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On the International Labour Day May 1st, 2022

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“SHAMS” Center demands the ILO impose pressure on the Israeli occupation to stop its crimes against the Palestinian workers. Also, it requires the EU to activate the second article of the Israeli-European agreement, which stipulates that Israel respects human rights to get the agreed-upon economic privileges. Furthermore, this agreement states that Israel should lift the siege on the Palestinian occupied lands and terminate its collective punishment policy, especially closures and isolation policy.

These policies deprive Palestinians of their most straightforward mobility rights and getting to their workplace, violating all international conventions. It is also imperative to stop taking advantage of Palestinian labour and pay back all the payment cuts taken from Palestinian workers in Israel over the past years.

Implementing the Palestinian Labour Law and forming specialised labour courts is also imperative. Furthermore, it is essential to give great significance to developing the Palestinian industrial and agricultural sectors for their outstanding contribution to the Palestinian GDP in providing job opportunities for the increasing numbers of Palestinian workers.

“SHAMS” Center is concerned about the statistics issued by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), which indicated the increasing number of unemployed Palestinians to (372000) in 2021 compared to (335000) unemployed Palestinians in 2020. Still, the Palestinian unemployment rate among the participants among Palestinian workers remained (at 26%) in 2021 due to the increase in their participation in the same year, reaching (43%) compared to the percentage in 2020 (41%).

At the regional level, the unemployment rate kept the same pace in both the West Bank and Gaza, reaching (16%) in the West Bank and (47%) in Gaza. Fortunately, the overall percentage of unemployment decreased (2%) in 2020, it reached (36%) while in 2021, it reached (34%) representing (524000) Palestinians.



Thus, the highest unemployment rate in the West Bank was in 2021 in Bethlehem, which reached (25%), then Jenin and Hebron with a percentage of (19%) each. However, the lowest unemployment rate in the West Bank was in Jerusalem, reaching (4%). In Gaza, the highest unemployment rate was (53%) in Der Al-Balah, then Khan Younes (51%), while the lowest rate was in the North Gaza governorate (38%).

It is worth mentioning that the number of workers in Palestine is about (1,034 000) workers in the West Bank, (259,000) workers in Gaza and (145,000) workers in Israel and its settlements, including (747,000) paid workers in Palestine. In addition, from the (747,000), (402,000) workers work in the West Bank, (209,000) work in Gaza, (116,000) workers work in Israel and (20,000) workers work in the Israeli settlement.

"SHAMS" Center reminds us that the Israeli violations against Palestinian workers are continuous and escalating daily, including right life violations, assaulting and humiliating them as well as imposing fines, preventing them from getting to their workplace, setting up checkpoints, ambushing them and treating them in an inhumane manner, especially at the checkpoints. Also, other violations include breaking into their workplace, denying their payments, taking advantage of Palestinian workers by giving them dangerous work without having professional safety tools and working for long hours.

Roadblocks and the siege of Gaza led to the inability of workers to get to their workplace or deprived Palestinian factories of their raw materials in Israel, making it inevitable to shutting down those factories and discharge thousands of Palestinian workers. Finally, agricultural lands are destroyed by the Israelis and target the Palestinian industrial factories.

"SHAMS" Center assures that the economic changes in the Palestinian society affect women greatly more than men since women do not have complete financial independence. Generally speaking, women do not have free economic decisions, affecting their political choices and everyday life. Also, the percentage of working women, excluding those working in the public sector, decreases since companies are not part of the public sector. The private sector companies are more likely to hire women than those in the public sector because they prefer to hire women more than men leading to the increase in women's unemployment compared to men.

Furthermore, the percentage of working women is unofficial, and without any legal or social rights, their salaries are less than men, so they are significantly marginalised. Also, poverty proliferation in Palestinian society, especially among women, hinders their increase in political representation.



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