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Iraq– Convention No 111

Chair, I am speaking on behalf of the trade unions in the Nordic countries.

Iraq is discussed here today due to discrimination in Employment and Occupation. In addition to discrimination based on color and religion which has already been mentioned there are also discrimination of women.

Women continue to be discriminated in access to employment and job security. Only 16 per cent of women participate in Iraq's formal labour force. COVID-19 measures, have added to the disproportionate amount of time that women already spent on unpaid domestic care work compared to men. Loss of sources of income, confinement within the household, and increased stress and anxiety are some of the key prevalent causes of the reported increase in gender-based violence.

The labor law limits women from working during certain hours of the day and does not allow them to work in jobs deemed hazardous or arduous. Women must obtain permission from a male relative or guardian before being granted a Civil Status Identification Card for access to employment. The law does not prohibit discrimination based on age, sexual orientation or gender identity, or communicable diseases.

In addition, Iraq has still to enact a national anti-domestic violence law and amend Article 398 of the Penal Code of 1969 which currently allows marital rape and gives impunity to men for sexual violence against women and girls if they marry the victim

Women trade unionists face also greater harassment. An example of this can mention that Taiba Saad, a member of the Social Services Syndicate (in Mansoura) was kidnapped from the city of Baghdad. She was subjected to torture during her detention such as being stripped and severely beaten.

We urge the government of Iraq to take its obligations in ILO seriously, comply with the convention and provide the information requested by the committee of experts urgently.

