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Her Excellency

Madam Ellen Sirleaf Johnson

President

The Republic of Liberia

21 March, 2016

Dear Madam President,

Urgent Call to Halt the Planned Outsourcing of Primary Education in Liberia

We convey to you and the people of Liberia the very warm courtesies of the African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa).

The ITUC-Africa (www.ituc-africa.org) is a Pan African trade union organisation representing over 17 million workers in 49 African countries, including Liberia. We are based in Lome-Togo.

ITUC-Africa is supporting and strongly reiterating the calls by the National Teachers' Association of Liberia (NTAL) and the Educational International (EI) urging your government to halt the proposed measure to outsource Liberia's primary education system to private for-profit actors.

One of the stated goals of African governments is to achieve structural transformation that will lift African peoples, communities and economies from poverty and into shared prosperity. Accessible and quality education aimed at improving human development and capacities has been identified as one of the main means for achieving this transformation aspiration. The African Union Agenda 2063 eloquently attests to the imperative of education as a goal of and a tool to achieve development.

Madam President, ITUC-Africa notes that Her Excellency was the Leader/Head of the African Common Position on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) negotiation, for which Africa harped on the need for genuine, inclusive and broad consultation.

We also note that whilst the 16 Sustainable Development Goals and their targets are relevant for developing economies such as Liberia, the primacy of Goal Eight- *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all* cannot be over-emphasized.


Furthermore, when this Goal is taken together with Goals Two (*Reduce inequality within and among countries*) and Three (*End poverty in all its forms everywhere*), there are real fears that

this policy will seriously undermine the right to educate and eclipse opportunities for indigent and poor individuals, families and communities to use education to claw out of poverty and hardship.

ITUC-Africa therefore urges Madam President to use her good offices and goodwill to stay action on the implementation of this policy and to invite and engage all national stakeholders, including the National Teachers' Association of Liberia and the Liberia Labour Congress, amongst others, in a robust and genuine consultation that will engender a pro-people outcome.

As we count on the goodwill of Madam President to accede to our appeal, we ask that Her Excellency accepts the assurances of our highest regards, please.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K.A.S.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kwasi Adu-Amankwah

General Secretary, ITUC-Africa