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Cardinal Tarcisio Pietro Evasio Bertone
Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church
Palazzo Apostolic Vaticano
Citta del Vaticano

EQ/CC

8th March 2013

Your Eminence,

On this 8 of March I am writing to express the outrage of the International Trade Union Confederation, a trade union organization representing 175 millions of men and women workers in the world at the persistent attempts by the Holy See representatives to derail the democratic process of consensus-building at the 57th UN Commission on the Status of Women currently taking place in New York.

Violence against women and girls, the subject of this year's Commission, is a problem in all countries and in all societies. One out of every three girls born today will face some form of violence in her life time. 140 million women and girls are suffering from genital female mutilation. Millions of women are victims of acid attacks, rape, forced marriage, stoning and other inhuman treatments.

Violence against women and girls is not about religion. It is not about culture and traditions. It is about power, inequality and lack of political willingness to act against it. The attitude of the representatives of the Holy See in New York obstructs the earnest efforts of a great majority of countries trying to reach consensus that builds on previously agreed international commitments to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

We urge you to take all the necessary measures to ensure that the Holy See representatives adopt a constructive attitude and ensure existing international agreements and national laws are upheld and implemented, and concrete steps taken to ensure violence is prevented throughout the world. The life of millions of women is contingent upon the measures governments will take at national level.

Help make this world a better place for women and girls!

Yours sincerely,



General Secretary

Cc: His Excellency, The Most Reverend Francis A. Chullikatt Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations