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Media Statement

For Immediate Release

Africa Rises: Pan-African Rally for Debt Cancellation and Trade Justice to Take Place in Accra, Ghana on the 29th of August 2025.

African trade unions under the banner of the African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) and Trades Union Congress (TUC) of Ghana, together with civil society movements, faith leaders, youth, and women's organizations will converge in *Accra, Ghana on the 29th of August 2025 for a historic Pan-African Rally for Debt Cancellation and Trade Justice*, demanding an end to unjust debt and exploitative trade systems that have bled Africa of its wealth.

The rally is part of Africa's Non-State Actors, especially the Stop the Bleeding Consortium (STB-C), contributions to giving pragmatic expression to the African Union's (AU) theme for this year – "*Reparative Justice for African and People of African Descent*". Debt is a part of neocolonial and neoliberal shackles undermining Africa's socio-economic progress and development. The May 2025 AU Debt Summit, in its **Lome Declaration**, affirmed that debt is a stumbling block to Africa's development possibilities. The Declaration called for the cancellation of odious debt. Therefore, the forthcoming rally is a declaration and demand for debt cancellation for reparative justice.

In a significant demonstration of political will, Her Excellency the Vice President of Ghana, Professor Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang, will join the rally, marching alongside African workers and citizens. This signals national leadership and continental resolve to confront a crisis that has left governments with impossible choices between servicing debt or serving their people.

A Continent in Crisis

Africa's sovereign debt has reached USD 2.14 trillion as of 2024, with 22 African countries at high risk of distress, and four already in default (Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Zambia). Today, seven African countries spend more on servicing debt interest than on education, and 25 spend more on debt interest than on health.

"The bleeding of Africa must stop," campaigners have declared, pointing to the stark reality that in a single year, Africa received USD 162 billion in loans, aid, and remittances but lost over USD 203 billion through illicit financial flows and profit repatriation – a net annual loss of USD 41 billion.

This rally makes clear: Africa will no longer accept a system of modern-day neo-colonial exploitation in which our resources serve creditors instead of our people.

Rallying for People-Centred Trade

The rally also aims to take a stand against trade injustice. While the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) promises to boost intra-African trade by over 50%, unions warn that without enforceable labour and social protections, AfCFTA risks repeating patterns of “jobless growth” and deepening inequality. Workers demand that trade unions be formally included in AfCFTA governance structures and that labour and social clauses be incorporated into AfCFTA protocols.

“Trade must deliver decent jobs, not just GDP growth. We refuse a race to the bottom where workers pay the price for Africa’s trade liberalisation,” said ITUC-Africa in its rally call.

Continental Campaign, Global Message

The rally will commence from Obra Spot and terminate at Independence Square. The rally participants will be carrying banners and placards reading “*Cancel Africa’s Debt Now!*”, “*Debt Cancellation is Reparation!*”, “*People-Centred AfCFTA!*”, and “*Stop the Bleeding!*”, etc. Symbolic acts will include a chain-breaking ceremony to dramatise Africa’s liberation from the shackles of debt.

The event is convened by a powerful coalition of organisations: ITUC-Africa, Ghana TUC, AFRODAD, FEMNET, Pan-African Lawyers Union (PALU), Tax Justice Network Africa (TJNA), Trust Africa, and the Nawi Collective, together with broad grassroots networks across the continent. Their unity underscores the legitimacy and urgency of Africa’s demand for debt cancellation and fair trade.

Importantly, we have written to lenders and donors through their agents, embassies and organisations to join this rally. Their participation will demonstrate whether global financial institutions are ready to listen to Africa’s people and act on the urgent demand for justice.

This is not just a Ghanaian moment — it is a continental campaign. Trade unions, civil society, and movements from across Africa will stand together to deliver a petition to policymakers, demanding debt cancellation, trade justice, and reforms in the global financial system.

Call to Media

We call on local, regional, and international media to assist in communicating this information widely and to cover this landmark event. The rally is a defining moment for Africa’s economic future – and a message to the world that Africa is united, organised, and determined to demand and obtain reparative justice and reclaim its sovereignty.



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