



Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity

Public Hearing Summary

Friday April 12, 2019 at 10:33 a.m.

Topic:

Inquiry into the sexual harassment in the workplace in Trinidad and Tobago.

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present for the public hearing:

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| • Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, MP | Chairman |
| • Mr. Esmond Forde | Member |
| • Mr. Rushton Paray | Member |
| • Mr. Kazim Hosein | Member |
| • Mrs. Hazel Thompson-Ahye | Member |

Witnesses who appeared:

Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development (MLSED)

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| • Ms. Sangeeta Boondoo | Senior Legal Officer |
| • Ms. Sabina Gomez | Chief Labour Relations Officer (Ag.) |

Office of the Prime Minister

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| • Ms. Jacqueline Johnson | Permanent Secretary |
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Equal Opportunity Commission

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| • Mrs. Lynette Seebaran-Suite | Chairman |
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Employers Consultative Association

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| • Ms. Stephanie Fingal | Chief Executive Officer (Interim) |
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Equal Opportunity Tribunal

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| • Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry | Registrar |
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Trinidad and Tobago Institute for Women in Leadership

- Ms. Hazel Brown Director

Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women & Working Women for Social Progress

- Mrs. Jacqueline Burgess Network Coordinator

Women's Institute for Alternative Development

- Ms. Folade Mutota Executive Director

WOMANTRA

- Ms. Stephanie Leitch Director

Key Issues Discussed:

1. The power of the Equal Opportunity Commission to receive, investigate, conciliate or refer complaints of sexual harassment to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal;
2. The rationale for standalone legislation on sexual harassment and the status of draft legislation on sexual harassment;
3. The bases upon which a claim for sexual harassment can be made by a non-unionized worker;
4. The need for definition of a 'worker' in the National Workplace Policy on Sexual Harassment in Trinidad and Tobago to be broadened to capture domestic workers, migrant workers and volunteers;
5. The roles and responsibilities of a trade union needs to be addressed in the National Workplace Policy on Sexual Harassment in Trinidad and Tobago;
6. The need to provide a whistle-blower protection, anonymous reporting and psycho-social support to workers via Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) in the National Workplace Policy on Sexual Harassment in Trinidad and Tobago;
7. The significance of public education, sensitisation and awareness in the implementation of the National Workplace Policy on Sexual Harassment in Trinidad and Tobago in order for both employers and employees to understand, assimilate and effect the tenets of the Policy;
8. The absence of penalties for employers who fail to have a sexual harassment policy and enforcement measures to be attained with enactment of legislation;

9. The collaborative efforts between the MOLSED and the Office of the Prime Minister to sensitise children through various outreach initiatives; and
10. Additional comments and feedback on National Workplace Policy on Sexual Harassment in Trinidad and Tobago can be submitted to the MOLSED via email at conciliationmol@gov.tt and via the Ministry's Facebook page.

View the Hearing:

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube page via the following link:

<https://youtu.be/PH9GsRlzAsg>

Contact Information:

You may contact the Committee's Secretary at jschumanrights@tparliament.org or 624-7275 Ext. 2288/2402.

Committees Unit

April 12, 2019