

GLOBAL WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY, APRIL 28, 2015

On the 28th of April, Workers' Memorial Day, the Honduran Women's Collective (CODEMUH) states this is a day of mourning, struggle and pain for the workers who have lost their lives, been injured or left disabled as a result of an accident at work.

We remind the authorities responsible that they must protect labour rights, that accidents at the workplace or illnesses resulting from the working environment are pandemic. Every year 2.3 million people die in work-related accidents or illnesses resulting from the working environment. Every day 6,300 deaths are recorded, 262 every hour and 4 every second. And in Honduras, according to an investigation by the Autonomous Metropolitan University of Mexico and CODEMUH, 46% of factory workers suffer from depression, 46% suffer from stress and 62% suffer from musculoskeletal disorders. It is important to underline that these are young people, 79% of whom are under the age of 35.

The government and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (STSS) – the authority responsible for safeguarding the human rights and labour rights of the workers - must meet its constitutional obligations and implement the international treaties on the issue. They must not allow textile factories to commit violations. A safe and secure working environment free from exploitation by the management must be ensured.

Even though the protection of the rights and personal integrity of women are covered by international law and effective action such as The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ("Protocol of San Salvador"), the government of Honduras and the Labour Ministry are not honouring the commitments that the state has agreed to.

At numerous meetings with the STSS, and also publicly, CODEMUH has raised the issue that the labour authorities are not meeting their constitutional obligation of safeguarding workers' rights, especially in sensitive working environments such as the fabrication of clothing for exportation, where excessive working hours and illegal working methods are often employed.

CODEMUH presented an application for administrative support to the Supreme Court of Justice and the court ruled in favour of the 49 workers at the textile factory, ordering the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to adopt an inspection scheme to reduce ergonomic risks at the place of work, to bring an end to illegal working days of almost 12 hours and to ensure an ordinary working day of eight hours, as well as a living wage.

We, the textile factory workers, demand that the Minister of Labour, Carlos Madero, implement the Supreme Court of Justice ruling, making historical gains in the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights.

"STOP VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE"



"WORK YES, BUT WITH DIGNITY"



Translated by Cheryl Gallagher for CAWN