



THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

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Participation of the Socialist International Women in the National Congress of the National Organization of Liberal Women in Bogotá, Colombia. Held on Friday, October 11, 2024. Where the vice president of the Socialist International Women, Yomaira Sarmiento, participated as president of this organization, delegating the position to the president-elect in this Congress, Adriana Garnica.

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Regional Meeting of the Socialist International Women for Latin America, held on October 18, 2024, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

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**JANET
CAMILO**

SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

*National Organization of Liberal Women,
Colombia.*

In a country like Colombia that has been able to face historical challenges with courage and has taken important steps towards inclusion and equity. Today, we are summoned by something that transcends borders, parties and generations: the political participation of women. This is an issue that is not only urgent, but necessary to build more just, democratic and equitable societies.

However, I want to be clear from the beginning: women are still lagging behind in politics. Although we have made remarkable progress in the productive life

of our countries, politics continues to be an area where the gender gap is even more pronounced. According to data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women in 2023, in Latin America women represent approximately 50% of the population, but we only hold an average of 28% of the seats in national parliaments. Globally, only 26% of parliamentary seats are held by women. Even more worrying is that only 22 countries worldwide have women as heads of state or government.

According to these data, only 21% of ministers worldwide are women, and many of them are in charge of portfolios related to health, education or social issues, perpetuating stereotypical roles. These figures reflect an unquestionable reality: while women have proven to be a vital force in the productive sphere, our presence in decision-making spaces remains limited.

Comrades, this is not only a problem of representation; it is a problem of justice and rights. When women are not at the decision-making table, solutions that directly affect our lives are not treated with the urgency they deserve. It is true that we have advanced and achieved important achievements, but we cannot be satisfied. It is not enough for some of us to reach high positions of power if the majority continues to be relegated. It's not enough to be a drop in the ocean; We need to be a tide of women occupying and transforming political spaces at all levels.

- It is time for us to take our place with
 - determination and boldness. History
 - has shown that when women have
 - the power to decide, the whole
 - society moves forward. And here, I
- want to make an important pause: we need each other. We cannot continue to reproduce the old narrative that "a woman's worst enemy is another woman". That is a myth that weakens us and that we must dismantle. We are not here to compete with each other; We are here to support each other. Because alone we can go fast, but together we go further.

Politics is not a zero-sum game where one wins and the other loses. Every time one of us reaches a space of power, she opens the door for another to do the same. Every woman who manages to break a glass ceiling, paves the way for more women to do so. And this effort cannot be limited by ideological or partisan differences. We may have different visions, but there is something that unites us beyond our differences: the desire to build a society where women have the opportunity to decide about our own lives and the destiny of our countries.

It is time to turn the page on complaint and disunity. Together, we can write a new chapter of hard work, dedication, cooperation, and unity. We cannot continue to allow internal divisions to limit us. It is up to us to create support networks, to build bridges instead of building walls. If a woman is in a position of power, let's not criticize her for her failures; Let's help her get through them, so she can open more doors for all of us. This is a

historic moment for women. The challenges are great, but so are the opportunities. We cannot continue to wait for things to change on their own. Change must come from us, from our collective action, from our unity. We must not wait for someone to invite us to the table, we must create our own tables, our own spaces, our own opportunities.

Comrades, this is our moment. A time to leave behind fear, division and destructive criticism. A time to embrace the cooperation, solidarity and power we have when we work together. We cannot settle for small victories. We want a complete and structural transformation of our societies, and to achieve this we must be united.

We know that politics is not easy, but it is precisely in the moments of greatest difficulty that we most need to be together, supporting and lifting each other up. Because true change, that change that we all yearn for, will not come from the hand of a single party or a single person. It will come from us, from our collective work, from our unity and from our conviction that we can transform the world if we stand together. It is time for our voices to be heard with all the strength we have. It is time to work, to cooperate and to build the future we want for ourselves and for the generations to come.

Together we are unstoppable! Thanks a lot.



**SONIA
GUERRA
LÓPEZ**

BREAK THE SILENCE

In the world there are men who exercise violence as a way of relating to the Other. The dilemma between wanting or hating is practically non-existent for them, and they can damage to death what they claim (or claimed) to love. They harm in different ways, with physical, sexual, economic, institutional violence... they damage to the point of exhaustion, to the point of being unable to take it anymore, to death. There are such men in the world. Men who were socialized in the classic gender role of masculinity. Men who do not express their vulnerability because they "do not cry, they have to fight". We could affirm, at first glance, just by the way they behave in both public and private spaces, that they are "bad" men. They embody the socially accepted profile of "abuser".

