

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences; the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls

Ref.: AL OTH 12/2026
(Please use this reference in your reply)

6 March 2026

Dear Jos Stefan Hideky,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences; Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 51/15, 53/3, 59/4 and 59/14.

We are independent human rights experts appointed and mandated by the United Nations Human Rights Council to report and advise on human rights issues from a thematic or country-specific perspective. We are part of the special procedures system of the United Nations, which has 59 thematic and country mandates on a broad range of human rights issues. We are sending this letter under the communications procedure of the Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council to seek clarification on information we have received. Special Procedures mechanisms can intervene directly with Governments and other stakeholders (including companies) on allegations of abuses of human rights that come within their mandates by means of letters, which include urgent appeals, allegation letters, and other communications. The intervention may relate to a human rights violation that has already occurred, is ongoing, or which has a high risk of occurring. The process involves sending a letter to the concerned actors identifying the facts of the allegation, applicable international human rights norms and standards, the concerns and questions of the mandate-holder(s), and a request for follow-up action. Communications may deal with individual cases, general patterns and trends of human rights violations, cases affecting a particular group or community, or the content of draft or existing legislation, policy or practice considered not to be fully compatible with international human rights standards.

In this connection, we would like to bring to your attention information we have received concerning **allegations of serious labour exploitation at PT Huadi Nickel Alloy Indonesia (PT HNAI), including working conditions and employment practices that may amount to forced labour, as well as allegations of failures to effectively prevent, identify and remedy such violations, including through timely protection of affected workers, provision of adequate assistance, access to justice and effective remedies including by holding perpetrators accountable.**

PT Huadi Nickel Alloy

According to the information received:

PT Huadi Nickel Alloy Indonesia (PT HNAI), a subsidiary of the China-based Huadi Steel Group, is a mining company established in the Bantaeng Industrial Area (Kawasan Industri Bantaeng, KIBA) in 2013 and it has been operational since 2018. The company has become a major actor in South Sulawesi's nickel processing industry. It is reported that PT HNAI has committed a range of human rights abuses, including forced labour as described below.

Working hours and compulsory overtime

Firstly, it is alleged that workers at PT HNAI, including migrant workers, are required to work 12-hour shifts on a rotating basis (8.00 a.m.-8.00 p.m. or 8.00 p.m.-8.00 a.m.). Under this system, workers perform up to 20 working days per month, amounting to a total of approximately 240 working hours per month. Of these, 160 hours constitute regular working hours under national law, while the remaining 80 hours constitute compulsory overtime, which reportedly exceeds the legal limits on working hours.

Under Indonesian law, maximum regular working hours are set at either 7 hours per day for six working days per week or 8 hours per day for five working days per week, as regulated under Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower, as amended by Article 81 point 23 of Law Number 6 of 2023 on the Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2022 concerning Job Creation into Law. Overtime work is further regulated under Article 78 of the same law, which requires workers' consent and limits overtime to a maximum of 4 hours per day and 18 hours per week.

In practice, however, workers reportedly perform 4 hours of overtime per shift for five shifts per week, resulting in approximately 20 hours of overtime per week. This exceeds the maximum limits prescribed by law. Overtime is reportedly imposed unilaterally without the consent of workers, and workers who refuse to comply face threats through warning letters or other sanctions.

Employment regulations further require employers to provide rest breaks during working hours, including a break of at least 30 minutes after four consecutive hours of work, as stipulated under Article 79 paragraph 2 of the Manpower Law. According to the information received, PT HNAI does not provide such breaks in practice. Workers report that they are required to remain at their workstations throughout the 12-hour shift to monitor operating machinery. Mealtimes are not treated as rest periods and they need to eat at their working stations, and workers are not permitted to leave their posts. As a result, workers experience de facto continuous labour for the entire duration of each shift without effective rest. Even to use the toilet, workers allegedly need to seek permission from their supervisors. This puts women working alone at their stations at particular disadvantage, as even when they have their period they must wait for supervisory approval before leaving. Workers describe having to assess their supervisor's psychological state before requesting to go to the toilet and in some instances, they are reportedly denied the right to do so.

