



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES

877 Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, West Triangle, Quezon City

P.O Box 718, Manila Central Post Office, 1099 Ermita, Manila

Telephone: (632) 426-1729 * 426-3790 * 436-9157 Fax: (632) 426-1729

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CALL TO ACTION ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION 2017 #BeBoldForChange #ResumePeaceTalks #PeaceTalksItuloy

Today, the International Women's Day, is a day to celebrate globally the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. Today marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

This year's IWD theme focuses on "Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030". The world of work is changing, and with significant implications for women. On one hand, we have globalization, technological and digital revolution and the opportunities they bring, and on the other hand, the growing informality of labor, unstable livelihoods and incomes, new fiscal and trade policies and environment impacts – all these must be addressed in the context of women's economic empowerment.

Achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including ending poverty, promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, reducing inequalities within and between countries, and achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, rests upon unlocking the full potential of women in the world of work.

But like the nameless hemorrhaging woman in Mark 5:24-34 whose sickness made her a social outcast, isolated, burdened with severe low self-esteem, and hopeless, a lot of women remain to be of great and desperate need. Women have to be acknowledged for who they are, have their own identity and voices to be heard.

The rights you now enjoy today were obtained by women who fought for the vote, for civil rights and who struggled against discrimination; women who claimed their voices and supported rights to life. They were beaten, arrested, jailed, tortured and killed, even when not participating in marches, but while just trying to live their lives.

It is now 2017, and people are marching. Women, their husbands, children and fathers all around the world are marching for women who still make less money than men for the same work, for migrant families who live in fear of being deported and torn from their children; for undocumented workers abused, exploited, and burned in factories owned and operated by foreigners; for families left behind by victims of a cruel war on drugs; for families who are continually pushed in the pit of poverty without hope and opportunity to rise up; for victims of extra judicial killings and human rights abuses; for victims of modern day slavery; and to raise awareness for women in places who have few, if any, rights. Every march, every right fought for, that women died for, was for the right we now enjoy but often take for granted. Don't let all those who died, the fighting and suffering be for naught.

Let us be #BoldForChange like the hemorrhaging woman asserting her right! Let us be catalysts and vehicles for driving a greater change for women and moving closer to gender parity. Let us call on our government and its agencies to:

- Uphold gender equality in all fields of social activity and combat gender/sexual discrimination
- Improve the wage and living conditions of workers, protect and promote all possible means of livelihood and raise the people's standard of living
- Expand social services, especially in education, health and housing, and improve public utilities



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- Protect vulnerable migrant workers from becoming victims of assault and abuse at the hands of their employers
- Resume GPH peace negotiations with the NDFP and complete those with the MILF
- Carry out national industrialization as the lead factor of economic development and as the key to solving unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment
- Implement land reform as a matter of democratic right and social justice, as the foundation of economic development and as a method of liberating the landless tillers, releasing capital, promoting rural development and creating a domestic market
- Respect the rights of national minorities to self-determination and development
- Promote a patriotic, democratic, scientific and progressive system of education and culture
- Ensure wise utilization of natural resources and protection of the environment

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