Background note
Support to the ILO Programme of Assistance for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)
10 November 2026, 1.30 – 3 p.m. (Geneva time)
ILO headquarters (Room IX (9))

Following the decision of the Governing Body at its 355th Session, this partners' meeting brings together Governing Body members, development partners and relevant constituents, with the aim of maximizing support for the ILO programme of work in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT).

The war in Gaza and the escalation of violence in the West Bank have had devastating effects on Palestinian lives, livelihoods and the economy. Palestine's GDP has contracted by 29 per cent, and more than half a million jobs have been lost since October 2023. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), unemployment has reached 28.6 per cent in the West Bank and over 80 per cent in Gaza, leaving many families unable to meet even basic needs.

Recovery efforts must prioritize large-scale employment programmes, fundamental principles and rights at work, including occupational safety and health, skills development, enterprise recovery support, social protection measures and the strengthening of labour market institutions – aimed at restoring livelihoods rapidly, while laying the groundwork for an inclusive and sustainable labour market recovery.

The ILO's efforts in Palestine take place under the Decent Work and Recovery Programme for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) (2026-2029), while taking account of the UN Security Council Resolution 2803 of November 2025.

The ILO further contributes to the work toward early recovery and reconstruction of the UN Country Team under the Cooperation Framework, through the support of the Horizon UN Trust Fund for Palestine and joint integrated programmes.

Objectives of the meeting

The partners' meeting will consolidate support and help shape future strategies for the Decent Work and Recovery Programme, in close collaboration with the Palestinian partners, and within the framework of the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus.

Partners will be called upon to support an ambitious plan to expand investments that favour decent work opportunities and the implementation of the National Labour Sector Strategy.

More specifically the event seeks to:

(1) showcase progress and achievements of ongoing initiatives by the Palestinian partners, with ILO support, including joint programmes with the UN and development partners;

(2) highlight and strengthen cooperation across the UN system to promote decent work throughout the humanitarian and early recovery phases, while addressing the drivers of economic hardship, poverty and vulnerability; and

(3) build consensus and expand commitments, including financial commitments, for the implementation of priority actions under the ILO Decent Work and Recovery Programme in OPT (2026-2029).

Agenda

1.30-1.40 p.m. Opening statements

- Introduction by Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo, ILO Director-General
- Opening remarks by H.E. Mr Ali bin Saeed bin Samikh Al Marri, Minister of Labour of the State of Qatar
- Opening remarks by H.E. Ms Erica Schouten, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

1.40-1.50 p.m. Interventions of the Palestinian tripartite partners

- Statement by H.E. Ms Enas Dahadha Attari, Minister of Labour of the State of Palestine
- Statement by Mr Shaher Saed, Secretary General of the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU)
- Statement by Mr Abdu Idris, President of the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (FPCCIA)

1.50-1.55 p.m. Intervention of the Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident Coordinator for the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Mr Ramiz Alakbarov

1.55-2.10 p.m. Presentation of the Decent Work and Recovery Programme and ongoing work in OPT: Achievements and investment opportunities for a better future, including video screening, Ms Ruba Jaradat

2.10–2.55 p.m. Statements of (financial) support from the floor

2.55-3 p.m. Concluding remarks and next steps by Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo, ILO Director-General