The shift system reportedly operates continuously with three rotating teams, with workers typically assigned five shifts per week. While workers may receive an interval of approximately 24 hours between shifts, there are no fixed weekly rest days.

Reportedly, these working conditions also deny workers sufficient time to fulfil their religious practices. In Bantaeng Regency, where the majority of workers are Muslim, operations reportedly continue during Friday prayers. Workers are required to remain at their posts to monitor machinery and are therefore prevented from attending Friday prayers.

Failure to Ensure Adequate and Predictable Wages in Line with Minimum Wage Standards

Secondly, it is reported that in 2025 PT HNAI paid a basic wage of IDR 3,500,000. This basic wage falls below the South Sulawesi Provincial Minimum Wage (Upah Minimum Provinsi, UMP) for 2025, which is set at IDR 3,657,527.37 (approximately 217 USD) under South Sulawesi Governor's Decree No. 1423/XII/2024.

According to information received, this basic wage applies uniformly to workers regardless of their length of service. While certain allowances – such as length-of-service-related or conditional allowances – may be provided, they are non-fixed, discretionary, and dependent on specific conditions, rather than forming part of a transparent wage structure and scale. Generally, conditions refer to the worker's assigned position. However, workers reportedly do not receive clear written criteria or instructions regarding how these positions are determined or how the related allowances are calculated. Moreover, workers may be reassigned to different positions at the company's discretion. In some cases, individuals who were previously in higher positions have been transferred to other roles without prior notice or transparent explanation, and without being informed that the new position would not provide the same or higher level of remuneration. As such, these allowances do not form part of a transparent, predictable wage structure or scale.

It is further reported that certain benefits, including health-related allowances, are treated as components of the minimum wage rather than additional entitlements, and may be deducted in wage calculations. As such, these allowances do not guarantee that workers effectively receive wages that meet or exceed the legally mandated minimum wage on a stable and predictable basis.

This practice raises serious concerns regarding compliance with Indonesia's labour and wage regulations. Under Government Regulation No. 36 of 2021 concerning wages, which implements Law No. 13 of 2003 on Manpower as amended by Law No. 6 of 2023, the provincial minimum wage constitutes a mandatory floor, and workers with one year or more of service must be paid in accordance with a clear and transparent wage structure and scale.

Additionally, it is further reported that, on 27 May 2025, the Labour Inspectorate issued a determination in relation to alleged underpayment

affecting 20 workers. According to information received, this determination was later set aside by a court and is therefore not legally binding on the company. According to official calculations by the Labour Inspectorate showing underpayment since November 2021, overtime pay is not provided in accordance with regulations.

It is also reported that, in the furnace department (where ore is smelted), supervisors sometimes order workers to enter furnaces for cleaning while they remain hot, causing shoes to melt and putting worker's health and safety at risk.

Alleged human rights abuses against women workers

Finally, violations of women workers' labour rights at PT HNAI have also been alleged. According to information received, women workers are generally not adequately informed of their rights, and they receive information about maternity-related entitlements and protections primarily through labour unions rather than through company communication.

While maternity leave is reported to be formally granted, women workers indicate that access to maternity-related and reproductive health protections remains limited in practice.

Additional allegations include the absence of designated lactation rooms, instances of sexual harassment, miscarriages allegedly linked to working conditions, and health concerns related to exposure to cigarette smoke in the workplace.

Recent developments of the situation

It is reported that on 1 July 2025 PT HNAI introduced a unilateral temporary layoff policy under a so-called "layoff" scheme, which the company refers to as a "break." This policy was reportedly implemented without prior consultation with workers, without any guarantee of income during the layoff period, and without clarity regarding the timing or conditions of return to work.

According to information received, while the measure was initially presented as a temporary layoff, from October to November 2025 the layoffs effectively became permanent, resulting in the dismissal of the company's entire workforce. As of 15 July 2025, it is reported that a total of 1,962 workers have been laid off.

