

The status of women in the USA

written by Lizz Toledo

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Lizz Toledo, with fist raised, at the WIDF/FDIM in Windhoek, Namibia.

Report by Lizz Toledo to the World Steering Committee of WIDF/FDIM (the Women's International Democratic Federation/Federación Democrática Internacional de Mujeres)

Greetings comrades and friends, I bring you solidarity and love from Mujeres en Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party in the USA.

"The status and condition of women workers in the capitalist United States continues to be highly exploitative and dismal. While 46.9 percent of the U.S. total workforce consists of women, we still remain in the lowest paid jobs such as food service, clerical, factory and health care. In 2019, women still earn 79 cents for every dollar that men make.

"Nevertheless, women workers recently led the most dynamic union struggles, including the teachers' uprisings from West Virginia to Los Angeles. In this case, teachers, sometimes without traditional union backing, conducted strikes and refused to back down until they won.

"Fast food women workers at McDonald's restaurant chain challenged common on-the-job sexual harassment and assault by conducting a one-day strike in ten different cities. Most of the workers are poorly paid; they are primarily Black, Latinx and immigrant workers.

"Migrant East African women played a key leadership role in the July 15 strike of Amazon warehouse workers at the Shakopee, Minn., fulfillment center. Hibaq Mohamed, who is one of the leaders of the strike that took place during Amazon's Prime Day, was one of those women who braved bosses, police and security guards to help lead a walkout over grueling production levels. She is just 26 years old," reports former Amazon worker Sharon.

"Many of our sisters are still facing oppression and are often ostracized by their family and communities. Depression, substance abuse and poverty are still the norm for Latinx lesbians! Latinas face racism in the U.S. and as lesbians we face multiple oppressions. We continue to fight back, defending and protecting our sisters everywhere," reports Celenia T., a Latina lesbian activist.

"As capitalism decays, fewer good-paying jobs than ever are available to young women, especially women and queer people of color and immigrants. Extreme lack of economic opportunity has left many young women underemployed or unemployed and unable to access basic needs, including health care and education.

"The Trump administration has cut back abortion rights and access to contraceptives. Multitudes of young women and queer people find themselves going into massive debt to fund their educations, even as university degrees become more and more devalued by the day.

"There is an epidemic of sexual violence and gender-based violence against young women and queer people that continues to grow. Transgender people, Black and Brown women, migrant women, and Indigenous women are murdered and go missing every day.

"Mental illness and trauma are common, and health care is unavailable, so young women and queer people have even more difficulty being productive under capitalism. These obstacles disproportionately affect women of color, Indigenous women and girls, and LGBTQ2S young people.

"As socialists, it is our duty to fight back. We are educating the masses of young women and queer people about the root cause of their oppression, which is not working-class men, but rather the capitalist system that robs young women workers, and all workers and oppressed people, of their basic rights and opportunities. "We wish to spread a collective vision of a society where young women and girls are

empowered and have the tools to achieve full liberation from patriarchy, all forms of gender and sex-based violence, and capitalist exploitation. Now is the time for young women, girls and LGBTQ2S people of the working class to unite in struggle,” says Miranda from Mujeres en Lucha and Youth Against War & Racism.

The status of women in the United States continues to be one of struggle. Women have been and continue to be in the frontlines of all people’s fights for liberation. We are union workers fighting to raise the minimum wage to \$15 and fighting for equal pay. We are in the Im/migrant Rights movement demanding that family separations end and to abolish the ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) police.

While in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, communities buried their dead from racist mass shootings, the U.S. government arrested 800 workers at their jobs in Mississippi chicken processing factories. Their children were left without their parents on their first day of school, but the racist billionaire owners exploiting these workers were not arrested for hiring undocumented workers.

We are in the streets demanding an end to mass incarceration and to abolish the oppressive police system that only serves the rich and powerful, who continue to kill Black and Brown youth at will and with impunity.

We are among the fighters for LGBTQ2S liberation. Stonewall 50 was celebrated this past June 30 in New York City, as delegates from around the world came to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the birth of the modern-day LGBTQ2S movement.

We organize and fight to end sexual and domestic violence of any kind directed at women and young girls. We are anti-war and anti-imperialist. Even with the boot of U.S. imperialism on our necks, we continue to defend Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Palestine, Cuba and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea against U.S. aggression. End Imperialist wars! Long live the international working class!

