

Statement by
**Austria on behalf of the Quadrilateral Group
(Austria, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, Switzerland)**

at the

**41st Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Annual Full-Day Discussion on the Human Rights of Women
Panel 1: Violence against women in the world of work**

Geneva, 27 June 2019

Mr President,

Distinguished panellists,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Slovenia.

Our four countries strongly welcome the topic chosen for this discussion. It is very timely, in light of the landmark agreement at ILO one week ago on a new international instrument to end violence and harassment at work.

Ending violence and harassment against women in the workplace is a legal obligation for all countries and it is the economically smart thing to do. The IMF has shown that countries ranking low on gender equality could boost the size of their economies by 35% if they took advantage of the skills women had to offer.

Already in 1993, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women explicitly affirmed that sexual harassment and intimidation at work

constitute a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and impair or nullify their enjoyment of those rights.

We witness today, as the report of the Special Rapporteur states, mounting opposition to and backsliding of women's rights everywhere.

Our countries are firmly committed to "push back against the pushbacks" which are slowing down progress in the elimination of structural discrimination, gender based violence against women, harmful gender stereotypes and patriarchal norms. This includes promoting and protecting sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls, including for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in the world of work.

We express our gratitude to the government of Canada for tabling a strong resolution on Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls in this instance, which we fully support.

Thank you.