

**To the Attention of the Prime Minister's Office,**

**Subject: The proposal of the Public Sector Modernization Committee to abolish the Ministry of Labour.**

In reference to the recommendations of the Public Sector Modernization Committee, which included a proposal to abolish the Ministry of Labor and distribute its tasks to several ministries, we, the undersigned, express to you our belief that this proposal has not been sufficiently studied as it does not take into account the main lines of work undertaken by Ministries of Labor (MoL), such as MoL's critical role in public administration, alignment with international standards, and knowledge of domestic dynamics. The bureaucratic side of the proposal dominates over economic and social considerations, leading to the marginalization of key tasks carried out by the MoL and its responsibilities in what is known as the National Action Policy. This includes various labor-related issues and their role in adopting a coordinated and effective labor market management system that ensures cooperation directly with employers and workers, along with their participation in the policy-making process (preparation, management and coordination).

MoL's role in policy-making and its implementation is interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. It includes a set of functions to be performed by labor administration systems in relation to employment policy and social protection, labor and employment protections, industrial relations, and services related to occupational safety and health, minimum wage setting mechanism, vocational training services and human resources, social dialogue, and labor inspections. MoL is furthermore the leading partner in processes related to consultation, cooperation and negotiation with social partners and employers under the principle of the tripartite structure that must be enshrined in the various functions of labor market management.

Ministries of labor in the world were established in order to address what is known as the "social issue" or "the labor issue." Protect and organize labor markets in order to improve working conditions and maintain a balance between the interests of employers and workers, with the aim of maintaining social peace and avoiding major social conflicts. MoL also play a major role in economic and social development through the formulation and implementation of labor policies in line with the objectives of national development.

The proposal to abolish MoL and transfer its responsibilities to other Ministries and governmental institutions is detrimental to the interest of the Government of Jordan. The success of any country in dealing with labor market issues is related to the role of the Ministry of Labor in drawing up the national labor policy, and strengthening its role as a main channel for dialogue social framework within the government.

We furthermore warn that adopting this proposal will cause chaos in the implementation of programs, policies, and collection of data related to the labor market. It will furthermore weaken the ability of government agencies to fulfill their obligations in regulating the labor market and ensuring the necessary protections for workers in achieving decent work conditions. We also warn that aiming to encourage investment and stimulate economic growth cannot be done at the expense of weakening worker's and social protections. This will lead to deepening social inequality and increasing poverty rates.

We acknowledge that the reality of public sector performance requires bold decisions, specifically in relation to the promotion of programmes, mechanisms and processes that aim for a better distribution

of public budgets, along with the creation of new sources of revenue that can overcome the “rentier mentality” and waste of public funds. However, we also believe that the current circumstances are not conducive to implement immature proposals that may lead to yet more unnecessary public spending and waste current opportunities, particularly at a time when the economy is still suffering from many unsolved crises and it remains in a state of uncertainty due to global financial instability. Furthermore, the proposed plan neglects the human factor, and it does not lay down real, tangible solutions that guarantee the fight against poverty and unemployment. Rather, the current proposal is limited in its vision and scope, focusing on the merging or abolishing of institutions, not one of them based on successfully grounded experiences.

For these reasons, rather than recommending the abolition of the Ministry of Labor, we would like to propose that the Government adopts first a holistic approach to organize the work of this ministry and focus on empowering it within the frameworks, accepted standards, and experiences of other countries, so that it remains at the center of economic decision-making circles and society at large. We furthermore propose that the Government strengthens MoL’s coordinating role by adopting the elements of the national labor policy, and adopts a strategy of change based on considering MoL an important part in the state’s performance of its role in labor market policies and dialogue, that is driven by key principles of good governance, participation, transparency, accountability and rule of law.

What has been proposed by the Committee is not based on a study of the expected impact on the tripartite dialogue actors (workers, employers, and the government), and it does not take into account the roles and responsibilities of ministries of labor around the world as recognized by international standards and the international experiences.

We hope the Council of Ministers will study this matter carefully, taking into consideration international standards in this matter and taking into account the economic and social impact before making its final decision.

Yours Sincerely,

1. ARDD, Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development	26. Independent Trade Union of Heavy Vehicles Transportation Drivers
2. Tamkeen for Legal Aid	27. Independent Trade Union of workers in the Southern Municipalities of Jordan
3. Workers’ House	28. Independent Trade Union of workers in the Hospitality Sector النقابة المستقلة للعاملين في الخدمات
4. Phenix Center for Economic Research	29. Independent Trade Union of Workers in the Railway Transportation Sector
5. SADAQA	30. MA'AL Center for Consultations, Training and Human Development
6. The Social Economic Forum for Women	31. Khatwat Ama Association
7. AHEL for Community Organizing	32. Ahl Al Himma Charitable Women Association / Tafila
8. The Center for the Protection and Freedom of Journalists	33. ‘Emaar for Social Development Association/ جمعية أعمار للتنمية المجتمعية
9. Justice Center for Legal Aid	34. Mount Ashrafieh Notables Committee/ لجنة وجهاء جبل الشرفية

10. Lawyers without Borders	35. Charitable Association for Women of Aqaba
11. Adaleh Center for Human Rights	36. Tafilah's Women Charitable Association
12. Partners-Jordan	37. Al Hara Association
13. Jordanian Women's Village Association	38. Al Rafeed Agricultural Women's Association
14. Arab Women's Association (in Jordan)	39. Al Kiram Association
15. RASHEED, Transparency International	40. Al Amal Association for Social Development
16. Jordan Labor Watch	41. Ramtha Women's Association for Social Development
17. General Trade Union of Health Service Workers	42. The Women's Association of the Villages of Al-Disah
18. General Union of Electric Workers	43. The Jordanian Association for the Care of Juveniles and Orphans
19. Federation of Jordanian Independent Trade Unions	44. Abu Alanda Association for Social Development
20. Independent Union of Electricity Sector Workers	45. Third Millennium Women's Association/ جمعية سيدات الألفية الثالثة
21. Independent Trade Union of Phosphate Sector Workers	46. Durrat Al Manal for Development and Training
22. Independent Trade Union of Public Transportation Drivers	47. Dibeen for Environmental Development
23. Independent Trade Union of workers in the Northern Municipalities of Jordan	48. Future Capabilities Foundation for Community Development
24. Federation of Independent Trade Union of workers in the Municipalities of Jordan	49. Gender Foundation for Studies and Consultations
25. General Union of Graphic and Media Workers	50. Al Shamma Charitable Society for Family Protection