

MEDIA



International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations

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As U.N. Delegates Negotiate Global Rules to Stop Violence and Harassment at Work, Marriott Hotel Workers Demand Company Signs Global Sexual Harassment Agreement

GENEVA, Switzerland: On May 29th Marriott workers from around the world will gather in Geneva to call on the company to adopt concrete measures to address sexual harassment faced by women workers. While worker delegates at the United Nations annual International Labour Conference in Geneva push for a global Convention on violence and harassment in the workplace, women who work at Marriott, the world's largest hotelier, are demanding action to stop sexual harassment.

The Marriott workers from Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America, led by their international trade union federation, the IUF, will hold a demonstration on May 29th. They will march from the Marriott owned Ritz-Carlton Hotel de la Paix to Marriott's Hotel President Wilson to present company representatives with a proposal for a global agreement to work with unions to stop sexual harassment. This would include prevention measures, quicker response times to reports of sexual harassment, and protection from retaliation for workers who report harassment from guests, managers, or coworkers.

"The IUF has already negotiated similar agreements with several global companies. As the world's largest hotel company Marriott has the power to raise standards for women across the entire industry. We want them to act now.

"As the global union representing hotel workers worldwide, we are calling on Marriott to take positive action to protect its hotel workers around the globe from sexual harassment on the job," said IUF General Secretary Sue Longley.

"Two years ago I was cleaning a bathroom at the Marriott Marquis when a man came in and sexually assaulted me. Soon after another housekeeper was attacked. Management refused to take action to protect us and told me not to talk about it," said Consuelo Escorcía, a member of North American hospitality union UNITE HERE and a lobby attendant at the Marriott Marquis in San Francisco, "I traveled to Geneva to join Marriott workers from all over the world in telling Marriott that we refuse to be silent."

"When management found out that my coworkers and I were organizing a union, they called us into meetings one by one and interrogated us. I was suspended indefinitely. It has been three months now and my second child was just born and I don't know what I will do. It is impossible to fight for change on any issue without the right to

organize,” said Agus Sarwatama, a member of Indonesian hospitality union Federasi Serikat Pekerja Mandiri and a first cook at W Bali – Seminyak.

Countries demanding a global agreement on sexual harassment with Marriott include Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Fiji, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Lithuania, Malawi, Maldives, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

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The International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) is an international federation of trade unions representing workers employed in agriculture and plantations; the preparation and manufacture of food and beverages; hotels, restaurants and catering services; all stages of tobacco processing. The IUF is composed of 422 affiliated trade unions in 131 countries representing over 10 million workers.

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