

### Hope and uncertainty – ILC 2022 6.7.2022

President, excellences, distinguished delegates and guests, shalom from Israel. On behalf of the Histadrut, I am proud to represent the working men and women of Israel at this 110th International Labour Conference. I want to congratulate the Director-General, Mr. Guy Ryder, for this Conference and his leadership over the years. The last two years have proven that the ILO's position, led by Mr. Ryder, of a Human-Centered recovery, is the only way the world can get back on track to a post COVID19 economy, address the future of the world of work, and bridge the much-needed balance of power between all the social partners.

President, this last year has been a time of mixed feelings for the workers of Israel. Feelings of hope but also feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. This week we marked one year since the new government was established. It came after two years of political instability, populist politicians trying to rally voters' emotions, and no budget leaving the country and its workers in a state of limbo.

This year we have thankfully seen all that change.

In the last year, Israel has stepped up to the medical challenge, and today we are confronting the results of the economic pandemic. The Histadrut has continued to be a significant player at the decision-making table in Israel. **The Histadrut initiated, campaigned, and negotiated a package deal with the government and the employers. The deal served as a core stabilizer in the exit of the initial phase of the pandemic; we demanded and achieved an agreement to increase in the minimum wage, organize distance working, flexibility in the labour market, increased lifework balance, and funds for deprived and exploited sectors.** The ability to work together, social partners seeing the benefit of tripartism, with steps that have been essential in bringing the economy into full swing, fighting unemployment, and recognizing the importance of the working men and women is only the initial stage of what needs to be done.

Like elsewhere around the world, the cost of living and inflation is making life for those who toil in the factories, in the fields, in offices, and in public service harder and harder. Decent wages for a decent day's work must be at the heart of individual economic progress. People before profit has to be a goal of governments and employers.

To address this challenge, we've recently commenced negotiations for a new framework agreement in the public sector. We believe that the agreement will improve the status of the working person in Israel and contribute to growth in the economy.

In Israel, we are still experiencing inequalities in the workplace as the wage gap continues to be around 25%.

We believe that the labour market is a mirror image of our society. Therefore, the concern for diversity, inclusion, and equality in employment is key to developing and growing all parts of society. Diversity is an important value that can strengthen Israeli society, cleanse it of institutionalized racism, shatter prejudices that have no place in today's world, and make society better. It is our responsibility, workers,

governments, and employers, to promote the work space where everyone feels safe and receives the appreciation that respects their individual contribution and uniqueness.

Conference, we work every day to support, advocate, and fight for Palestinian workers' rights in Israel. We negotiate, we conduct occupational health and training seminars, together with the social partners we conduct upskilling in industry, and we conduct workers' rights seminars for workers in the hotel sector.

We believe that the path to the solution to the conflict between the State of Israel and the Palestinians passes only through the negotiating table. Unilateral actions will harm us agents of the peace process, prevent a return to the process of peace between peoples, and perpetuate the hostility in a way that casts a heavy cloud over the possibility of resolving the dispute.

We must therefore focus on constructive acts rather than dispute, hostility, and boycotts that are counterproductive and do not promote the understanding between the Israeli and Palestinian workers.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity and call on those that want peace in our region to join us and explore ways to cooperate in different ventures in various sectors to promote Palestinian workers' rights and their vocational training in Israel. We, the workers of the region, know that this is the only true way to create understanding and trust between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and workers, which are essential for our joint goal -- peace and reconciliation.

Thank you, toda and shalom