



Establishment of the "Doha Dialogue" on Labour Mobility by the Africa Union, the Gulf Cooperation Council States, Jordan, and Lebanon: ITUC-Africa welcomes the initiative and calls for genuine and inclusive implementation.

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation ITUC-AFRICA welcomes the dialogue, which results from ITUC-AFRICA's six-year sustained campaign in Africa and within the African Union spaces for the creation of such a mechanism necessary to improve labour migration governance, especially as we seek better protection for migrant workers.

We also applaud the State of Qatar for providing the platform to realise this initiative. It is a testament to Qatar's ever-readiness to engage, collaborate, and contribute to improving the state of play in labour migration governance. We equally salute the African Union and its signatory Member States to this Doha Dialogue for their readiness to reorder and improve their efforts at protecting migrant workers from the continent. Our commendation also goes to the other Gulf Cooperation Council States, Lebanon, and Jordan members for their commitment to this dialogue.

However, what is important is that the implementation arrangements and processes are clearly and effectively set out, as the Terms of Reference (ToR) describes. We look forward to the finalised ToR (it was subjected to a final review that will be concluded in a month).

We also want to call on the African Union to take further steps to ensure the creation of an African Labour Migration coordination process like the Asians' Colombo Process. Asians use the Colombo Process platform to undertake coordination and coherence engagement before going to the meetings of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD). A determined and well-organised process helps reduce competition, ease of focus on the issues/themes for discussion, and better target outcomes. Africa needs to avoid the race to the bottom and position its engagement with the GCC, Lebanon, and Jordan in ways that ensure better protection for its people. Labour Migration is a response to the realities of the ever-dynamic global labour market. Migrant workers as supply-side responses to the labour demand gaps do not and should not lead to their commodification.

The Doha Dialogue is an excellent step in the right direction to utilising social dialogue to improve labour migration governance between the two regions. Partners in the dialogue, including social partners, must all be provided technical support to ensure inclusive, collaborative, and effective implementation. This is where development partners like the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) come in. As organised labour, we shall continue to engage, monitor, and report on the implementation of the Doha Dialogue.

Akhator Joel Odigie, General Secretary ITUC-AFRICA. 23 May 2024.