

**African Regional Organisation
of the International trade union Confederation (ITUC-Africa)**



4th Ordinary Congress of ITUC-Africa
Abuja (Nigeria), 20 – 21 Nov. 2019

“UNITE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE”

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

Resolution N° 1: Deepening Democracy, Advancing Workers' Rights and Interests

Note that whilst the African continent continues to democratize, though largely along a liberal democratic path, there are increasing concerns that the democratization processes are not delivering on the expectations and aspirations of the African people, especially on issues of welfare and wellbeing;

Observe that the dissatisfaction of citizenry on account of failed expectations and the non-realisation of the dividends of democracy, as well as manipulation of democracies are manifesting in more protests and revolutions on the streets and in communities and we see these actions positively as the rise and relevance of people power;

Acknowledge and salute the heroic contributions of African men, women, children, workers, trade unions and friends of Africa that have made sacrifices and paid with their convenience, sweat, blood and lives for democracy to take root on the African continent. We also salute the inspiring courage of the people of Togo, Algeria, Sudan, Malawi, Liberia, Zimbabwe and other places where concerned citizens continue to organise peaceful collective actions as part of their efforts to reclaim and defend their democracies, constitution and wellbeing; we, therefore, salute the dogged spirit of the ZCTU Zimbabwe comrades and celebrate the dropping of treason charges against them as victory for working class solidarity;

Reiterate previous Congress observations that though the African continent continues to democratize, unfortunately, the vestiges of slavery, colonialism and the practice of absolutism in some African territories persist. In Africa slavery is still being practised though with a change in the attitude of some of the governments of the countries involved. They are moving away from denial to actions that can benefit from more genuine intent and urgency. For Western Sahara, being a full-fledged member of the African Union with recognised statehood status, the process of total decolonisation and self-determination remains slow. Swaziland, now known as eSwatini, remains an absolute monarchy in Africa where freedom of association, assembly and expression continue to be breached;

Concerned that politicians and political parties see democracy as a transactional tool even as they use elections as a means to capture power for personal enrichment rather than to serve the people. They mobilise obscene financial resources as well as manipulate ethnic, religious and other primordial sentiments, including the use of violence to disenfranchise service-driven candidates including women from winning elections. The winner-take-all electoral arrangement dominant on the continent also continues to fuel this desperation;

Worried that state capture by the corporate and political elite is fast leading to the situation where elected leaders abandon their constituencies and constituents in want and misery whilst they focus on serving and servicing the rich by lavishing them with obscene benefits and concessions;

Reject the notion and practice by states to parcel and dish out labour and workplaces rights through flexible labour laws used as part of the concession regimes to businesses under the guise of encouraging local capital and attracting foreign direct investments;

Recognize that state paranoia is also contributing to the erection of barriers to the enjoyment of civil liberties especially the right to organise, assemble and to expression as seen notably in Zimbabwe;

Therefore, affirming the sanctity and efficacy of organised and coordinated people's actions in the defence, protection and promotion of civil liberties and the consolidation of democracy and conscious of the need and urgency to advance Africa's transformation agenda, we undertake to do the following:

- Organize and mobilise workers across sectors and our people and their communities to stage and participate in marches and rallies to protect and secure human rights, effective public service delivery, job creation and the payment of minimum and living wages.
- Continue to campaign against public and private sector corruption through sustained vigilance and whistleblowing; as well as embrace “bargaining for the common good”;
- Continue to support and strengthen the organising and advocacy actions and capacities of workers, trade unions and their members so that they are better positioned to be able to defend civil liberties, such as in eSwatini and Zimbabwe and other places where democratic norms and respect for human rights are in short supply and on the decline;
- Scale-up advocacy campaigns to demand the positive change of the corporate and industrial relations rules of engagement and the institutionalization of social dialogue in ways that the current distribution crisis is redressed and the growing culture of state capture is effectively challenged and halted;
- Commit to champion the demand for the genuine and effective implementation of the African Union’s Agenda 2063, especially the aspirations on constitutional democracy, good governance, elections and diversity management through genuine peer review practice;
- Commit to the improvement in the development of institutions, infrastructure, technology and human capacities as necessary ingredients for the advancement of Africa’s manufacturing and industrialization transformation,
- Continue to strengthen trade union advocacy to expose International Financial Institutions’ (IFIs) conditionalities and violations of HTUR, as well as to strategise on how to empower African unions to be able to counter the likely effects from the Belt and Road Initiative, which is going to be really prominent in Africa on investments and on the corporate angle.
- Stay focused on the anti-slavery campaign by supporting local trade unions and other local non-state actors through capacity enhancement, political leveraging and externalization of the issues;
- Continue to strategise to improve trade unions’ engagement and usage of existing structures of the African Union and those of the Regional Economic Blocs for the advancement of civil liberties and citizens’ wellbeing, notably- the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, Special Technical Committee on Labour and Social Affairs, Pan African Parliament, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council;
- Our commitment to working class solidarity, through practical actions, for and to peoples and territories under political and economic siege and occupation such as Western Sahara, Palestine and Cuba shall continue to be positively and progressively calibrated and sustained for their ultimate liberation.

