

# Media Update

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## ILO

PRESS RELEASE

### Pakistan Launches National Coalition for Social Justice

***National Coalition for Social Justice cements the commitment of partners to addressing inequalities and promoting social justice in Pakistan.***

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (ILO News) – The launch of the National Coalition for Social Justice today marks a meaningful step towards advancing social justice for everyone and everywhere, as leaders from Government, employers' and workers' organizations reaffirmed their commitment to work together for decent work and social justice.

Hosted by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistani and Human Resource Development (MOPHRD), the event was held to commemorate World Day of Social Justice and drew participation from key stakeholders in the world of work.

With the decision to create a National Coalition for Social Justice, Pakistan has taken the first step in implementing commitments made when Pakistan became the first country with both government, employer and worker partnership in the ILO-launched Global Coalition for Social Justice last year.

The Coalition reinforces the recognition that all women and men have the right to pursue their material well-being and spiritual development in conditions of freedom, security, equity and human dignity. With the launch of the National Coalition, Pakistan underscores its commitment to a fairer, more inclusive society.

Driven by the urgency to address widening disparities in the world of work, the participants at the ceremony recognized the challenges posed by climate change, shifting demographics, technological advancements, and the evolving landscape of employment. They stressed the critical need for a coordinated response to address such disparities and build fairer, more inclusive societies.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr. Arshad Mahmood, Federal Secretary, OPHRD, stated that “One of the most pressing issues we face is the gender gap in the labour force, with women comprising only about 21% of the Pakistani workforce. Discrimination and inequalities not only impede economic growth but also exclude a significant portion of the population from the labour market. They undermine social progress, and most importantly, they violate fundamental human rights.”

Dr. Mahmood further added that while the government has taken steps to address these issues, including passing laws to protect women's rights and providing support to women entrepreneurs, more concerted efforts are needed to tackle the root causes of these inequalities.

Geir Tostol, Country Director for ILO Pakistan stated that “Today, far too many people are denied access to quality education, decent jobs, and social protection, making the quest for social justice more important than ever. The establishment of the National Coalition for Social Justice presents a historic opportunity to focus on injustices in the world of work and promote cooperation for an inclusive and equitable world of work for all and everywhere.”

Chaudhry Naseem Iqbal, President of the Pakistan Worker’s Federations said “This marks a significant milestone for the workers' movement in Pakistan, as the actions outlined within the coalition align with the advocacy efforts undertaken by workers' organizations over the decades. The commitment from the three Tripartite constituents today is a crucial step forward, laying the foundation to transform Social Justice from an aspiration into a tangible reality.”

“I am thrilled to announce our association with the ILO-launched Global Coalition for Social Justice. At EFP, we firmly believe that social justice is not merely an ideal but a practical tool for achieving equitable and sustainable

development. The cornerstone of our commitment lies in ensuring decent work for all – a concept that forms the bedrock of our endeavors,” said Malik Tahir Javed, President of the Employers’ Federation of Pakistan.

## **Background:**

The Global Coalition for Social Justice is a ground-breaking initiative aimed at intensifying collective efforts to urgently address social justice deficits and to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Decent Work Agenda. It creates a collaborative space for action, dialogue, and advocacy, in which partners shape individual and collective opportunities for concrete actions and tangible outcomes. The ultimate goal will be to achieve a greater balance amongst sustainable development's economic, social, and environmental dimensions, significantly reduce inequalities and poverty, and meet essential needs and opportunities worldwide.

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