

## Committee on the Application of Standards

Date: 27 May 2025

**Governments concerned are invited to submit written information on serious failure to report by 27 May 2025.**

### ► Information on cases of serious failure to respect reporting and other standards-related obligations supplied by governments

#### Syrian Arab Republic

**Failure to supply reports for the past two years or more on the application of ratified Conventions**

**“Urgent appeals” – Failure to supply reports on the application of ratified Conventions for at least three years**

**Failure to supply information in reply to comments made by the Committee of Experts**

**Failure to supply reports for the past five years on unratified Conventions and Recommendations**

#### **Failure to submit instruments to the competent authorities**

The Government has provided the following written information.

Following Syria’s liberation from the old regime and the new Government’s assumption of power, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (hereinafter the Ministry) has conducted a preliminary review of the extent of compliance with the obligations arising from the ratified Conventions. It has been noted that the old regime had in past years failed to fulfil such obligations, specifically when it came to submitting internationally mandated periodic reports concerning ratified Conventions and the implementation thereof.

The Ministry appreciates that periodic reports submitted to the ILO are essential instruments for monitoring the implementation of Conventions ratified by Member States. The Ministry believes that the failure to submit reports to the supervisory bodies is a clear indication of the lack of commitment on the part of the old regime to protecting workers’ fundamental rights and improving working conditions, despite its ratification of the Conventions.

- The political and security situation that the old regime forced from 2011 on the Syrian people in all its entirety directly impacted the performance of state institutions and weakened their technical and administrative capabilities, with institutions suffering from deficient and defective staffing and technical resources, inadequate for the preparation of comprehensive technical reports.
- There had been a lack of internal coordination within government institutions, with there being no effective mechanism for coordination among the bodies concerned with preparing the reports.
- The international sanctions that were imposed on Syria constituted an indirect obstacle to communication with international organizations and United Nations agencies. Furthermore, the lack of technical support from the ILO Office in Syria that persisted for many years of that period also impacted the preparation of these reports as did the absence of the needed technical support.
- The old regime's political considerations, its reservations about the content of the reports or fear that this might be used against it internationally had also been an obstacle.

We wish to point out that in September 2024, the Ministry sought to fulfil its obligations and submit reports to the ILO. A request for technical support was submitted to the ILO Regional Office, which graciously provided it to the Ministry and trained the Directorate of Planning and International Cooperation and relevant technical directorates, along with a number of ministries, and elements representing employers and workers. Out of 37 reports, 22 draft reports had been prepared and submitted to the relevant authority, which did not communicate them to the ILO, possibly for the reasons outlined above.

The Ministry appreciates the importance of preparing and submitting periodic reports, not only for the sake of submitting the required reports and meeting its international obligations, but also for the purpose of achieving a number of benefits with regard to the updating and developing of national laws and legislation, most prominent among these being:

- (1) Improving compliance of national legislation with international standards: Thus, the process of making the reports requires exhaustive review of national laws and legislation and comparison of them with international Conventions, in order to bring about their amendment and make them more aligned with the latest international labour standards. The Ministry is currently in the beginning stages of this. We hence submit our request to the ILO for possible technical assistance in amending and updating the laws and legislation relating to labour and social insurance.
- (2) Reassessing and evaluating the current situation with respect to national legislation, identifying legal deficiencies and legislative reform: In the course of preparing the reports, gaps, or inconsistencies and flaws, came to light in national legislation, thus making it timely to propose legal reforms that will serve to offer greater protection to workers and employers and improved working conditions.
- (3) Making labour-related legislation and policies more transparent and accountable by drafting reports documenting the actual status of legislation and the extent of its application, such that transparency and accountability are strengthened, the passing of legislation that is at odds with Syria's international commitments is lessened and previous legislation is amended and upgraded.

