

## **Twenty-Two Libyan NGO's issue Joint Statement on the World Day against Child Labour**

Twenty-two (22) Libyan none-governmental organizations, among them Human Rights Solidarity, published today, Saturday June 12, 2021, a joint statement on the World Day Against Child Labour, expressing their concerns about the increase and spread of child labour in Libya, due to armed conflicts, which led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians from their areas, disruption of schooling and exacerbation of the economic and financial crisis.

The organizations called on the relevant authorities in the State of Libya to consider the best interests of the child above all considerations, and to provide the appropriate environment and protection for children, including protecting them from the effects of the spread of the emerging Corona virus, and provide the children of their basic rights, including health, education, and food.

Human Rights Solidarity calls on the Libyan authorities to make more efforts to protect the rights of children in Libya, and to end the illegal and arbitrary detention of children in the prisons of Mitiga and Jdaidah (Tripoli), al-Kerarim (Misrata) and al-Kuweifiya (Benghazi) and other prisons, and in the immigration and refugee detention centers.

**Human Rights Solidarity  
Tripoli – Libya**

Text of the Joint Statement:

## **Joint Statement by Libyan NGOs on the World Day against Child Labour**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the World Day Against Child Labour<sup>1</sup> to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it. Each year on 12 June, the World Day brings together governments, employers and workers organizations, civil society, as well as millions of people from around the world to highlight the plight of child labourers and what can be done to help them.

UNICEF reports<sup>2</sup> that there are about 160 million children in the age group 5 - 14 in developing countries, and about 16 percent of all children in this age group are involved in child labour. The International Labour Organization estimates that there are about 215 million children under the age of 18 working and many of whom work full time, all over the world. In sub-Saharan Africa, one out of every 4 children aged 5 to 17 works, compared to one out of every eight children in Asia and the Pacific and one in every 10 children in Latin America.

Libya is not isolated from the rest of the world regarding this serious problem of child labour, despite the lack of data and statistics on child labour, and despite the assurances of the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation "that there is no excuse or justification for child labour in Libya in any significant form", and its statement<sup>3</sup> that Law No. 12 (2010) did justice to the Libyan child and granted him full rights to health care, education and a decent life, child labour in Libya is prevalent.

Libya is a party to both the "Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention"<sup>4</sup> and the "Convention on the Rights of the Child", and these two agreements are the most

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations: "[World Day Against Child Labour, 12 June](#)".

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF: "[Child labour rises to 160 million – first increase in two decades](#)".

<sup>3</sup> Aswat LY: "[On "Child's Day" GNA Labour Ministry categorically rejects child labor](#)", March 22, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: "[Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)", Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49. Libya acceded the convention on 15 April 1993.

binding in the world to protect children from exploitation and forced labour<sup>5</sup>. This includes focusing on sound alternatives to support the child's development and of enjoying normal stages of development which depend on considering the best interests of the child.

At the level of local laws in Libya, Law No. (12) of 2010 regarding labour relations<sup>6</sup>, stipulates in Article No. (27) that it is not permissible to employ those under the age of eighteen in any type of work except for jobs that require practical training or vocational training for those who are 16 years or older, and in Article (28), the Law sets the working hours to a maximum of six hours per day.

However, despite the provisions of international agreements and local laws that aim to protect the child from exploitation and forced labour and deprive him of natural growth and appropriate education, the phenomenon of exploitation and employment of children still exists in Libyan society, especially with the increasing prevalence of armed conflicts. More than 400 thousand civilians, 36% of them are in the age group 6-17 years, are currently displaced from their areas of residence<sup>7</sup>, which has had a great economic impact on many of these displaced families and forced many to employ their children in order to meet needs of their families. In addition, forced displacement, deprived a large number of children of Going to school or socializing with their peers. It is also noted that the phenomenon of child exploitation, as beggars, and children of irregular migrants are employed in dangerous work, such as filling fuel in unlicensed places.

With the continuation of the Corona pandemic (COVID-19), the disruption of schools, the exacerbation of the economic crisis in Libya and the lack of cash for their families, there concerns about the increase and spread of child labour in Libya if the new government fails to resolve economic crisis and the threat of polarization and war returns again.

The undersigned organizations call on the relevant authorities in the State of Libya to consider the best interests of the child above all considerations, and to provide the

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<sup>5</sup> Libya acceded the "[Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography](#)" on 18 June 2004, and the "[Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict](#)", on 29 October 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Justice, Information and Documentation Centre: "[Law No. \(12\) of 2010, on issuing the Labour Relations Law](#)", English translation ([here](#)).

<sup>7</sup> International Organization for Migration: "[Libya IDP and Returnee Report, Mobility Tracking, Round 30, Key findings](#)", June 10, 2020.

appropriate environment and protection for children so not to be affected by the results of the armed conflicts in Libya, including protecting them from the effects of the spread of the emerging Corona virus, and provide the children of their basic rights, including health, education, and food.

## **Tripoli – Libya**

### **June 12, 2021**

#### **List of names of organizations:**

1. Bilady Foundation for Human Rights, Sabratha,
2. Al-Bareeq Organization for the Rights of the Child, Tripoli,
3. Free Press Foundation, Sabratha,
4. Al-Khair Association for Persons with Disabilities, Sabratha,
5. Basmat Amal Association for Autistic Children, Sabratha,
6. Ever Lighting Candles Organization for People with Disabilities, Sabratha,
7. Arab International Organization for Women's Rights, Tripoli,
8. National Unity Organization, Misrata,
9. Tuareg Youth Organization for Dialogue and Debate, Sebha,
10. Tamawsat Social Culture Association, Sebha,
11. Al-Shera' Association to Fight AIDS and Drugs, Darj,
12. Matress Intellect Pioneers, Darj,
13. Matress Youth Organization, Darj,
14. Libyan Network for Child Rights Protection, Tripoli,
15. Ihqaq Organization for the Sustainable Development of Women's and Children's Rights, Tripoli,
16. People for the People to Support Youth Organization, Misrata,
17. The Mediterranean Organization for Development and Relief, Sorman,
18. Mediterranean Childhood Forum, Surman,
19. February 17th Environment and Human Rights Organization, Tripoli,
20. Tabbinou Organization for Human Rights, Nalut,
21. Human Rights Solidarity Organization, Tripoli,
22. Al-Naseer Organization for Human Rights, Tripoli.