



## Racism has no place in the world of work

21<sup>st</sup> March, 2023.

Today, on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa: <https://www.ituc-africa.org/>) stands strong and resolute against the insidious and pervasive effects of racism on workers worldwide. It is with heavy hearts that we acknowledge the damaging impact of racial discrimination on individuals in the workplace, where a person's race or ethnicity can become a barrier to equal opportunities, fair treatment, and even basic dignity. Migrant workers, blacks, and persons of African descent have been the worst affected by racism.

The harsh reality is that racism has been woven into the fabric of many workplaces, perpetuated through discriminatory hiring practices, systemic inequities in promotions and pay, and biased workplace cultures that normalise derogatory language, microaggressions, and exclusionary behaviour. Such conditions not only cause immense harm to those who experience racism but also undermine the productivity, innovation, and growth of organisations and the economy as a whole.

We must recognise that the fight against racism in the workplace is a crucial aspect of broader efforts to dismantle systemic racism and inequality. It requires collective action from governments, employers, unions, civil society, and individuals to address the root causes of racism and foster inclusive and equitable workplaces that celebrate diversity, promote belongingness, and cultivate a culture of respect and empathy.

Employers and organisations are responsible for taking proactive measures to prevent and address racism in the workplace. These measures should include establishing clear anti-racism policies, training and educating employees on anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion, conducting regular equity audits, and creating safe and effective channels for reporting and addressing incidents of racism.

Governments must also play their part in eliminating racial discrimination by adopting and implementing policies and laws that promote equal opportunities. These laws and policies should combat systemic racism, xenophobia and intolerance and hold employers accountable for creating inclusive and equitable workplaces. Notably, the willingness and capacity must be to apply and enforce these laws and policies.

On this International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, ITUC-Africa calls on workers, employers, governments and all citizens to renew their commitment to building a world free of racism and discrimination, where every worker is valued, respected, and able to realise their full potential. Together, we can create a future where no one is held back by the colour of their skin or the place of their birth and where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and succeed, regardless of their race or ethnicity.



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