**Press Release issued on 9th November 2023**

**The Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions and Independent Federations/Associations oppose any move to**

**EXPORT INDIAN WORKERS TO ISRAEL TO REPLACE PALESTINIAN WORKERS**

Israel is shamelessly escalating its genocidal attack against Palestinians, rejecting appeals by the UNO or even their masters, the USA for a ceasefire!

The Modi government’s unethical and duplicitous stand on this issue too stands exposed : first the quick expression of solidarity with Israel, then studied backtracking by the Foreign Ministry, sending humanitarian aid to Palestine and finally abstaining from supporting the UN Resolution for a ceasefire!

But now even more shocking facts are coming out : in May, 2023 during the visit of the Israeli foreign minister Eli Cohen to New Delhi, both countries signed an agreement to send 42,000 Indian workers to Israel, out of which 34,000 were to be brought into the construction industry, to replace the Palestinian workers. Now, the Indian government is planning to export around 90,000 construction workers to Israel as demanded by them. The Indian Government is playing a despicable role of supporting the Israeli plans to throw out Palestinian workers. Retaliation of Hamas attack is only an excuse!

As it is, the settler-colonial occupation of Palestine has decimated its economy, causing high levels of poverty and unemployment, and has resulted in Palestinians being dependent on Israel for employment. Though numbers have fluctuated over time, an average of 1.3 lakh Palestinians were employed in Israel, with the construction sector accounting for the largest share of Palestinian workers, with Palestinian worker making almost 65-70% of the total workforce.

Nothing could be more immoral and disastrous for India than the said “export” of workers to Israel. That India is even considering “exporting” works shows the manner in which it has dehumanized and commodified Indian workers. Such step will amount to complicity on India's part with Israel's ongoing genocidal war against Palestinians and will naturally have adverse implications for Indian workers in the entire region.

India's trade union movement must rise in solidarity with Palestinian workers and reject this disastrous idea. Let's resolve that we will not work to replace Palestinian workers in Israel! India and Indian workers should boycott Israelian products! Indian workers, as their counterparts in some western countries, should refuse to handle the Israelian cargo!

We demand that the agreement with Israel to export Indian workers be scrapped immediately; we demand an immediate halt to Israeli aggression against Palestine; end its occupation; we demand that the Palestinian right to a sovereign homeland be upheld – this is the only possible route to peace.

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And Independent sectoral Federations/Associations