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ITUC-Africa Statement on Mandela Day: drawing inspiration from an Icon

The African Regional Organization of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) today joins the rest of Africa in celebrating Nelson Mandela - a living icon we share with the rest of the world. It is a celebration of the struggles and contributions of a man working with other comrades, compatriots, friends and allies who was able to overcome the oppressive and suppressive actions of apartheid and show the world that indeed good will always overcome evil if good persons commit sufficient dedication.

We remind ourselves that this day is a milestone that is etched in the history of the human race and points a bright touch to what sacrifice, courage, endurance, peace, reconciliation and service mean when we set our minds to pursue them.

ITUC-Africa therefore urges African and world leaders to recommit to the ideals that Nelson Mandela cherishes and stands for. These ideals speak to true freedom, stewardship, consensus building, forgiveness, reconciliation and the struggle for progress and shared prosperity. They are ideals that many other past African heroes and heroines espoused, but sadly remain unachieved.

Prosperity and progress that will make effective contribution to the elimination of extreme poverty and inequality cannot be achieved under the guise of austerity measures that punish people and the poor yet heftily reward speculators and the rich. The symbolism of Mandela Day speaks to how leaders and politicians should listen and act in the interest of their people, constituents and constituencies in ways which guarantee that their welfare and well-being are secured and promoted.

We join the rest of the world in extending our best wishes for speedy recovery to Nelson Mandela at this time. We celebrate you today and always!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kwasi Adu-Amankwah'.

Kwasi Adu-Amankwah
General Secretary