

## Unionists discuss reform of labor & social legislation during DWRC's 11<sup>th</sup> annual trade union forum in the West Bank & Gaza



DWRC implemented its 11<sup>th</sup> annual trade union forum in the West Bank and Gaza, with support from the Olof Palme International Center. **During the West Bank forum**, organized between 11-13/11/2021, 85 female and male unionists

representing 19 professional sectors shared information about their struggles & the general work conditions that they are facing. They discussed most pressing issues for the union movement and advocacy needs in working groups, including the amendments to the Palestinian Labor Law and the new minimum wage, the draft union organizing law, and the frozen social security law. A separate group for Governmental Universities and Colleges' Employees Unions focused on their current issues & bargaining process, while members of DWRC's board of directors and general assembly reviewed DWRC's current strategic plan. At the end of the forum, representatives of each working group reported about their discussions, focusing on the importance of a broad involvement of workers' representatives in policy reforms that concern workers' rights, in order to strengthen the social dialogue process.

**In the Gaza Strip**, the forum took place from 27-30/11/2021, with the participation of 45 female and male representatives of trade unions, experts in trade union work, and Civil Society Organizations.

Participants in the Gaza forum focused on the need to adopt a unified and modern trade union law, demanding the government to make workers' issues and demands one of their priorities. They also recommended the adoption of an amended social security law taking into consideration the special situation in Gaza, the need to put an end to the political division between the West Bank and Gaza, and to amend the Palestinian Labor Law, focusing on the need to develop effective mechanisms to enforce the minimum wage in Gaza. At the end of the forum, participants agreed on submitting their demands to the Council of Ministers.



## DWRC undertakes an awareness campaign on the occasion of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence



The Democracy and Workers' Rights Center in Palestine, implemented an awareness campaign on the occasion of the **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence**. DWRC implemented several awareness meetings in the West Bank and Gaza addressing ILO Convention No. 190 about eliminating

violence and harassment at work. During the annual trade union forum in Gaza, unionists showed their support demanding to put an end to all forms of gender-based violence, especially in the world of work. As part of the campaign, DWRC disseminated messages on social media under the hashtag: [#لا للعنف في أماكن العمل](#) / [#ليون العالم يرتقي](#) (no to violence at work, color the world in orange), demanding equality and justice at work, and highlighting the need to adopt laws that guarantee decent work opportunities for women.



Awareness ads on the occasion of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence

## Gaza CSOs discuss employment policies and their impact on women with representatives of governmental institutions



Gaza, 21/12/2021 – On March 20, 2021, the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center in Gaza organized a thematic seminar on employment policies, attended by 60 representatives of civil society organizations and trade unions.

The seminar aimed at enabling CSOs activists to acquire knowledge about specific policies, plans and mechanisms they should refer to or interact with in order to defend women's labor and economic rights. The seminar was held in light of women's situation in the world of work, which for many is characterized by low wages and the absence of a decent work environment, not to mention prevailing legal issues that require urgent attention and the unification of efforts by ministries, trade unions, employers, CBOs and women's organizations in order to develop a clear national plan that gives priority to integrating women into the labor market and advancing their rights, improving women's participation in non-traditional professions and reducing unemployment among them, and creating opportunities to enhance women's capabilities and improving their access to decent work.

The seminar is part of the "Gender Equality in the Economic Sphere: Our Right, Our Priority", implemented by DWRC, in partnership with PWWSO, COSPE, and EducAid, and which is funded by the European Union. [For more, please click here.](#)

## UNION CONFERENCES & ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Establishment of three trade unions branches by women workers in the West Bank;* on 9/11 & 29/11/2021, the **Secretariat & Administrative Works Workers' Union in Tubas & the Garment Workers' Union in Bethlehem of the New Unions Federation** held their establishing conferences, during which participants approved their union's internal statute and chose their representatives. A new branch of the **Kindergarten & Day-Care Workers' Union in Tubas** also held its establishing conference on 04/12/2021.

Several member unions of the New Unions Federation organized periodical conferences ahead of the federation's upcoming congress; thus, the *general conference of the General Union for Civil Societies' Organizations* was held in Ramallah on 17/11/2021, with the participation of 128 members (106 women & 22 men). Delegates elected their representatives, discussed the amendment process of their internal statute, and the activation of new financial procedures.



## When will the Palestinian government start enforcing the new minimum wage?

The Minister of Labor Nasri Abu Jish, announced on Thursday 16/12/2021, that the Ministry would start taking legal steps to guarantee the enforcement of the new monthly minimum wage of 1,880 NIS & the daily and hourly rates of 85 NIS and 10.5 NIS respectively for day-wage and seasonal workers in the private sector from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Legally, all employees of Palestinian establishments are entitled to be paid at least the minimum wage from 1/01/2022, but the Ministry will only start taking cases of non-compliance to court from April 2022. Prior to that date, the Minister indicated that labor inspectors would focus on raising awareness of workers and employers, and issue warnings if infractions are noted.