But there are also apparently "good" men in the world. Men who seem to know how to love, who relate to each other with respect and empathy, who take co-responsibility for private work, who like to take care of their loved ones. Lately a gap has opened up in this group of men. We could say that in the target of good men there are all those who are, but they are not all who are. They do not belong to a profession, to a certain age or to a certain social class. They are the typical men who are defined by their environment as "normal men" and "good guys". But, sometimes, appearances can be deceiving...

In recent months we have learned about the case of Gisèle Pelicot. A woman sedated by her husband and raped by him and by more than seventy-two "normal" men. Seventy-two "normal" men who found it "normal" to rape a woman without her consent (normality has never been so horrifying). For their defense, these men (remember, apparently "good guys") alluded to the consent of the husband. Showing once again the validity of the sexual contract that Carole Pateman denounced in the 80s, according to which there is an unwritten contract between men about the control of women's bodies. That is, female consent, our consent, does not belong to us but to the men with whom we have a bond, whether they are our fathers, brothers or husbands.

Unfortunately, the Pelicot case is not the only one that has come to light in recent times. Fabiola Yáñez's

- complaint of sexist violence against her husband and former president of Argentina, Alberto Fernández; or the
- case of Iñigo Errejón are one more
- example of "normal men", and even those who claimed to defend the feminist cause, and who exercised sexist violence in their homes or in other people's homes, confirming, as feminists defend, that there is no profile of the abuser.

And then? Is there hope? There is. Because in the world there are still good men, who relate to each other from the recognition of the Other. Men who not only do not use violence, but do not remain silent in the face of it... And being a good man is not only not raping, not beating, not humiliating... To be a good man is to reject the sexual contract, it is to break the pact of silence between "gentlemen". To be a good man is to denounce the sexist violence that surrounds us in the media and networks, in the workplace, leisure, politics, domestic... To be a good man is not to consent, it is not to be silent. To be a good man is to speak out and denounce, because if we really want shame to change sides, all of us, but above all EVERYONE, must break the silence.

YOMAIRA SARMIENTO



THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: AN URGENT TASK

Gender-based violence, an issue that has plagued our society for many decades, a serious and persistent problem, which requires the attention and immediate action of the Socialist International Women.

It is a violation of human rights, on the verge of becoming a pandemic that affects all cultures, ages, religions and social classes. It manifests itself in many ways, from physical, psychological and sexual abuse, to harassment, intimidation and ends with femicide.

It must be specified that gender violence is not only a women's problem, it affects everyone and our entire society. When a woman is abused, we all suffer: children, family, friends and the community in general, fueled by social norms that perpetuate discrimination and inequality. To eradicate it, we must fight together and promote gender equality in all aspects of our society; It is necessary to work and make concerted efforts on

several fronts, with all women's social organizations.

We all have a role to play in the fight against gender-based violence: Start by educating ourselves and others about this scourge. Raise your voice when we see or hear acts of gender-based violence. Supporting victims and making sure they get the help they need. Make preventive policies on gender violence visible. In conclusion, gender-based violence is a problem that we cannot ignore. We must come together as a society to put an end to this scourge and promote a world in which the entire human species is treated with dignity and respect so that women can have a life free of violence.

Promoting an education campaign from childhood, on gender equality, is an important and necessary task. Working on some ideas that have already been expressed, taking them as tasks to be developed and evaluated, through a work plan, to

move forward, this can make a difference, such as:

Teach by example: Children learn a lot from what they see around them. If they see gender equality in action in their home and community, they are more likely to embrace these values. Fostering empathy: Helping children understand and respect each other's feelings and perspectives can be a powerful tool for teaching gender equality.

Challenge gender stereotypes: Toys, books, and media often reinforce traditional gender roles. We can help children to question these stereotypes and to understand that there are no "boy things" or "girl things", they are preconceived ideas to be challenged. Promote equality in play and learning: Ensuring that girls and boys have equal opportunities to play and learn can help foster gender equality.

Talk openly about gender equality: With children, it is important to have open and honest conversations about gender equality, this can include talking about diversity, respect and justice.

In parallel with the impetus of the campaign to educate children, it is important to join forces to deepen the work with commitment of measures in the fields already advanced in society, such as:

Education: Educating ourselves, to educate society, a powerful tool for change. It is important to educate everyone, men and women, about women's rights and gender equality.

Legislation: Promote measures that aim at equal opportunities between men and women in work environments. The laws that protect women's rights and promote gender equality are many and fundamental, but it is necessary to work globally together for the implementation and enforcement of these.

Economic empowerment: Women's economic autonomy helps promote gender equality. Therefore, providing women with economic opportunities and access to resources is very important and necessary.

