

Quarter Report on Violations of Palestinian workers' rights in Jerusalem

April-June 2013

On the first of May of every year, the world celebrates the International Labor Day to remind us of the suffering of this category; which is considered the largest category in the Palestinian Society; and to enhance and improve their working and living conditions and provide them with the needed requirements for a decent life.

Despite the fact that all the workers of the world celebrate this occasion; which is considered a symbol for achieving their goals after a long struggle with their employers; the reality of the Palestinian worker is totally different; as unemployment rates in Jerusalem reached more than 12.6% as a result of the hard conditions of the Palestinian Society, which is represented in closures, the construction of the separation wall, blocking roads, and the violations that workers are subject to by the occupation authorities through not issuing working permits for them; and in case they do, the suffering of Palestinian workers on the Israeli checkpoints and crossings is a story by itself; as the worker starts his day by getting up in the middle of the night so that he can stand in the queue to cross the checkpoint; and in case he succeeds and passes; his day ends by going back home at night and doing it all over again.

Moreover, tens of Palestinian workers are hit, beaten and assaulted by the occupation authorities and/or the employers and/or the settlers while working or while going to and coming back from work; as tens of cases were documented especially in the city of Jerusalem; some of these cases headed to MSD legal clinic to obtain legal defence and/or legal counselling; and the same applies for workers in the settlements.

The occupation authorities and/or the Israeli employers aim at depriving Palestinian workers from their rights; this is applied through discrimination in employment; wages and salaries; working days and hours; contracts; compensations; health and occupational safety; freedom of movement and health insurance. Moreover, they are deprived from their working privileges and basic rights as stated in the international, local and Israeli laws. MSD offers legal consultations and services through its legal clinic to reduce such violations that Palestinian workers are subject to; MSD also works with international organizations and institutions; the ILO in particular; to enhance the working conditions for workers by periodically issuing and publishing awareness publications and leaflets.

During the last three month; **the following violations were monitored:**

On 01/04/2013, Mr. Munther Shihada came to MSD legal clinic to report on the violation that he was subject to by his employer; Mr. Munther worked in an Israeli firm for about a year; during this period; he didn't get any of his entitlements which are represented in convalescence pay, annual leaves and sick leaves. During his working period; he was subject to an illness that made him stay in bed for a month; he brought all the medical reports that proves that, but the employer didn't pay him for any of these days, moreover, the employer didn't contact him.

On 03/04/2013 and while working, the worker (F.S.) was hurt and taken to the hospital as he fell from a height of 4 meters and broke several bones in his body; this comes as a result of the continuous neglect of employers for safety measures; especially in those types of work that are full of risks.

On 16/04/2013, three workers were arbitrary dismissed by the director of the soft drink company in Khan Al Ahmar area because they were late to work; and although the workers explained that they were late because of the checkpoint; the employer didn't take that into consideration; he expelled them and told them that he will not give them any of their entitlements which are considered their rights according to the law.

On 22/04/2013, the worker (A.B.) was beaten by a group of people while coming back from work; he was taken to a clinic to get the needed treatment as he suffered from bruises on his body.

On 08/05/2013, the worker (F.M.) was subject to a work accident as he fell from the tenth floor in the construction workshop that he works in; he was severely injured and taken to the hospital as he stayed in the ICU.

On 12/05/2013, the worker (L.W.) was subject to a medium injury while working in a construction workshop as he fell from a height of 3 meters and was taken to the hospital.

On 20/05/2013, the young man (B.A.) was assaulted by a group of settlers while coming back from his work at 11:00 p.m.; they brutally hit him which made him leave the area. The next day, the young man explained to his employer what happened with him; but the employer didn't care and asked him to continue his work.

On 03/06/2013, the young man (S.A.) was severely injured as the elevator fell in his work place and he was taken to the hospital to get the needed treatment. Taking into consideration that the young man (S.A.) is only 17 years old.

On 09/06/2013, Ms. (W.T.) came to MSD legal clinic to report on the violation that she was subject to and get a legal consultation regarding the matter; (W.T.) explained that she has been working as a teacher for a year and that she didn't get any of her entitlements for this year and according to the law; she also added that the school's principal told her that he would only give her entitlements for the new year and that he doesn't want to give her any entitlements for the last year that she spent in the school.

On 16/06/2013, the worker (A.) was injured while working in a dessert shop in the industrial area – Atarot, he went to the hospital to get the needed treatment; the doctors told him that he needed to rest for 4 days at home, he called his employer and informed him of that, the employer told him to stay home for two weeks and that he would call him after that in case he still needs him to work.

On 27/06/2013, the occupation authorities arrested more than 100 workers in the northern area, as large forces broke into the area, where many workers live, and arrested them claiming that they don't have work permits; they were taken to the crossings in order to deport them to the West Bank areas.