

**111<sup>th</sup> Session of International Labour Conference**

**Agenda Item I (A)**  
**Report of the Director-General: Advancing Social Justice**  
**Statement delivered by Mr. Zulfiqar Haider**  
**Federal Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource**  
**Development, Government of Pakistan**  
**(13 June 2023)**

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Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalam-o-Alaikum and a very good morning!

Allow me to extend warm greetings and heartfelt wishes from the people of Pakistan.

In line with the Director-General ILO's vision, Pakistan is dedicated to promoting social justice based on principles of equity, solidarity, and equal rights for all. We deeply appreciate the recommendations presented in the report, as they align with our ongoing efforts to advance in these areas.

Recognizing the devastating impact of floods on our population and workforce, Pakistan has implemented robust strategies and policies to enhance social protection measures and ensure job retention during and after such calamities. Relief programs have been established to offer temporary employment opportunities to those affected, providing economic stability and preserving their means of livelihood during the challenging recovery phase. These efforts contribute to rebuilding communities and enable individuals to actively participate in building a more resilient nation.

Pakistan takes pride in its informal economy, which serves as the backbone of the country. We are committed to recognizing and protecting the rights of those working in this sector. In recent years, we have enacted new laws in the provinces to regulate and improve the working conditions of informal workers, including domestic workers, home-based workers, and agricultural workers. These laws have provided better entitlements, particularly for women workers, and encompass provisions on minimum wages, working hours, leave entitlements, and occupational safety and health.

Pakistan remains steadfast in upholding International Labour Standards (ILS) and has ratified numerous ILO conventions. Our national legislation is aligned with international labor standards. To further strengthen our commitment, we have developed a five-year ratification strategy with the assistance of the ILO Country Office. Priority conventions for ratification include those addressing

forced labor, occupational safety and health in mines, maternity protection, domestic workers, and maritime labor.

The Pakistan DWCP IV 2023-2027, signed by the government and social partners on May 4, 2023, outlines four key priorities that will improve working conditions and foster an inclusive and equitable society. Firstly, we prioritize decent work in Pakistan's economic recovery, development, and response to climate change, natural disasters, and conflict. Integrating decent work principles will lead to sustainable, inclusive, and worker-centric economic growth. The ILO's support in developing a World of Work strategy for crisis response and just transitions is vital.

Secondly, we prioritize expanding social protection coverage for all, including universal health coverage. We are committed to USP 2030 and are prepared to join the Global Accelerator. Creating fiscal space and implementing inclusive legal reforms are steps we have taken to enhance social protection.

Thirdly, we prioritize the application of International Labour Standards (ILS) and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW), fostering harmonious industrial relations. Through the Better Work Programme, a collaboration between the ILO and IFC, significant progress has been made in improving working conditions, safety, and labor standards compliance in Pakistan's textile and apparel sector. We are dedicated to strengthening our partnership with the ILO and addressing formalization, access, SME development, capacity building, diversification, and the empowerment of women entrepreneurs.

Lastly, we are committed to safe, healthy, and gender-responsive workplaces free from violence and harassment. Prioritizing occupational safety and health conventions, we are working with the ILO to establish an OSH Center of Excellence. Our government is focused on ratifying the IMO shipbreaking convention, emphasizing occupational safety and health in the sector.

In conclusion, Pakistan stands ready and determined to work towards just transitions through jobs creation, social protection, human capital development, upholding labour standards especially fundamental principles and rights at work. The vision of the Government of Pakistan and the vision of DG ILO is aligned, and we look forward to our joint and collective effort to further the goals of social justice for all.

Thank you.