It is further alleged that PT HNAI has failed to pay severance entitlements in full, as required by Article 43 paragraph 1 of Government Regulation No. 35 of 2021, on the grounds that the company has suffered financial losses. According to reports, the company has relied on the initial classification of the measure as a temporary layoff to justify a reduction of severance payments by approximately 50 per cent. However, these claims of financial loss have reportedly not been substantiated through any credible independent audit. As a result, affected workers are reportedly receiving only half of the severance pay to which they are legally entitled.

Reportedly, the Mining and Energy Industry Workers Union (SBIPE) of the Bantaeng Industrial Estate held a protest in front of the main entrance of PT HNAI from 14 to 25 July 2025, demanding wage payments in accordance with applicable regulations, overtime pay, and clarity regarding the legal status and employment relationship of all workers laid off by the PT HNAI. Throughout the process, it is alleged that union members of the SBIPE of the Bantaeng Industrial Estate were subjected to intimidation directly by the company. According to information received, this intimidation was accompanied by retaliation against union members, including the prioritisation of non-union members in the payment of wages and other financial entitlements. Such practices are reported to have created pressure on union members and to have undermined their ability to freely exercise their right to freedom of association.

During the protest on 15 July 2025, PT HNAI issued an internal memorandum announcing the suspension of operations for all HNAI employees, starting with the Huadi Unit, Yatai Unit, and Wuzhou Unit, until an unspecified date. As a result of this announcement, at least 400 employees at the Huadi Unit, 600 employees at the Yatai Unit, and 350 employees at the Wuzhou Unit were laid off justified by alleged material supply chain difficulties related to nickel, including suspicions concerning the use of illegally sourced materials, which reportedly contributed to the company's bankruptcy.

The PT HNAI, together with PT HNAI's union which name is Federasi Serikat Pekerja Buruh Indonesia (FSPBI), without involving the SBIPE of the Bantaeng Industrial Estate, made a decision on 22 July 2025, regarding the workers laid off starting 15 July 2025, namely granting them Rp 1,500,000.00 per month for three months. This policy was not agreed to by the majority of employees, as they requested wages in accordance with the minimal wages established under national legislation.

The PT HNAI reportedly issued another unilateral decision in the form of an internal memo on 23 July 2025, notifying the revocation of the internal memo on the suspension of operations and confirming the resumption of operations, requiring workers to return to work.

Following these developments, the affected workers, represented by the Legal Aid Institute (LBH) Makassar, submitted a formal complaint to the National Commission on Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia (Komnas HAM) concerning alleged human rights abuses related to the workers' labour rights at PT HNAI. The complaint further relates to intimidation and threats allegedly faced by workers during lawful protests, including reports that workers were threatened with sharp weapons by members of a vigilante group reportedly assigned by company representatives.

In response, Komnas HAM exercised its monitoring mandate under Article 89(3) of Law No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights and, in August 2025, issued formal requests for information to multiple relevant parties. These included the President Director of PT HNAI, the Head of the Manpower and Industry Office of Bantaeng Regency, the Head of the Manpower and

Transmigration Office of South Sulawesi Province, and the Internal Affairs Division of the South Sulawesi Regional Police. Komnas HAM requested clarification regarding company policies on wages, working hours, overtime payments, layoffs, and the handling of alleged intimidation during protests.

Komnas HAM subsequently received responses from several authorities and the company. The Bantaeng Manpower and Industry Office reported that mediation efforts between PT HNAI and SBIPE of the Bantaeng Industrial had taken place on 3 and 16 July 2025 but failed to reach any agreement. Further mediation was reportedly conducted by an industrial relations mediator on 16 July 2025, between PT HNAI, represented by Sabaruddin, S.H., et al., as legal counsel, and SBIPE of the Bantaeng Industrial. The mediation did not result in an agreement, so the industrial relations mediator recommended that the two parties involved pursue further dispute resolution through the industrial relations court (PHI). The South Sulawesi Regional Police Internal Affairs Division indicated that, based on internal verification, no formal police report was found in relation to allegations of intimidation raised by workers while the Legal Aid Institute (LBH) Makassar i had filed a complaint.

