

## UN Human Rights Council 39th Session

10 September 2018

### Oral Statement on Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences

#### *Check against Delivery*

Thank you, Mr. President.

This statement is delivered by Plan International, in collaboration with Terre des Hommes International Federation, Defence for Children International and Global March Against Child Labour, who are working together in the Girls Advocacy Alliance to affect policy change to combat violence against girls.

We welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur and thank her for her continued dedication and efforts to combat all contemporary forms of slavery. The report is particularly significant since it gives visibility and substance to a largely invisible phenomenon.

When examining the issue of domestic servitude, it is important to take both a gender- and an age perspective; as we know, paid domestic work is highly feminized. But we also know that adolescent girls experience migration differently from older women. Research<sup>1</sup> shows that girls often migrate to seek more opportunities to work, to learn, and develop new skills. It is important to recognise their role as agents in the migration process, not only victims.

But we also know that adolescent girls face heightened risk of exploitation. They are more likely to face sexual assault, exploitation and abuse from the male members of the family where they work, and the lack of external contacts make them more vulnerable and they often lack awareness of their own rights. Girls often have limited access to alternative sources of livelihood because of poor formal or vocational education.

We would recommend States to:

- Design policy responses that are adapted to the age of female migrants, which also take into account their particular reasons for movement, educational level, and context of host community.
- Ensure that migrant girls are able to continue their education.
- Ratify the ILO Convention 189 on domestic work.
- Address the gender stereotypes and discrimination as root causes of slavery and servitude by awareness raising and by implementing specific policies to transform social attitudes and promote behaviour change around the value placed on women and girls.

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Grabska, K. Time to Look at Girls: Adolescent Girls' Migration in the South. 2016. Available at: [https://www.terredeshommes.nl/sites/tdh/files/uploads/comparative\\_research\\_report\\_time\\_to\\_look\\_at\\_girls.pdf](https://www.terredeshommes.nl/sites/tdh/files/uploads/comparative_research_report_time_to_look_at_girls.pdf)