End of Resolution

Resolution N°2: Peace and Security in Africa

Note that the theatres of sectarian and civil wars on the African continent continue to decline when compared to the scenarios the continent has witnessed in the past two decades, nevertheless, new trends of conflicts and violent activities such as kidnapping for ransom and terrorism are emerging whilst old ones such as boundary conflicts, religious intolerance, cattle rustling and banditry and herders-pastoralist feuds are not letting;

Recalling that the causes and triggers of past sectarian and civil violent conflicts such as marginalization, oppression, socio-economic deprivation, religious intolerance, ethnic chauvinism and nepotism, corruption, lack of compassion by elected and appointed leaders, disregard for the effective operationalization of the rule of law, etc are the root causes of insecurity and they are resurfacing with boiling intensity;

Alarmed that hunger, poverty, unemployment and underemployment, stagnant and slave wages earned by many in productive employment, declining public services delivery on account of cut in public spending, as well as weak and inadequate social protection provisions and climate change effects are responsible for and exacerbating despondency, disenchantment and apathy, which have led affected people to resort to sharp survival measures, including desperate migration journeys and violent crimes;

Further concerned that the other causes of insecurity and fragility rooted in politics and politicking such as winner-take-all election arrangements, manipulated and rigged elections, disenfranchising of women and young persons through the monetization and militarization of electoral politics, provocative gerrymandering, constitution tampering, amongst others, are still issues plaguing election management and democracy consolidation in Africa;

Recognize that building strong and enduring institutions necessary for delivering justice and accountability remains a challenge for the continent in her quest to securing peace and social justice;

Disturbed that the rise of terrorist groups and other criminal extremist organisations are posing real and existential threats to lives, livelihoods, communities, properties, economies and hope and exacerbating internal displacement;

Condemn strongly the conscienceless attacks of these terrorist and extremist groups whose trade is jaundiced propaganda to justify and rationalize their senseless use of violence and wanton destruction;

Strongly disturbed that hundreds of workers have lost their lives, properties, jobs, families, communities to the dastardly attacks of these mindless terrorists and extremist groups and that their nefarious and criminal activities are contributing to the worsening of socio-economic hardship of the people and their communities, especially those proximate to their areas of operation;

Believe that as long as workers, especially those that provide social services such as teachers, medical and health providers and caregivers, sanitation officers, farmers, as well as physical infrastructures such as schools, hospitals, farms and rural roads are not secure and safe to operate, poverty and inequality will deepen and in turn compromise the chances for attaining enduring peace;

Concerned that the violent attacks on women and girl children through different forms such as abduction, kidnapping, rape, forced marriages, forceful evictions from schools, patriarchy, battery, verbal and physical assaults amongst others are still recurrent issues;

Worried that Africa is now home to the largest Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)¹ as available statistics from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) put the figure at about 20 million persons forced to leave their homes mainly on account of conflicts and violence, as well as by the effects of natural disasters;

Concerned that currently, the growing youth population of the continent is not being harnessed for the potential gains and advantages it presents, rather, sadly, it is fast becoming a curse and burden given that the teeming youth are not being timely and adequately empowered and productively engaged and so they are embracing vices and violent crimes;

Worried that the current fourth industrial revolution underpinned by automation, robotics, innovation and invention though they offer opportunities, nevertheless, the current level of adaption and capability readiness on the continent are issues of concern that may worsen employment and welfare conditions of the people of Africa, especially the youth if the attendant issues are not timely and decisively addressed;

Acknowledge with hope and commendation the fact that workers and organised labour have been taking concrete steps and initiatives to contribute to the achievement of peace and security through the utilization of collective bargaining mechanisms, availability and readiness to engage in social dialogue, documentation of how violent conflicts affect workers and members of their families, initiation of projects that provide humanitarian support and assistance to victims of violent conflict and internal displacement, including rehabilitation and reintegration services, as well as seeking elective offices with the aim to contributing to better governance delivery;

Express hope that the adoption of the ILO Recommendation 205 (Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience) represents the framework to further build the role of trade unions as peace builders, and a useful tool that trade unions and their social partners can utilize in their quests to build, attain and consolidate peace, security and resilience;

In the light of the foregoing we resolve as follows:

We commit to continue to use our platforms and visibilities at the national, sub-regional and continental, as well as international levels to continue to campaign for responsive and responsible governance by and from our elected and appointed leaders especially on the need to prioritise and deliver on job creation, youth empowerment and human development;

We will continue to support the role of trade unions in peace-building. At the global level, this will require us to push African governments to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of NUCLEAR Weapons (TPNW) to protect the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We shall continue to seek ways and means to better utilize and improve social dialogue as a vehicle for discussing and finding solutions to issues posing threats to peace and security within our economies, as well as continue to fine-tune our political organising so as to increase our relevance and influence within our body polities;

We commit to contribute to the attainment, through practical campaign actions and mainstreaming, of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals as we know that these goals are interlinked. In particular, we shall pay attention to Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth),

¹ Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are those forced to leave their homes but who do not cross international borders. As a practical matter, they are largely devoid of the protections accorded by international law and UN agencies to refugees—persons with a well-founded fear of persecution based on ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, and other criteria that are defined by international protocols