In addition, Komnas HAM conducted a request-for-information meeting with PT HNAI management via Zoom in September 2025. During this engagement, the PT HNAI reportedly asserted that the “layoff” or furlough policy had been communicated persuasively to workers in advance for efficiency reasons and that a monthly payment of IDR 1,500,000, together with continued social security coverage, had been offered during the layoff period overall. PT HNAI further claimed that the suspension of operations and furlough decisions were taken in response to prolonged protests that allegedly obstructed company operations, and that an agreement on furloughs had been reached with Federasi Serikat Peejuangan Buruh Indonesia (FSPBI), operating at the company.

After reviewing these responses, Komnas HAM reportedly invited the complainants to submit further comments. In their subsequent submission, LBH Makassar and the affected workers contested the explanations provided by the PT HNAI and state authorities, emphasizing that the issues at PT HNAI were not isolated labor disputes but reflected systemic and large-scale human rights abuses affecting thousands of workers. They stressed that wages below the provincial minimum wage, excessive working hours without adequate rest, unpaid overtime, mass layoffs without full severance pay, and alleged intimidation by employers amounted to serious human rights concerns. Furthermore, the PT HNAI repeatedly invoked financial losses to justify paying only half of the legally mandated severance pay, without providing the results of any independent external audit to substantiate such losses.

The complainants therefore requested Komnas HAM to carry out a thorough investigation involving all relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Manpower and the Indonesian Parliament, and to ensure that the nickel downstreaming industry in Bantaeng operates in compliance with national law and international human rights norms and standards. They specifically called for the restoration of unpaid wages, overtime pay, and severance entitlements, as

well as structural reforms to the PT HNAI's working hour system and layoff practices, in order to prevent further human rights abuses.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations, we express serious concern that, if confirmed, the reported practices at PT HNAI may amount to forced labour based on the ILO Indicators of Forced Labour.¹ In particular, the combination of excessive working hours, compulsory overtime imposed without consent, restrictions on workers' freedom of movement during shifts, threats and intimidation for refusal to work overtime, and severe economic pressure arising from wage practices and mass layoffs may be inconsistent with the prohibition of forced labour.

We also express concern regarding reported wage practices that may fall below legally mandated minimum wage standards. ILO convention No. 131 on Minimum Wage Fixing, read together with ILO convention No. 95 on the Protection of Wages, requires that minimum wages be legally binding, effectively enforced, and paid in full in a regular and predictable manner.

We are also deeply concerned about threats and intimidation against workers during peaceful protests, allegedly perpetrated by members of a company-affiliated vigilante group, as well as by alleged threats and retaliation against union members – not least because such actions have the immediate effect of discouraging workers' exercise of their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, please refer to the **Annex on Reference to international human rights law** attached to this letter which cites international human rights instruments and standards relevant to these allegations.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please describe the measures that PT HNAI has taken, or plans to take, to prevent/address human rights abuses reportedly taking place in its operations.
3. Please clarify how PT HNAI's 12-hour shift system, including compulsory overtime of approximately 20 hours per week, is compatible with the maximum working hours and overtime limits under Indonesian labour law, and whether workers' free and informed consent to overtime is obtained in practice. Please also provide information regarding alleged threats or sanctions applied against workers who refuse to work overtime.

¹ https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_norm/%40declaration/documents/publication/wcms_203832.pdf.

