Model letter: Ratification of the Protocol

To: Your head of Government

CC: Your relevant ministers

**Call for ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security**

Dear [head of Government],

As you may know, in 2022, **the African Union adopted a landmark Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security** (from now on, *the Protocol*). The Protocol reaffirms social protection as an internationally recognised human right enshrined in the African Union's Core Values, and outlines governments’ responsibilities to ensure the provision of adequate social protection, in line with international labour standards, as well assure the good governance of social protection systems.

**The [union] now calls on the government of [your country] to take immediate steps to ratify the Protocol**. As head of government, you hold the primary responsibility to ensure that social protection is ensured for all, aligning with agreed international commitments to extend social protection and international labour standards, notably ILO Convention 102 on social security minimum standards, ILO Recommendation 202 on social protection floors, as well as ILO Recommendation 204 on the transition to the formal economy.

[Add specific information on the need for social protection in your country] Insufficient political commitments and low public investments towards social protection, at both national level and across the African region, are compromising people’s livelihoods, particularly among rural populations that are at higher risk of poverty, malnutrition and hunger, poor health, and natural disasters. While the situation has been serious for years, the matter is even more urgent today. The climate emergency is contributing to the erosion of incomes and increasing inequalities, leading to a situation where postponing the extension of social protection coverage is no longer possible.  Extending social protection is both a social and economic investment; it not only reduces poverty and boosts livelihoods, but it is a prerequisite for well-functioning labour markets and the formalisation of the informal economy, for boosting aggregate demand, and supporting sustainable, inclusive economic growth.

The adoption of the Protocol represents a critical opportunity for [your country] to lead by example across the African continent. We urge you to commence the ratification procedure within your government and sign the protocol: failure to take immediate action now, will only render your government complicit in future social and economic distress.

Yours sincerely,

[NAME ]

[UNION]

[SIGNATURE]