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ITUC-Africa Statement on the Occasion of United Nations Public Service Day 2025

The African Regional Organization of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa, www.ituc-africa.org) joins the global community in celebrating United Nations Public Service Day 2025. This day is a vital opportunity to honour the commitment, professionalism, and resilience of public service workers across Africa and around the world.

In both times of crisis and stability, public service workers stand as the backbone of our societies. From healthcare and education to sanitation, transport, security, and public administration, their dedicated labour sustains essential services that uphold human dignity, foster social justice, and drive inclusive development. Recent crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, worsening climate emergencies, and deepening socio-economic inequalities have further underscored the indispensable role of public services in protecting communities and ensuring and supporting recovery and resilience.

Public service workers are essential to the well-being of our societies. Yet today, they are being undermined by global trends, including austerity measures, privatisation, chronic underfunding, and precarious employment. These pressures compromise not only the workers' rights and working conditions but also the accessibility and quality of public services. The result is widening inequality and a growing distrust in public institutions. Strengthening the rights, protections, and capacity of public service workers is therefore crucial to building resilient, just, and equitable societies.

Effective public services are also central to a nation's development. They are the foundation of good governance, ensuring that public goods are delivered in a manner that is efficient, transparent, and equitable.

As we mark this important day, ITUC-Africa reaffirms its call to protect and strengthen public services as a global and national common good. We denounce ongoing austerity policies, privatisation agendas, and persistent underinvestment that continue to weaken public sector effectiveness and accountability. We call for a halt to the privatisation of public services.

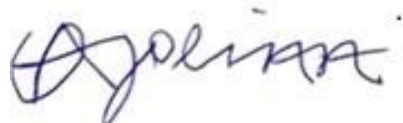
We call on African governments and international institutions to invest adequately and equitably in public services, ensuring universal access and quality delivery for all, including those in rural and marginalised communities. It is equally essential to guarantee decent working conditions, fair wages, and full respect for trade union rights for all public service workers.

Moreover, we urge the promotion of transparency, integrity, and inclusive citizen participation in the governance of public institutions. Public services must also be gender-responsive, designed to meet the specific needs of the vulnerable population and promote social justice.

We salute the tireless efforts of public sector workers and their trade unions that continue to advocate for dignity, fairness, and democratic governance. Their role in defending the public interest and holding decision-makers accountable remains essential in our shared pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable Africa.

Long live public service workers!

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Akhator Joel Odigie', written in a cursive style.

Akhator Joel Odigie
General Secretary

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