4. Please provide detailed information on the measures taken by PT HNAI to ensure workers' right to rest, including regular rest breaks during shifts, weekly rest days, and the ability to observe religious practices such as Friday prayers. Please also indicate how occupational health and safety is ensured and provide further details regarding allegations that workers are instructed, at times, to enter hot furnaces for cleaning.
5. Please provide detailed information about the existing policies related to parental and maternity leave in the workplace.
6. Please explain how PT HNAI's women workers are informed about their rights and maternity-related entitlements. Please specify how many designated lactation rooms are provided and how safety is ensured for pregnant, as well as for and nursing women and their children.
7. Please explain what the regulations and policies are in place to prevent, respond to, and redress sexual harassment in the workplace.
8. Please explain how PT HNAI's wage structure, including a base wage below the provincial minimum wage supplemented by variable allowances, complies with Indonesian wage regulations and relevant international norms and standards, including for workers with more than one year of service. Please specify also what concrete steps have been taken to remedy confirmed underpayments and unpaid overtime, including those identified by the Labour Inspectorate decision of 27 May 2025.
9. Please clarify the legal basis for the unilateral "layoff" or furlough policy introduced on 1 July 2025, to what extent consideration was given to income security during the layoff period, why only 50 per cent of legally mandated severance pay has been provided, and whether there is a publicly available and independent audit substantiating the company's alleged financial losses which reportedly lead to the layoffs.
10. Please provide information on any human rights policies, human rights due diligence processes and grievance mechanisms put in place by PT HNAI to identify, prevent, mitigate, and remedy the adverse human rights impacts of its activities, including how they integrate specific considerations based on intersecting rights concerns on the basis of race, religion, and gender, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

This communication and any response received from you will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) within 60 days. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person(s) responsible for the alleged violations.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future as, in our view, the information upon which the press release will be based is sufficiently reliable to indicate a matter warranting immediate attention. We also believe that the wider public should be alerted to the potential implications of the above-mentioned allegations. The press release will indicate that we have been in contact with you to clarify the issue/s in question.

Please be informed that a letter on this subject matter has also been sent to Indonesia and China.

Please accept, Mr. Jos Stefan Hideky, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Tomoya Obokata
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences

Damilola S. Olawuyi
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises

Gina Romero
Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

Claudia Flores
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls

Annex

Reference to international human rights law

In connection with above alleged facts and concerns, we would like to draw your attention to the applicable international human rights norms and standards, as well as authoritative guidance on their interpretation.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948, is a key component of international standards regarding the elimination of all forms of slavery. Article 4 states that “no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.” We also wish to underline the *jus cogens* nature of the prohibition of slavery enshrined in the UDHR.

We also recall the ILO convention No. 29 on Forced Labour, which defines forced or compulsory labour as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.” We further recall that article 4 of the Convention prohibit the use of forced or compulsory labour for the benefit of private individuals or companies.

We also wish to call the attention of your Excellency’s Government to Article 20(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association”.

We would also like to highlight the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which were unanimously endorsed in 2011 by the Human Rights Council in its resolution ([A/HRC/RES/17/31](#)) after years of consultation with governments, civil society, human rights defenders and the business community. The guiding principles have been established as the authoritative global standard for all States and businesses to prevent and address business-related adverse human rights impacts. These guiding principles are based on the recognition of:

- a) "The existing obligations of States to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- b) The role of business enterprises as specialized bodies or corporations performing specialized functions, which must comply with all applicable laws and respect human rights.
- c) The need for rights and obligations to be matched by appropriate and effective remedies when they are violated".

The guiding principles also make clear that companies have an independent responsibility to respect human rights. Principles 11-24 and 29-31 provide guidance to companies on how to meet their responsibility to respect human rights and to provide remedies where they have caused or contributed to adverse impacts. The guiding principles have identified two main components of the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, which require “business enterprises to:

- a) Prevent their own activities from causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts and address those impacts when they occur.
- b) Seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts directly related to operations, products or services provided through their business relationships, even where they have not contributed to those impacts” (guiding principle 13).

The commentary to guiding principle 13 notes that companies can be affected by adverse human rights impacts, either through their own activities or as a result of their business relationships with other parties (...) The 'activities' of business enterprises are understood to include both actions and omissions; and their 'business relationships' include relationships with business partners, entities in their value chain and any other non-State or State entities directly linked to their business operations, products or services.