Goal 10 (Reduced Inequality), Goal 13 (Climate Action) and Goal16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions);

We will continue to call on and work with our governments to embrace concerted efforts such as the design and implementation of a clear and well-funded security architecture, formulation and execution of employment development policies and the expansion of the coverage and access of social protection provisions;

We commit to pushing for more ratification and genuine implementation of the 2009 African Union Convention on Internally Displaced Persons and to campaign for better humanitarian aid management and deployment, as well as on IDPs rehabilitation and integration and reintegration while we will continue to applaud and commend African governments with programs to integrate IDPs;

We shall develop trade union advocacy around the ILO R205 and to monitor, report and take actions on peace, security and resilience promotion initiatives, including supporting peaceful resolution of disputes by state parties such as the initiatives by the Ethiopian-Eritrean government and others in the Horn of Africa, as well as to build trade union capacities to effectively analyse fault lines and flash points so as to be able to provide an early and timely warning.

End of Resolution

Resolution N° 3: Social Protection for All in Africa: The Role of Trade Unions

Note that social protection plays a pivotal role in the reduction of poverty and inequalities, and in furthering inclusive and sustainable development. Social protection guarantees every person a decent life and ensures, across the life cycle, access to essential health care, goods, services and basic income security.

Acknowledge that social protection is a human right as enshrined in several international and regional legal instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the African Union Charter on Human and People's rights, the global Agenda 2030, the AU Agenda 2063 as well as ILO Convention 102 on Social Security (minimum standards) and Recommendation 202 on Social Protection Floors. Sadly, this right is lamely and unevenly guaranteed. Statistics show that Only 45 per cent of the global population are effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit, while the remaining 55 per cent – as many as 4 billion people – are left unprotected.

Concerned about the harsh reality of social protection for Africa that abysmally stands at only 18% of the population that receive only one social protection benefit (compared to 84% in Europe & Central Asia, 68% in America and 39% in Asia and Pacific). As it currently stands, owing to greater efforts towards extending old-age protection, 29.6 per cent of Africa's older population now receive a pension.

Excited but cautious that countries such as Botswana, Cape Verde, Lesotho, Mauritius and Namibia have reached, or approached, universal pension coverage. However, significant coverage gaps remain concerning children, mothers with new-borns, unemployed workers, and persons with disabilities as well as vulnerable populations. There is, therefore, no doubt that the implementation of social protection floors should be an urgent priority in Africa (ILO, 2019)².

Affirm that achieving universal social protection is part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is clearly expressed through the five different but interrelated goals: *SDG 1 (Eradicate poverty)*, *SDG 3 (Achieve universal health coverage)*, *SDG 5 (Achieve gender quality)*, *SDG 8 (Promote decent work and economic growth)* and *SDG 10 (Reduce inequalities)*.

Recognise that women have a particular stake in social protection seeing that they face several gender-specific risks, such as maternity and unpaid family responsibilities which can hamper their efforts to have an income of their own.

Affirm that social protection can be achieved through rights-based national policies and programs that provide equitable access to all people and protect them throughout their lives against poverty and risks to their livelihoods and well-being. The programs can be a combination including via cash or in-kind benefits, contributory or non-contributory schemes and those that enhance human capital, productive assets and access to decent jobs.

Express concern that social protection portability systems and arrangements that are critical and necessary for facilitating labour mobility remain weak in Africa.

Concur that challenges such as financing; ineffective social protection management; accountability (corruption – non-remittance of contributions by employers, theft of contributory fund); high unemployment and under-employment and informality (especially for contributory schemes) continue to undermine social protection development in Africa. Other challenges include weak public

² ILO, 2019, World Social Protection Report 2017–2019, *Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*

service delivery; poor implementation of social protection-promoting international protocols and instruments; corporate state capture and governments' insensitivity to the plight of the people; and excessive privatization of social protection arrangements. Trade unions weak knowledge and capacities and undeveloped strategies to effectively engage in social protection governance is another challenge.

To this end, therefore, delegates resolved that the ITUC-Africa should commit to the following:

- Prioritize social protection clearly in trade union work and actions at the national, sub-regional, continental level. This prioritization will find expression in the set-up of structures and focal points at all these levels for adequate follow up of the objectives on the right to social protection.
- Engage government in social dialogue for better legal and political frameworks to extend the right to social protection to precarious and informal economy workers, migrant and disabled workers. The implementation should be with a focus on their inclusion in social security legislation and access to social security provisions.
- Engage in political action, campaigns and social dialogue with the government to ratify and transpose into national legislation the ILO standards concerning social protection, in particular, Convention 102 and Recommendations 202 concerning National Floors of Social Protection and R204 (the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy).
- Actively campaign and engage in advocacy for the ratification of Convention 189 (Decent Work for Domestic Workers), Convention 190 and Recommendation 206 on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.
- Invest in awareness-raising campaigns for workers and training of workers to stop violence and harassment at work and gender-based violence in particular.
- Work for the establishment and facilitation of institutionalized dialogue spaces and processes amongst social partners on social protection. This is with the view to enhance coherence, coordination, and sustainability of social protection systems and programmes.
- Advocate and campaign for employment equity (gender, race, ethnicity) legislative and policy frameworks.
- Advocate for access to public social services, especially child care services and access to electricity, water and energy services to reduce women's care burdens. To address the gender gap in social protection, we will advocate and campaign for specific targeted programs in social protection towards women, such as cash benefits or social transfer programs.
- Develop social dialogue interaction and political actions together with civil society actors for the financing of social protection through both international and domestic resources. Specifically, we shall campaign for the following: the establishment of a Global Solidarity Fund for social protection; the setting up of a national sovereign fund for social protection; fair and progressive taxation; halting of Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) from Africa.
- Advance the relevance and necessity of social protection within the development framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This will be done through the implementation and monitoring of trade unions' activities and participation in state-led processes. We shall commit to coming up with trade union progress reports which will contribute to the National Voluntary Reviews process.
- Build and strengthen the capacities of trade unions so that they can effectively play their different roles in the development, implementation and follow up of social protection policies. Specifically, trade union capacities will be built in the areas of the governance of social security institutions and social dialogue. Trade union capacities will be developed so that they can come up with alternative social protection proposals and solutions to policy-makers and employers that are beneficial for all parties.
- Build alliances and synergies among trade union actors and social and youth movements for the development and deployment of joint political action necessary for securing the needed

guarantees for access to social protection by all. Critically, the alliances will be built with and around cooperatives, Civil Society Organisations, research centres and academic circles possessing diverse expertise necessary for complementing trade unions' capacity to wage a successful campaign.

End of Resolution

Resolution N° 4: Organizing: Organization Development and Unionization

The Congress notes that:

Several trade union organizations in Africa are increasingly faced with a problem of survival due to a lack of political, organizational, socio-economic and financial resources.

Considering the resolutions resulting from the ITUC congresses held in 2014 and 2018 and those of ITUC-Africa held in 2015 on the importance to be given to unionization;

Considering the important role played by the ITUC and ITUC-Africa to support trade union organizations in their natural mission of organizing workers;

Considering the decline in union representation rate noticeable in many countries is directly related to structural changes in the global economy characterized by unrestrained liberalism and policies of privatization, precariousness ... with their disastrous consequences for the workers (closure of businesses, unemployment, reduction of social rights etc.);

Considering the existence in trade union organizations of the lack of internal and external communications and democracy illustrated, for example, by a lack of alternation, education, strategic planning and the persistence of artisanal and outdated methods of work;

Considering the high degree of proliferation, internal division and fragmentation of trade unions;

Considering the importance of young people, women and actors in the informal economy, in the economic and social fabric of our states and the potential in terms of strengthening trade union organizations by this target population;

The Congress urges ITUC-Africa affiliates to:

- Conduct organizational studies and analyses, focusing specifically on representativeness, unionization and the capacity of action and functioning for trade union organizations;
- Adapt their working methods and procedures to ensure representation for all groups of workers, especially the less privileged and those in informal working relationships;
- Prioritize the unionization of women, young people from the informal economy and other vulnerable groups to create the conditions for the growth and relevance of trade unions;
- Develop new organizational models to avoid disappearing;
- Train union leaders at all levels by promoting the leadership of women and youth through trade union culture and education for greater effectiveness of trade union action;
- Put in place policies and strategies to promote the financial autonomy of trade union organizations;

The congress, while welcoming the relevance of the organizing programme and its sustainability, recommends:

- support to the main organizers trained at the regional academies, in the development, planning and implementation of organizing activities and recruitment of new members in the unions,
- Extension of the programme to non-benefiting trade union organizations that fulfil the conditions.

End of Resolution

Resolution N° 5: Strengthening the Power of the Youth

The Congress notes that:

Young Africans are striving for economic independence in a shrinking labour market while the education system does not fully prepare young people for transition and the demands of the labour market. As a growing continent without employments, Africa has not been able to integrate young people into the labour market. In fact, most young people are employed in a precarious, unproductive informal economy that falls short of providing decent jobs.

The mismatch between labour demand and supply (mainly young people) has left Africa with a huge number of desperate and discouraged young people. With an estimated 226 million young people in 2015 aged 15 to 24 and a projected population of around 321 million young people by 2030 (Africa Economic Outlook, 2018), young women and men are a time bomb waiting to explode given the precariousness of the labour market.

The ability of these young people to integrate or not into the labour market will have an impact on their individual well-being, but also on that of society as a whole and, consequently, of the whole African continent.

Youth unemployment is a growing and persistent problem in many countries. However, the problem is much more serious in developing countries.

The globalization of labour markets, the flexibility of the labour market and atypical forms of employment are generally considered to contribute to the inability of a large part of the population to participate in the economy. The youth unemployment rate, which is generally higher than the national average, is becoming a general concern. The most disadvantaged are young women with little or no formal education.

