



## **Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva**

### Statement

112<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference of ILO  
Report of the Director General on the situation of workers of the  
Occupied Arab Territories  
ILC.112/DG/APP

Statement delivered by H.E. Chaudhry Salik Hussain,  
Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource  
Development  
on behalf of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)  
(6 June 2024)

**Mr. President,**

I am honored to deliver this statement on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Despite our commitment to social justice, we must acknowledge our collective failure to uphold the ideals of the Declaration of Philadelphia on its 80th anniversary. The situation in the occupied Arab territories, particularly in Palestine, represents a failure of the multilateral system at large.

Our initial mission was to improve the working conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, but our focus has shifted to saving lives, especially those of women and children. Moving from providing humanitarian aid to fostering economic recovery has proven to be a difficult process.

The recent attack on Rafah underscores the dire situation highlighted in the Director General's report: Gaza lies in ruins, and the effects of the occupation in the West Bank are deepening, leading to mobility restrictions, business closures, and widespread unemployment. These issues are intensified by the loss of Palestinian employment opportunities in Israel. Those who are

employed often receive partial payment, particularly in the public sector, and the public fiscal space is exhausted, with opportunities for decent work diminishing.

More than 35,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, including women and children, with over 7,000 missing or trapped under rubble, and more than 77,000 injured. Nearly 14,000 children have lost their lives, and many others are suffering from injuries and trauma. Approximately 1.7 million people, comprising three-quarters of Gaza's population, have been internally displaced.

Gaza's unemployment rate has reached 45%, which is more than three times that of the West Bank. This rate is particularly high among women and youth, indicating dire livelihood struggles and economic collapse. The UN's food security agency has projected famine in northern Gaza, with the entire population surpassing acute food insecurity thresholds and 1.1 million facing catastrophic hunger.

The recent violence in Gaza has caused an almost 80% plunge in GDP during the fourth quarter of 2023, with widespread destruction crippling businesses and agriculture, leaving the population dependent on aid. Daily economic losses across the Occupied Palestinian Territory reach nearly US\$19 million. The total daily labor income loss in Gaza is estimated at US\$4.1 million due to job losses, partial payment of public sector salaries, and reduced private sector incomes, resulting in the collapse of the labor market.

Despite the new Palestinian government's focus on economic recovery, ongoing conflict and infrastructure damage present significant hurdles to effective labor governance. The condition of workers in the occupied Syrian Golan is also worrying. They encounter comparable challenges arising from the occupation and conflict, experiencing restricted access to jobs and vital services. The economic and social circumstances in the Golan are severe, prompting an immediate call for international attention and intervention.

The OIC calls for an immediate ceasefire and the unobstructed delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza. It is imperative to develop a

comprehensive recovery and reconstruction plan that addresses the root causes of the conflict and promotes long-term peace and stability in the region. This plan must include substantial international support and a commitment to rebuilding the Palestinian economy and labor market.

We take this opportunity to convey our deep appreciation for the continued efforts and important initiatives taken by the ILO to support workers and mitigate the adverse effects of the crisis being faced in Gaza and the West Bank.

**Mr. President,**

The OIC Group calls upon the international community to urgently address the crisis faced by workers in the occupied Arab territories. Immediate action is needed to alleviate suffering, support recovery, and rebuild. By working together with sustained efforts, we can bring dignity, stability, and prosperity to those affected by this prolonged conflict.

The OIC stands in solidarity with the workers and reaffirms its commitment to advocating for their rights and well-being, aiming for lasting peace and development in the region.

**Thank you.**