To meet their responsibility to respect human rights, companies should have in place policies and procedures appropriate to their size and circumstances:

- a) A political commitment to uphold their responsibility to respect human rights.
- b) A human rights due diligence process to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their human rights impact.
- c) Processes to redress any adverse human rights impacts they have caused or contributed to (guiding principle 15).

According to guiding principles 16-21, human rights due diligence involves:

- a) Identifying and assessing actual or potential adverse human rights impacts that the enterprise has caused or contributed to through its activities, or that are directly related to the operations, products or services provided by its business relationships.
- b) Integrate the results of impact assessments into relevant business functions and processes, and take appropriate action in accordance with their involvement in the impact.
- c) Monitor the effectiveness of the measures and processes adopted to address these adverse human rights impacts in order to know whether they are working.

- d) Communicate how adverse effects are addressed and demonstrate to stakeholders - particularly those affected - that appropriate policies and processes are in place to implement respect for human rights in practice.

This process of identifying and assessing actual or potential adverse human rights impacts should include substantive consultation with potentially affected groups and other stakeholders (guiding principle 18).

Where an enterprise causes or is likely to cause an adverse human rights impact, it should take the necessary steps to end or prevent that impact. “The establishment of operational-level grievance mechanisms for those potentially affected by corporate activities can be an effective means of redress provided they meet certain requirements listed in principle 31 (guiding principle 22).

Furthermore, business enterprises should remedy any actual adverse impact that they cause or to which they contribute. Remedies can take a variety of forms and may include apologies, restitution, rehabilitation, financial or non-financial compensation and punitive sanctions (whether criminal or administrative, such as fines), as well as the prevention of harm through, for example, injunctions or guarantees of non-repetition. Procedures for the provision of remedy should be impartial, protected from corruption and free from political and other attempts to influence the outcome (commentary to guiding principle 25).

We would also like to highlight the Working Group on business and human rights’ report A/80/171 on Labour migration, business and human rights. In the report, the Working Group elucidates the responsibility of businesses to respect the human rights of migrant workers in a cross - border context, in line with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The report provides guidance on how migrant workers can be put at the centre of efforts to implement the Guiding Principles, including, for instance, by conducting human rights due diligence to enhance respect for migrant workers’ rights.

The Working Group on discrimination against women and girls in its report on Women’s human rights in the changing world of work (A/HRC/44/51) stated that narrow focus on economic growth and profitability in dominant economic models, at the expense of human well-being, decent work and environmental sustainability, is at odds with the realization of women’s human rights.

The Working Group further stressed that reimagining the economy for women’s human rights would involve adequately recognizing and prioritizing women’s specific needs, ensuring reproductive autonomy, eliminating all discrimination and valuing and investing in care work, paid and unpaid, as a central pillar. Such investments can both stimulate employment for women and build much needed physical and social infrastructure that benefits all workers.

To address violence and harassment, the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls recommended that to ensure full implementation of the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) and introduction and strengthening legal frameworks to prevent and effectively respond to sexual harassment, ensuring coverage for all types of workers, particularly workers in non-

standard employment, and application to all workplaces, including public spaces, transport, online and digital work platforms (A/HRC/44/51).

In its report on Gendered inequalities of poverty (A/HRC/53/39), the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls also highlighted that unequal and inadequate remuneration, precarious employment, lack of union representation, and violence and harassment in the workplace are all factors that increase gender-based inequalities and entrench poverty for women and girls. The Working Group underlined that businesses have a key role to play in reducing poverty and inequalities globally and nationally, by upholding standards on human rights, environmental protection, labour relations and fiscal accountability. Lastly, it recommended States and other relevant stakeholders, to guarantee universal, accessible, adequate, available, gender-responsive and comprehensive social protection, adhering to and applying relevant ILO conventions, and ensuring that gender-responsive social protection is granted throughout the life cycle of women and girls as part of the right to an adequate standard of living, and to guarantee equal representation and voice in labour unions and collective bargaining for women workers and create independent and transparent grievance mechanisms to protect and fulfil women's rights to decent work and to enable women to enjoy these rights and to receive gender-transformative remedies in the event of violations.