official data show that 36 thousand men have lost their jobs whereas 53 thousand women were dismissed at the same period. As their position is more expensive to the employer, due to the costs of the maternity leave, women are the prior choice at dismissal moment.

The ILO report, "Working Panorama for Latin America and Caribbean – 2008" anticipates that "due to the crises, up to 2.4 million people could enter the regional unemployment queues in 2009", adding up to the almost 16 million that are already unemployed.

In most countries there was a salary retraction; working women are the most affected, with an unemployment rate 1,6 times bigger than the male one.

In nine countries, the juvenile unemployment in 2008 was 2.2 times bigger than the total unemployment rate.

Today, in 54 countries, the per capita income is lower than ten years ago. In 34 countries, the life expectative has decreased. In 14 countries, more children are starving to death. The lack of basic sanitation has killed more children during the last decade than all the armed conflicts since the II World War. In Africa, where colonialism has resisted since the twilight of the XX Century, 200 million of human beings are entangled in a quotidian of hunger, disease and abandonment.

The world crisis in the nourishment field, caused by the speculation on the prices of food, has catapulted the world price of basic aliments, monopolized on the hands of three North American multinationals.

There are about 870 million people in the world that are dying due to hunger and among then, two thirds are women and an expressive part is at the African countries. According to FAO, other 850 million people are also threaten: at each percent point that the world rate of food prices rate increases, more than 16 million people join the macabre figures of hunger and innutrition.

In the USA, the evictions have reached 750 thousand middle class families and 1 among 6 landowners is without conditions to pay for their debts and end up loosing their realties to the banks, staying without a place to live. Today 17% of the realties for sale in the USA are realties resumed to the banks.

Women receive salaries usually 30% lower than men get for the same job, there are almost no investments in their qualification, they have no guarantees that the laws of motherhood or female work will be abide. The factories, enterprisers or the States – through tax received – do not invest in day care facilities, pre-schools, motherhood or children assistance. They also do not build any collective structure to support domestic services.

Partial or temporary jobs have significantly increased among women at the same time that the unemployment or the informal work among women is the double than among men. The retirement age limit has increased; expenses with the health system and the social security are

placed on the shoulders of the working class. Great companies are forcing the working women to promise not to get pregnant at a certain period otherwise they will be fired.

Considered as second class human beings, we are used to reduce the prices of the working force. During the years we were "subjected to the domestic slavery, suffocated by mean, brutal, heavy and barbarizing work, and usually isolated by the domestic economy".

There are 2.8 billion people all over the world living under the poverty line. 70% of them are women.

The current fight of women goes over a strong mobilization to define the role of the States at this moment of crisis.

Mechanisms of prevention and control over the maintenance of jobs and salaries are necessary. It is imperative to guarantee the credit for production and for consume. We are totally against the flexibility to reduce the cost of work with the withdrawal of rights of workers.

Extortions and threats of collective dismissal made by business sector, especially by the multinational companies, in order to reduce the rights of workers constitute a threat against workers.

It is time for the States to reduce their interest rates, creating more resources to inner investment, to invest in salaries, in more places to access to work, in agriculture, to create fomentation banks in the States so they can loan money for the production.

Those are urgent and imperative initiatives.

All around the world several governments in Europe, Latin America, of China and Russia, among others, are already adopting measures to face this crisis and to prevent that this threaten takes the economy of their people into bankruptcy. In China an economical package of US\$ 292 million to build railways is going to create jobs for the Chinese workers and facilitate the outflow of the agriculture production therefore reducing the costs. In Brazil, this crisis is being faced with more production, using the public Money to irrigate civil construction, sanitation works, agriculture, automobilist industry and Brazilian small and medium companies. The Plan for the Acceleration of Growth has already decided that 30% of the jobs opened with its implementation must be destined to women that will also be trained for that.

Those are urgent measures that can be assumed in every country, with initiatives that create jobs and the determination from the governments so that the public money that will be lend to companies must have as a counterpart non dismissal of workers.

We will fight so that the States are mobilized in order to guarantee the maintenance of jobs and that we, women, will continue to indicate paths and exits for this crisis aiming the human being and the development of our countries.

It suits to UN to supervise and to demand that the States Members do not allow that there falls back on the shoulders of the workers the onus of this economical crisis and that the jobs and salaries are guaranteed and protected.

Thank you!

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Women International Democratic Federation