Employment is one of the main challenges and priorities not only in Africa, but also in the world. This challenge is even more daunting for Africans, given the low level of development of the continent and lack of adequate social coverage for the unemployed and the working poor. The precariousness and low income levels of the working poor and the inadequate health and safety conditions on the continent call for action. Therefore, social partners cannot remain insensitive to any initiative undertaken to improve working conditions and an environment conducive to private initiative.

African policymakers need to hold the reins of youth employment policy so that the labour market can absorb and exploit the potential value of this growing population. To take advantage of the demographic dividend requires a dynamic private sector and a merit-based public service, as well as appropriate skills and institutions. Young people must be equipped with the skills required by the economy, and institutions should contribute to effective labour placement and promote entrepreneurship in high-growth African countries. It is therefore imperative to invest sufficiently in social infrastructure, especially in urban centres where public authorities will have to ensure that employment opportunities expand for an increasingly young urban population. If Africa wants to take advantage of its demographic dividend, it is important that the public and private sectors work together to ensure that employment keeps pace with the working-age population.

The Congress recalls that:

The intensification of the youth employment crisis not only poses problems from an intergenerational perspective, but also threatens to further widen the inequality gap in the current cohort of young people.

The African labour market presents youth with hostile employers who fearlessly victimize young people who engage in union activities, thus contributing to low levels of youth unionization. Faced with low wages, precariousness, labour rights violations and lack of social protection, as well as limited participation in social dialogue, young workers would find the unions competent to defend their interests. However, the trade union movement has a weak influence on policies in Africa. The total number of unionized workers is barely 20,000,000, representing a unionization rate of 7%. The recruitment of young workers is a necessity to reverse the trend.

This will revive the union solidarity force that depends on its number as a lobby group. The value of youth in African unions cannot be underestimated. If the unions included young people in their policies, programmes and actions, they could, certainly reap the benefits in terms of new and innovative approaches to the current challenges facing the trade union movement, especially the prevalence of decent work deficits in Africa.

Trade unions need new energies and vibrant activism to increase the pressure on the social partners. And with the aging and shrinking membership, the recruitment of more members, especially young people, would reorganize the power of unions and strengthen the future relevance of the labour movement.

iv. Young trade unionists would bring with them new technological capabilities and innovation for the unions. The use of information and communication technology and social media in pursuing union objectives, programmes and action plans would be led by young trade unionists.

In recent years, some trade unions have taken into account the question of employability of young people in their strategies and action policies because they have understood that, in addition to promoting decent work for workers, it will also be necessary to extend the actions to others. Vulnerable layers, especially young unemployed graduates, women, people with disabilities, advocating for an effective engagement of our leaders in an inclusive economic growth strategy that creates wealth and decent jobs in the region. Policies to promote a quality education system, professional and accessible to all, the development of integrated and inclusive programmes focused on youth entrepreneurship and based on incentive mechanisms should be encouraged.

In addition, new strategic orientations must be developed in order to highlight the potential of creativity and innovation to young people through a better representation of these in public, economic and political life, for a socio-political stability and sustainable development of African countries.

The Congress calls on African governments to commit to:

- ✓ Assign a central place to youth employment in national development frameworks and policies;
- ✓ Strongly create an integrated strategy for growth and job creation;
- ✓ Develop employability education strategies with substantial improvement in the access, quality and external efficiency of the education system
- ✓ Establish market intermediation institutions, encouraging the participation of the private sector;
- ✓ Develop integrated programmes of active youth employment policies to promote entrepreneurship, salaried employment in the private sector through aids or incentive mechanisms;
- ✓ Rehabilitate qualifications in collaboration with the private sector preferably by mixing training and work in the enterprise, improving intermediation between supply and demand;
- ✓ To invest into the establishment and implementation of a legal political and institutional framework in favor of youth employability

- ✓ Facilitate young entrepreneurs' access to capital through an inclusive finance policy and other funds allocated for the promotion of self-employment, collective and individual entrepreneurship.

The Congress urge Employers to:

- ✓ Facilitate the implementation of ILO Conventions and more particularly ILO Conventions n° 87 and 98 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining;
- ✓ Take into account decent work for youth as human rights and as a potential business case that paid off social partners including employers;
- ✓ Respect the labour legislation in force at national, regional and international level;
- ✓ Offer integration opportunities to young graduates;
- ✓ Promote on the job training system;
- ✓ Facilitate long life learning;
- ✓ Define a social responsibility policy for their companies;
- ✓ Promote young people's access to a decent job

The Congress urges union leaders to:

A: Promote the integration of young people into the labour movement by:

- ✓ Creating a framework dedicated to young people and their evolution within each national organization;
- ✓ Taking specific measures for the unionization of young men and women;
- ✓ Investing in youth capacity building at local, national, regional and international levels;
- ✓ Establishing practices of a good democracy that encourages the participative leadership of young people;
- ✓ Promoting the participation of young people with a minimum quota of 30% of youths in different activities and representative framework at national, regional and international levels;
- ✓ Working towards the organization and empowerment of young people in the settlement of youth issues;
- ✓ Commit specific budget to youth activity
- ✓ Make a clear distinction between youth and women
- ✓ Advocating unity of action within the trade union movement by promoting the establishment of inter-unions and youth structures

B: Promote the employability of young people by:

- ✓ Putting the issue of youth employability at the centre of trade union concerns
- ✓ Broadening the scope of inclusive social dialogue on the issue of youth employability at national, regional and international levels.
- ✓ Establishing strategic alliances with other youth organizations/civil society organizations to promote youth employment and increase youth employment awareness and related issues.
- ✓ Building alliances with other civil society organisations (including student movements).