Political participation: Encouraging women's participation in politics and decision-making can help ensure that their rights are respected and promoted.

Cultural Change: Work to change attitudes and cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality and discrimination against women; challenging some gender stereotypes, developed as preconceptions, every little step we take when it comes to teaching boys and girls about gender equality, by distorting ideas such as:

1. **Girls are sweet and boys are tough, NO.**
2. **Men are providers and women are caregivers, NO.**
3. **Men are leaders and women are followers, NO.**
4. **Men are good at math and science and women are good at arts and humanities, NO.**

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5. Men are strong and women are weak, NO. Las niñas son dulces y los niños son rudos, NO.

Support services: Requiring governments to provide support services, such as women's shelters and effective support lines to help women who have been victims of violence or discrimination, must be a primary task to minimize cases of femicide.

These are some proposals that the ISM must develop during the year 2025, dedicating the entire institutional structure, knowledge, resources and energies.

Likewise, to propose to other women's organizations the convening of an INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S SUMMIT, to coordinate actions, discuss and approve a unitary and global work plan to be

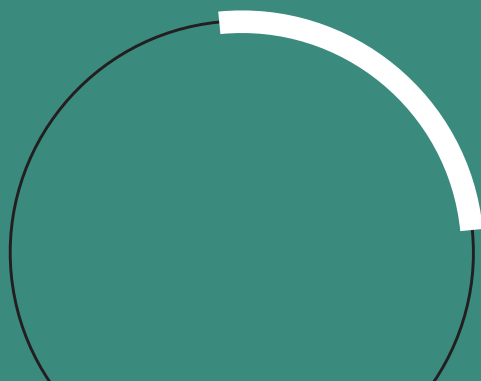
implemented by all organizations in their respective countries, as a key instrument to continue advancing in the fight for gender equality.

i Alone, we advance a few steps!

i United, we advance many more steps!

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YASMINE **EL JAÏ**

Sexist and sexual violence has regularly made the headlines in France. This movement has lifted the veil on a dark reality, affecting political figures, figures in cinema, television, and, more recently, ordinary people. The trial of the Mazan rapes, underway in Avignon, illustrates this problem by highlighting the case of Gisèle Pelicot. Refusing to be held behind closed doors, she chose to testify publicly against her ex-husband, accused of having drugged her to have her raped by 50 men, people from everyday life: neighbors, colleagues, sometimes friends.

Faced with this patriarchal society that fuels violence against women — whether in the public, private, or conjugal sphere — socialist feminists are actively engaged. Being a feminist means first and foremost recognizing that this systemic

domination concerns us all, and that it permeates our behaviours and interactions. For political organizations, this demand for change is even greater. Feminist associations, especially on the left, expect them to set an unflinching example, not only in their political proposals, but also in their functioning.

The Socialist Party has thus strengthened its commitment against sexist and sexual violence (SGBV) so that activists feel safe. Since 2019, training courses have been regularly organized to raise awareness among activists. In 2020, a listening unit was set up to support victims. Since 2021, a disciplinary commission dedicated to the fight against harassment and discrimination, with the power to sanction, has been included in the Party's statutes. In 2023, these trainings were extended to several French territories, and in November 2024, the national office decided to make them mandatory for all candidates, leaders, as well as to offer them with each new membership.

Feminists in socialist parties must remain vigilant to maintain the fight against SGBV as a priority. This feminist revolution requires that every activist, executive, and elected official of the party invest in this collective struggle to build a more just and egalitarian society.



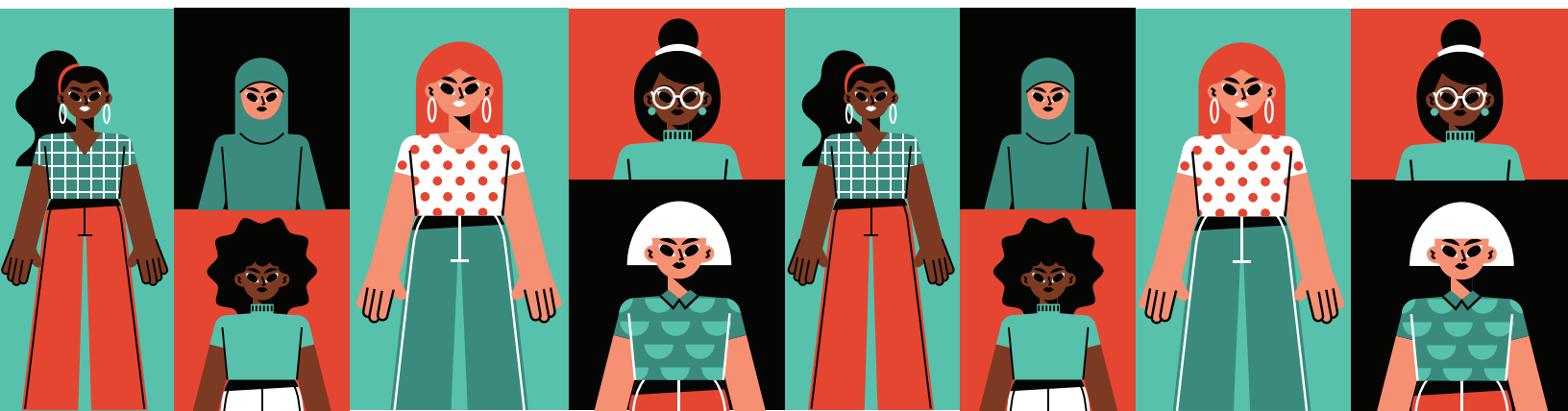
DECLARATION ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN

