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ITUC-Africa Statement on the Fifth Anniversary of ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work

On this day, 21 June 2024, the African regional organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (www.ituc-africa.org) joins ITUC and the labour movement worldwide to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the adoption of ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, alongside Recommendation No. 206. This landmark convention is the first international treaty to recognise the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence.

This convention underscores the essential role of a safe working environment in achieving equality, dignity, and opportunities for all workers, regardless of their employment status or work sector. Together with Recommendation No. 206, it provides a common framework for action and a unique opportunity to shape a future of work based on dignity and respect.

Violence and harassment in the workplace take many forms, from bullying, economic discrimination and exclusion to physical threats and sexual violence.

Over the past five years, we have witnessed remarkable progress toward implementing C190. Countries in Africa and across the globe have demonstrated their commitment by ratifying and aligning their national laws and policies with the provisions of this convention. To date, 44 countries have ratified C190, including eight African nations: the Central African Republic, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda.

These nations have set a commendable example of safeguarding their workforce and fostering environments where all workers can thrive without fear of violence or harassment. We commend these countries and urge them to take practical steps to ensure the complete application and enforcement of the convention's provisions in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, thereby transforming workplaces and communities into havens of respect and dignity. We call on our governments in countries that have yet to ratify the convention to take the necessary steps towards ratification, domestication, and application.

Finally, we call on African governments to commit to inclusive, collaborative, integrated, and gender-sensitive policies and programmes. These policies and programmes would ensure that violence and harassment issues are adequately addressed and violations are investigated and sanctioned. Notably, psychosocial and other medical remedies must be available to victims to aid proper recovery.

In solidarity,

Signed by comrade Akhator Joel ODIGIE, General Secretary, ITUC-Africa. A statement was issued in Lome, Togo, on June 21, 2024.