End of Resolution

Resolution N° 6: Economic and Social Development for the People

Noting that many African countries have pursued a neoliberal policy model following the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programs in most African countries since the 1980s. The adoption of which has had direct consequences and significant impacts on the socio economic development of African countries. Notably, mass privatization and closures of state owned enterprises leading to huge unemployment and the massive expansion of the informal economy in recent years;

Further noting that Africa is a resource-rich continent with an economy heavily dependent on the extractive sector and which is expected to reach a GDP of \$29 trillion by 2050 - with recent growth attributed to growth in sales at commodities, services, and manufacturing;

Nonetheless, recognizing that contrary to this impressive picture of high growth rates, is the stark reality of a continent plagued with soaring rates of unemployment – particularly youth targeted; significant numbers concentrated in the informal sector with precarious working conditions; high urbanization rates; extreme poverty and all round absence of social protection coverage;

We acknowledge that to address the developmental challenges of Africa, there is need for a structural transformation of the economy, placing emphasis on domestic resource mobilization, transformation and reallocation of economic activity across the broad sectors of agriculture, manufacturing and services with primary focus on value addition and beneficiation of agricultural and extractive products;

Importantly, structural economic transformation must ensure the participation of key stakeholders in society including the state, business, trade unions and civil society organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies for a more transformative agenda. These policies must respond to direct socio-economic needs of the people through the creation of decent jobs, infrastructure development, provision of basic social services such as quality healthcare, education, water and electricity; advance regional integration, and provide a sound environmental framework for sustainable development;

Realizing that climate change poses a major threat to today's development and severe threats to future sustainable development and thus to employment, livelihoods and jobs, there is need to adopt sound policies that promote sustainable development and at the same time protect the environment. To achieve this, African governments need to adopt Just Transition plans and integrate these plans into their National Development Plans. Furthermore, the appropriate legal framework supporting a clear vision of phasing out the extraction of fossil fuel and the move towards renewable energy must be adopted by countries;

Recognizing that African Integration is vital to achieving structural economic transformation. We note that Africa's Regional Economic Communities do not only constitute key building blocks for economic integration in Africa, but are also key actors working in collaboration with the African Union (AU), in ensuring peace and stability in their regions. As the building blocks and implementing arms of the African Union (AU), the RECs have been central to various transformative programs of the continent, including the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) adopted in 2001, and the AU's Agenda 2063 adopted by its Summit in January 2015, and its First Ten-Year Implementation Plan adopted by the 25th Summit of the AU in June 2015;

At the Continental level, *we welcome* agreements such as the recently adopted Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (ACFTA) and *emphasize* the need for the provisions of such agreements to truly serve the purpose of providing a pathway towards sustained development and growth for Africa and its people;

In order to achieve Sustainable Development for Africa, the Africa Trade Union Movement emphasize the need for various actions and engagement at different levels including National, Sub Regional and Continental levels including:

- Advocate for policies which focus on sustainable production and value addition with the aim of promoting economic transformation and sustainable growth.
- Push for pro-poor policies with specific provisions for working people and vulnerable populations.
- Advocate for favorable laws and the requisite legal framework that support domestic markets and are in favor of Workers such as transfer of knowledge and skills from multinational companies.
- Lobby governments to invest in education of people to raise competent workforce and sustain human capital development.
- Lobby governments to adopt Just Transition plans and integrate these plans into National Development Plans.
- Continuously push for the regulation and redistribution of economic benefits of the society for all through the implementation of fiscal policies such as progressive taxation, adoption of minimum living wages, and the provision of a basic social protection floor for all. The adoptions of these policies are highly crucial to bridge the huge inequality gaps existing in society today.
- Push for the harmonization of policies (sustainable agriculture, energy, trade, social protection, environment etc.) at sub regional level to promote common pathways and move towards integration.

Within the Trade Union Movement, we commit to the following:

- Reinforce the capacities of trade union leaders, women, young leaders on issues of socio-economic development through implementing programs and activities on thematic issues including SDGs, climate change and environment issues, economic transformation and industrialization etc.
- Train affiliates on policy analyses, monitoring and evaluation and provision of technical input into National policy processes.
- Encourage ITUC-Africa affiliates to implement programs and activities on socio-economic issues at national level within the spirit of collective action and in line with the vision of ITUC-Africa.

End of Resolution

Resolution N° 7: Internal Democracy in Trade Unions

Noting that:

The essence and nature of progressive trade unionism are mass traditions, leadership mandates including, consultations and feedback, and popular mobilization around all issues that affect members and society in general. However, it has become clear that in most cases, unions fail to meet these conditions, resulting in fragmentation, membership decline, loss of trust, distance between leaders and members, unfulfilled and disappointed hopes, organizational and political breakdown.