Gender-based violence continues to be one of the greatest threats to the integrity and dignity of women worldwide. In the realm of daily life and in every corner of our societies, women face physical, psychological and economic abuse that seeks to limit their freedom, silence their voice and violate their autonomy.

Violence against women is a global pandemic that persists in all contexts, including areas of armed conflict, such as in various regions of Africa, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. In these settings, women are particularly exposed to extreme levels of abuse and exploitation due to their gender status and the precariousness of their situation.

It is critical that the international community and leaders of all faiths come together in the unwavering defense of women and girls. This includes the implementation of effective and urgent measures to eradicate gender-based violence in all its forms and protect those who are in vulnerable situations. Justice for victims is a priority, and those responsible for these unacceptable acts must be prosecuted without impunity.

From the Socialist International Women, we reaffirm our commitment to the fight against gender-based violence and to the creation of a safe, equal and fair environment for all women. We will not rest until every woman, in every corner of the planet, lives free from fear and oppression. The protection of women's rights and dignity is not only a goal, but a moral obligation that we assume with full determination.





ANIVERSARIO DE JINA AMINI MAHSA

Two years after the death in custody of Jina Amini Mahsa, harassment against women and girls is on the rise, the authorities have stepped up crackdown on those exercising their fundamental rights, including freedom of religion, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

From the Socialist International Women, we reiterate our firm commitment to support the women and girls of Iran in their struggle to regain lost rights and continue to move towards equality. We recognize the crucial role they have played in the history of their country and underscore the importance of their continuing to be protagonists, with their rights protected and guaranteed. We call on the Iranian government to protect and promote the fundamental human rights of all people, and reaffirm that the rights of women and girls must

be at the heart of the global response to the current crisis. We are convinced that improving the situation of women and girls will be key to increasing the country's competitiveness and building a fairer and more equal society.

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MIGUELINA VECCHIO

She was born on January 29, 1963, worked in the 1980s in the office of Congressman Carlos Araujo, headed by former President Dilma Rousseff. At that time she began her activism in the women's movement.

Called by Brizola to form the National Executive of the Women's Movement, she made the first tour of the country to identify the roots of the movement and create new state and municipal bodies. She became president of the Women's Movement, which would later be called Labour Women's Action.

Her career in political life, and especially her personal life, marked her with a banner of struggle for the end of all types of violence against women.

With two children and married, she completed her degree in Social Sciences and became a sociologist, pursuing several postgraduate degrees in the area of gender, many of them focused on the fight against violence against women.

She was president of the Women's Rights Council in RS, where she strengthened women's rights at all levels. Standing out with the fight for the health rights of women prisoners, who at that time could not even undergo preventive exams while serving time in closed prison.

At the international level she began to represent the women's movement with the Socialist International of Women, gaining more and more space within the PDT, becoming National Vice President of the PDT, expanding its representation within international organizations such as ISM, IS, Coppal, UN Women. among others.



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In Brazil, she went on to represent the National Forum of Women's Instances of Political Parties, responsible for crucial achievements in the search to reduce disparities in electoral disputes. Focusing on expanding women's participation in politics, reaching this segment into spaces of power and combating multiple forms of political violence against women. In this context, it was the protagonist of triumphs such as the guarantee of at least 30% of the resources for female candidates, parity in television and radio time during the electoral campaign, the expansion of these affirmative policies so that resources and visibility were compatible with the needs of the electoral time and not left to the last minute.

She received numerous awards, honors, and recognitions in nearly every state in the country, demonstrating the magnitude of her achievements in improving women's living conditions and expanding their participation in politics.

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