

Resolution No. 5

PROMOTING AND ACHIEVING WORK LIFE BALANCE

The 3rd ITUC-AP General Council Meeting in Cebu, Philippines, on 10-12 November 2009:

NOTING that work-life balance is about women and men finding a balance between work life and personal life in pursuit of a career of their choice, succeed in it, and at the same time, have quality family life;

RECOGNIZING the ITUC-AP survey findings that:

- despite women's increasing entry into the labour market, bulk of housework and care work is still predominantly done by women;
- ratification of ILO Conventions No.156 - Workers with Family Responsibilities and No. 183 - Maternity Protection is very dismal;
- 38 percent of respondents comply with ILO standard of at least 14 weeks paid maternity leave and 31 percent have paid paternity leave ranging from 3-15 days;
- top coping strategies used by women in their balancing struggle are informal child care arrangement, leave employment, and child care centers which are not necessarily the best options but because of its availability;

EMPHASIZING that the primary root of women's difficulties towards full participation in society, workplace, trade union and in achieving Work-Life balance is the socially and historically constructed role of women and men at home which has been transmuted into the workplace in the form of among others, wage disparities, occupational distinctions, and positions of status, power and authority and access to education and training opportunities;

ACKNOWLEDGING that Globalization and the recent global financial turmoil is forcing reconsiderations in the traditional roles of women and men at workplace, at home, in society and in trade unions such that trends towards later marriage, never marrying, single motherhood and marriage breakdown, means increasing number of women in many countries needs an income to support themselves not having a male partner for financial support; on the other hand, women in marriage or cohabitating couples are pressed to share breadwinning role with men giving rise to dual-income families, but, bulk of family responsibilities remain with women;

NOTING that an alarming trend as an offshoot of women maternity and care problems not being satisfactorily addressed, a new breed

of well educated women shun marriage and maternity as they become more career oriented, enjoy independence, autonomy and economic empowerment including being child-free and tendencies towards marrying no less than their equal;

UNDERSCORING

that the trade unions mission is to better the conditions of work and life of working women and men and their families such that its existence is to facilitate fulfillment of working women and men's aspirations of having a successful career and a happy family life;

CALLS ON

ITUC-AP and affiliates to:

- transform male-dominant labour market including employment structure and working style into gender neutral one with no discrimination in terms of wages, employment opportunity, training/retraining, career building, promotion, etc.;
- promote good practices of shared family responsibility to tackle family gender inequality
- extend maternity protection, security of employment, parental leave, time off, flexible time, healthcare, prohibition of or restriction on night work, proper OHS standards, etc., in strong support of reproductive role of women;
- support family through collective bargaining for better facilities and working hour arrangements;
- advance institutional reform for better labour laws, social laws and facilities; and,
- organise better and stronger community support;
- continue action to ratify ILO Conventions and improve national legislations
- promote gender-neutral free education;
- encourage and promote quality and quantity participation of women in trade union activities and to leadership positions; and,
- propose the issues of Work-Life Balance to be on the agenda of national, regional and inter-regional tripartite mechanisms.