Collaboration with elements of the ruling class and employers, to the detriment of workers' interests, and even corruption and lack of accountability, lack of transparency and a lack of leadership.

The concentration of power in the hands of a few or even one person is one of the main reason why internal democracy.

Fragmentation leads to competition for scarce resources between members and increases hostilities between different federations.

The African trade union movement is increasingly confronted with internal problems that prevent it from functioning democratically. Indeed, union governance is often so rigid that the base is not sufficiently consulted. There is inadequate internal communication, a lack of human resources and a low capacity for mobilization and organization of members and that the African trade union movement still faces the following weaknesses:

- a) Low participation of young people, women and other vulnerable groups, eg persons with disabilities, workers in the informal economy, immigrants, etc.
- b) Low consciousness of the working class and lack of ideological cohesion;
- c) Lack of a mandate duly given by workers, ie that the leaders act on the basis of their own ideas or interests.

Internal democracy is also compromised by over-reliance on conditional funding and guardianship, both inside and outside the continent. These different sources hold power in union affairs, resulting in the loss of control by leadership of unions.

The trade union movement cannot afford to be on the side-lines of this dynamic by remaining stuck on outdated union management practices characterized by the lack of genuine participation of members.

The demands of effective trade union action in the sustainable development process require internal strengthening and democratic functioning as vital conditions for contributing to the development of democracy throughout society and more concerted management to promote collective emancipation and respond to workers' hopes for decent work.

Therefore, the Congress reaffirms that:

1. The power of the working class can only come from the ability of the workers themselves to organize, to act as a collective power that comes from below and not from above or from far. The weight of the numbers and an efficient organization are therefore important.
2. The power of the workers cannot be built without an awakening of consciousness which must be developed systematically into class consciousness that leads to a change of mentality and an ability to analyze critically each situation with a view to transforming it.

3. ITUC-Africa, as a trade union movement based on workers' union solidarity, is a mass organization that requires for mobilization, communication, information and education.
4. Communication is an essential element in the exchange of ideas, experiences and knowledge that allow consensus to be reached on common project to be achieved between workers of the same company, the same nation, a region or even globally.

Congress advocates that priority is given to the following action points:

1. Strengthening the skills of shop stewards and members
2. Political and ideological development, particularly political economy studies, as a foundation or analytical tools to help workers better understand the world and their situation.
3. Holding of specialized and technical training sessions for certain categories such as the leaders, the specialists of the organization and other strategic experts of the trade union movement;
4. Supporting communication training to develop the capacity of workers to communicate effectively, to mobilize, to negotiate, to manage conflict, to discuss critically and to form coalitions;
5. The promotion of respect and the application of freedom of association and the right to bargain as stipulated in ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98;
6. The obligation for affiliated organizations to adapt their basic texts to democratic principles and to hold their various governing bodies regularly
7. The renewal of the governing bodies of our trade union organizations through free and transparent democratic mechanisms
8. Ensuring financial viability / sustainability based on diversification of funding sources and accountability in financial management
9. The guarantee of financial autonomy thanks to a good policy of recruitment and collection of union dues
10. Promoting alliances with and between trade unions (including GUFs), organizations supporting workers, social movements and community organizations to better address workers' concerns;
11. More active involvement in the resolution of affiliates' internal conflicts to avoid the fragmentation of the African trade union movement
12. Establishment of a representation quota in decision-making bodies for women and young people
13. Work towards unity of the two regional organizations ITUC-Africa and OATUU

To this end, the Secretariat of ITUC-Africa is invited to develop a system enabling affiliates to report regularly to ITUC-Africa on the progress made in the various areas listed above.

End of Resolution

Resolution N° 8: Promoting informal and social/solidarity-based economies for better development in Africa

The ITUC-Africa recognizes that:

1. The informal economy in the world in general and Africa in particular, makes significant contribution to national development. As for Africa, the informal economy constitutes a source of employment and livelihood for a vast majority because of the shortage of alternative job opportunities in the formal sector. Most African businesses are significant in scope and informal activities. The informal economy is generally characterized by a number of decent work deficits.
2. More than two-thirds of African workers are in the informal economy, where they work under precarious conditions and without social protection. The informal economy consists of activities that are often not recorded in the national accounting systems and are not covered by labour laws. In general, workers in the informal economy are poorly educated, poorly paid and endure precarious working conditions.
3. Despite the implementation of the various economic policies, most African countries continue to face major development challenges; they account for almost 50% of the [world's] poor; 30% of the unemployed or underemployed labour force, a disturbing high level of youth unemployment and most of the precarious and informal jobs.
4. Africa's economic growth over the last two decades has not reduced the levels of poverty on the continent. The gap between rich and poor has widened [even] further. Social justice has deteriorated. Some of the reasons cited for weak socio-economic performance and low levels of development on the continent include the absence or the low involvement of workers and trade unions in the formulation and implementation of development policies.
5. African economies are more outward-looking, more vulnerable to global market fluctuations and less geared towards meeting local needs and creating decent jobs. Social/solidarity-based economic initiatives seem to be better suited to meet local needs as they can ensure the production of goods and services that can reduce the levels of poverty and dependency in Africa.
6. The formalization of the informal economy, which opens up to a large segment of society, could contribute to meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged populations by providing them with jobs, incomes and a minimum of social protection. In addition, it can help to extend social dialogue to informal economy workers and operators.
7. Recommendation 204 adopted at the ILC 2015 is an instrument for strengthening union membership base and the capacity of informal economy players for mobilization. Recommendation 204 provides guidance to Member States to facilitate their collaboration with tripartite constituents in the implementation of programmes for the formalization of the informal economy through various measures, such as facilitating the transition of workers and economic units from the informal to the formal economy, while respecting the fundamental rights of workers and ensuring opportunities for income security, livelihoods and entrepreneurship;

