



## ITUC-Africa Statement on the Occasion of World Day for Decent Work (WDDW) 2022

### **A New Social Contract NOW! Reverse Austerity Measures and Embrace Social Protection for all**

On this year's occasion of the World Day for Decent Work (WDDW22), the African Regional Organization of the International Trade Union Confederation ([www.ituc-africa.org](http://www.ituc-africa.org)) commends the workers of Africa and the world for their sacrifices and continuing services to duty, family, community and national progress. We urge workers to continue to do their best as we work together to reverse the dire socio-economic challenges threatening our welfare and wellbeing.

It is common knowledge that the world experienced higher wage inequalities during the pandemic. According to the ILO 2020-21 Global Wage Report focusing on wages and minimum wages in the time of COVID-19, low-paid workers faced unprecedented challenges. In the first half of 2020, due to the COVID-19 crisis, workers experienced downward pressure on the level or growth rate of average wages in two-thirds of the world's countries, though in some countries, average wages increased, largely artificially, as a reflection of the substantial job losses among lower-paid workers.

For women workers and wage-earners, the situation was worse. For instance, ILO figures suggest that out of 32.7 per cent core wage earners, 15.3 per cent are women paid at or below the hourly minimum wage.

In the face of the daunting challenges to jobs, wages and wellbeing, we are witnessing aggressive budget cuts for social services provisions on the African continent. Sadder, African governments are disproportionately increasing taxes and rolling out depressing austerity measures. These desperate measures aimed at saving resources for debt servicing are hurting workers, households and communities, with women, indigents, migrants and insolvent communities being the worst hit.

Against this backdrop, we call on our governments and social partners to develop and deploy imaginative and pragmatic initiatives to ensure no one is left behind. These recovery initiatives must be done in an inclusive and collaborative manner. The initiatives must genuinely seek to

create employment, reinforce respect for rights at work, improve social protection and facilitate credible processes for collective bargaining and social dialogue.

**Kwasi Adu-Amankwah**



**General Secretary, ITUC-Africa**

7th October, 2022.