- (4) Fostering the development of a legal environment that is conducive to cooperation internationally and with the United Nations and to programmes of rehabilitation and rebuilding of Syria: Thus, the alignment of legislation with international labour standards raises the confidence of international players in the strength of Syria's resolve to regulate and develop the labour market and to create a decent working environment. Syria is desirous of this in the present phase of its recovery as well as of achieving sustainable development.
- (5) Extending social dialogue and participation in the preparation of legislation: The participation of trade unions and employers' organizations is integral to the preparation of the reports, which simultaneously strengthens social participation in the drafting of labour policies and partnership with them given that they are stakeholders in these.
- (6) Benefiting from the experience of other States that are in compliance with international Conventions and have introduced them into their national laws and legislation.

**Proposed work plan for stepping up the process of preparing and dispatching the reports requested, while ensuring their consistency and compatibility with international standards and that they do not fail to comply therewith or fall short of them in the future**

| Activity                                              | Tasks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Time frame                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>First stage</b>                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                           |
| 1. Reviewing observations and Conventions             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review the latest observations by the Committee of Experts on which work is currently under way</li> <li>✓ Categorize the observations and requests in accordance with the Conventions of highest priority</li> <li>✓ Identify those Conventions that have still not been addressed or that are in need of updating</li> </ul>                                                                      | During the workshop that will be conducted on 31 May 2025 |
| 2. Assembling data, information, laws and legislation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assemble relevant national legislation</li> <li>✓ Obtain latest statistical data from governmental bodies</li> <li>✓ Document actual practices by means of questionnaires or on the basis of locally supplied reports</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                           |
| 3. Preparing the draft report                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review draft of the reports produced in accordance with the report forms for:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948 (No. 89)</li> <li>2. Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)</li> <li>3. Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)</li> <li>4. Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |                                                           |

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| Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Tasks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Time frame                                                  |
| <b>Second stage</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                             |
| 1. Announcing the formation of a national team comprising representatives of the Government, employers and workers                                                                                                                                                   | Issue an official decision to form a permanent national team for preparing reports, reviewing the Conventions that are to be addressed and assembling the relevant national legislation. The team shall comprise representatives and legal experts from: the Ministries of Social Affairs and Labour; Foreign Affairs and Expatriates; Justice; Education; (Higher) Education and other relevant ministries and the like; the General Establishment for Social Insurances (GESI); the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU); the Federation of Chambers of Industry, (the Federation of Chambers of) Commerce and others besides.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | During the first week of June 2025                          |
| 2. Completing all the required reports                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Prepare the draft of the technical report on 37 Conventions, including the response to the observations and requests                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | During the workshop to be conducted from 22 to 25 June 2025 |
| 3. Reviewing and approving the reports                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Conduct internal legal and technical review; approval of the reports by the national committee prior to presenting them to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | During July 2025                                            |
| 4. Dispatching the reports and following up on them                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Dispatch the report via the Organization's official channels<br>Request confirmation of receipt of the report by the ILO                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | During August 2025                                          |
| Requirements specific to achieving the plan annually                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Appoint a permanent point of liaison for future follow-up vis-à-vis reports from the Directorate of Planning and International Cooperation</li> <li>✓ Build the capacities of national personnel to prepare international reports; request technical support from the ILO in training the national team on each specialized Convention</li> <li>✓ Hold meetings and workshops nationally in cooperation with ILO on a continuous basis in order to make clear the importance of compliance and the consequences of non-compliance</li> <li>✓ Hold a biannual workshop to take stock of progress in preparation of the reports</li> <li>✓ Encourage dialogue between the government and representatives of workers and employers under the auspices of the ILO</li> <li>✓ Assign a permanent team to the Office of International Cooperation within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to follow up on reports on a continuous basis</li> </ul> |                                                             |

**Proposed work plan for stepping up the process of preparing and dispatching the reports requested, while ensuring their consistency and compatibility with international standards and that they do not fail to comply therewith or fall short of them in the future**

| Activity | Tasks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Time frame |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
|          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Seek technical, legal and specialist support from the ILO with a view to developing labour-related legislation and fostering its effective application in a manner conducive to adherence to international Conventions through modern, developed national laws and legislation that are in step with international advances</li> </ul> |            |