8. Broadening union membership base to informal economy is a strategic priority for the African trade union movement. This will ensure greater representation of informal economy workers, especially women, who are in the majority. The major challenge is to ensure that jobs created within informal economy structures meet the criteria for decent work.
9. Without putting a lot of effort into organising workers in the informal economy, it will be quite difficult to increase the representativeness and the visibility of unions on the continent.

Congress recommends that the ITUC-Africa, its affiliates, partners and trade union federations should:

1. continue to organize workers in the informal economy by focusing on issues of recognition and rights; formulation of regulations, strategies and policies pertaining to decent work;
2. support efforts aimed at addressing separately key issues that fuel informality, namely bureaucratic bottlenecks, taxation, and facilitating easy access to flexible loan facilities for workers in the informal economy;
3. be willing to defend, lobby and campaign for social security floors for informal economy workers;
4. conduct research (country case studies) based on collection of reliable data pertaining to informal economy and thus define appropriate strategies for formalisation;
5. lobby for the integration of informal economy workers into social dialogue platforms at national and other levels.

End of Resolution

Resolution 9: Effective Trade union engagement on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Noting that:

1. The current global economic architecture is socially unjust and economically unfavorable for Africa;
2. Due to an economic paradigm based on the neo-liberal agenda pursued by African countries, our economies have entrenched inequality and deepened poverty, resultantly falling short of achieving development for all,
3. Sadly the agenda of African regional integration is not being promoted diligently in policy and practice;
4. It is noted that some African countries have recorded positive economic growth, however most of the growth has not been sustainable and has been jobless;
5. African economies remain highly depended on the extractive sector, which is reflective of poor industrial development leaving the continent as a net importer of most of its needs;
6. The gap between economic growth and the needs and aspirations of the African people is evident;

Convinced that:

1. Africa as a continent remains one of the most marginalised in the world.
2. Africa is foremost responsible for its own development and improvement in the livelihoods of its people.
3. The need to transform African economies as reflected in the African Union Agenda 2063, which calls on Africans to take the destiny in their own hands, requires a mind shift.
4. That heavy reliance on the exportation of mineral resources without any value addition is not sustainable, as such the implementation of the adopted African Mining Vision in 2009 by the African Heads of State should be promoted by the trade unions as a tool to fight against dependence on mineral resources,
5. Africa should without hesitation begin to mobilise resources domestically to achieve its development. All efforts to curb that financial outflows from Africa must be scaled up and well-coordinated,
6. Our commitment to realising goals and targets to end poverty, foster decent work, ensure quality education, provide public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, reduce inequalities, promote women's participation in the work force and improve fiscal, wage and social protection policies which is in line with the universal development framework adopted by all World leaders in September 2015
7. International Development frameworks such as the SDGs (Agenda 2030), Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC), and the UNFCC processes could be the necessary impetus for achieving sustainable development agenda for the African continent.
8. African trade unions have the responsibility to uphold the principles of democracy at the national and continental levels and must contribute as enablers for economic growth, prosperity and social progress
9. While the trade unions recognize the role of the private sector in development, we also know that their ultimate aim is profit maximization at whatever expense.
10. There are some companies who are committed to responsible business models that are considerate of the needs and aspirational development needs of the countries in which they are operating.
11. The overall goal of development is ultimately the creation of inclusive national development – focusing on reducing both poverty and socio- economic inequalities are and these are paramount for any effective partnership.

We therefore resolve that the Africa Trade Union Development Network (Development Cooperation)

1. Implement programs on economic and development in the context of the Sustainable Development (SDGS) framework in order to develop and stimulate debates on the form that structural transformation of African economies should take and the role that affiliates should play in achieving that.
2. Continue to strengthen through capacity building, training, research, monitoring and evaluation competencies of Africa trade unions for effective advocacy on development issues from a trade union perspective at national, sub-regional and regional level and foster inter regional exchanges and learning.
3. As actors in development, trade unions should claim their space through the social dialogue mechanism in the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.
4. In the wake of increased Direct Foreign Investment (FDIs) trade unions should be vigilant in monitoring the role of the private sector in development and its impact on labour rights at the national level.
5. Trade unions should use the SDGs and the Agenda 2063 as tools to push for the implementation of the country decent work agenda
6. Trade unions should promulgate the centrality of decent work in achieving the SDGs through the “time for 8” campaign.

End of Resolution

Made on the 21 November 2019 in Abuja, Nigeria