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AF3IRM International Working Women's Day Statement 2012

**A WOMAN'S
place is in the
STRUGGLE**
AF³IRM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Statement on 8th March 2012

Date of release: February 28, 2012

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THE WAR AGAINST WOMEN IS A WAR AGAINST ALL;

EMANCIPATE WOMEN, LIBERATE HUMANITY!

Call it what it is; and then end it. The so-called “culture war” being waged by the right wing in the US is a war against women and by extension, a war on the children of US society. The numbers do not lie.

- 1.5 million single mothers are in a state of absolute poverty;
- 1.9 million more single mothers are on the brink of absolute poverty;

- 1.5 million two-parent families depend on women's income;
- 13.9 million families rely on both parents' income to survive.

Despite the critical nature of women's earnings to the family's survival, only 32% of jobs created by the so-called economic recovery program hired women. This has been compounded by a continuing gender wage gap, whereby white women make 77 cents, African-American women 64 cents and Latinas only 53 cents to every dollar a white male makes. In anti-union states like Wisconsin, women overall make only 75 cents even as Wisconsin removes access to its local courts for equal pay grievances.

Social transformation is not at all possible without addressing the continuing oppression and exploitation of more than half of the population. The equation for progress is as simple as that. The demand for women's comprehensive equality and social, political and economic rights is a transformative demand. Without women's equality and social, political and economic rights, any advance is of the nature of a rubber band, prone to return at any instant to its retrogressive state. We have seen this happen even to the most progressive societies.

Transnational labor has a pivotal role in this struggle. Latinos/as comprise 50% of the foreign-born workforce of the US, with Asians coming in at 21.8%. Yet these two ethnic groups have been subjected to the shock and awe of deportations and threats thereof, rendering their lives fraught with fear and uncertainty. More than half of Latinas who are "undocumented" are employed work at housekeeping, and the care of children and/or the elderly.

Artificially stoked xenophobia enables unscrupulous labor recruiters to impose virtual slave conditions on transnational labor, bringing them into the US under the flawed guest worker program and enabling corporations to pit worker against worker through the sub-contracting of allegedly non-core corporate operations. This means contracting out such departments as housekeeping, laundry, food service in hotels and hospitals to an outside provider, in the process reducing regular jobs to casual hire, eradicating job security and de-unionizing the work place. Women staff most of these so-called non-core operations. Consider the case of Massachusetts which had to ban this subcontract practice.

Call it what it is: creating social pressure and social conditions that would return women to being "barefoot, pregnant and in the kitchen" – which is short-hand for poor, without rights, enslaved, and banned from public discourse, even when such revolves around topics that impact women the most.

Call it what it is: a war on women. Then demand comprehensive equality and full social, political and economic rights for women. Organize for this demand; struggle for it; win it.

Only in this manner can society as a whole advance to the next stage of social evolution without fear of back-sliding and allowing the return of age-old oppression and systems of exploitation.

AF3IRM calls on all women to rise and march; to carry the banner waved by so many revolutionary women through the ten thousand years of women's struggle for liberation, from Ines Carinugan to the Truong Sisters, Mother Jones to Lucy Parsons; the Mirabal Sisters to Comandante Ramona; Lolita Lebrón to Assata Shakur to the transnational women we struggle alongside today.

AF3IRM calls on all women to embrace this truth: that the struggle for women's liberation is a critical part of the struggle for the liberation of humanity.

Let no one tell you otherwise.

Fight on for Women's Rights & Equality – from the home, to the office, to the factory and fields!

Fight for Women's Militant Sisterhood!

End the War against Women.

Onward, shoulder-to-shoulder, to women's, people's liberation!