



**Ninth Meeting of the ITUC-Africa Women's Committee**

**25 September 2013**

**MENSVIC Grand Hotel, Accra, Ghana**

1. The ninth meeting of the Women's committee of ITUC-Africa was held as stipulated by the statutory provisions on **25<sup>th</sup> September 2013**, at Mensvic Grand Hotel in Accra, Ghana. In attendance were:

**Titular members:** Najoua MAKHLOUF (UGTT), Gladys BRANCHE (SLLC-Sierra Leone); Edith KOUAME (UGTCI, Côte d'Ivoire); Hind Mouttou (UGTM-MOROCCO); MCTU (MALAWI); Rose Omamo (COTU-KENYA); Marième BA KONATE (UDTS-SENEGAL), ADJOUJJI GUEME (UST-Chad); Tajwantee TAUKOORCHAND( NTUC Mauritius)

**Absent with permission:** Rabiadou Serah BAH DIALLO (CNTG-GUINEA, Marième Ba Konaté(SENEGAL -UDTS)

**Observers :** VLEI DAZAON Suzanne (UGTCI-CÔTE D'IVOIRE), Crecencia Mofokeng, BWI Regional Representative (Africa & Middle East), Angélique KIPULU (CSC, DRC), Alberta DEJEAN (G-TUC), Edith Ekoué Koumako (ITUC-Africa), Dieynaba Cisse (ITUC-Africa) KATUMBA Miriam (ZTUC-Zimbabwe) Francisco Maria FERNANDA CARVALHO (UNTA, Angola) OOSTHUYSEN Freda Wilhelmina (COSATU))

The General Secretary of ITUC-Africa called on women leaders to make a difference and show the added-value of their work. He was of the opinion that, as leaders, women need to strive for the sustainable transformation of their organisation. They discussed, inter alia, matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting of the Women's Committee held in 2012, the activity report for 2013, the conclusions of the Congress held in Johannesburg in 2011, the 2014 action plan for the upcoming Women's Conference of ITUC-International slated for Dakar and its Congress in 2014, violence against women, migrant workers, domestic workers and the status of the 12x12 campaign for the ratification of the convention and the role of trade unions and particularly women trade unionists, the responsibility of trade union organisations, the dynamics of information and communication, social protection floor and the issue of maternity, ratification of Convention 183, the poor representation of women on discussion platforms with international and

regional institutions and intensification of efforts at the promotion of gender mainstreaming. The preparation of the ITUC-Africa Women's Conference in 2015 was also mentioned.

**2. The meeting was satisfied with:**

- the gender audit carried out in 2013 and efforts to extend this exercise to all affiliated organisations.
- the emphasis put on linking social protection to the theme of equality ;
- the project of writing the history of women trade unionists in Africa.

**3. It however pointed out that:**

- Communication was still poor as far as the work accomplished by the department was concerned. Trade Union Organisations and more importantly trade union leaders were not passing on sufficient information at the regional level. There was no mechanism for sharing of information and experience; or for data collection.
- The lack of resources of the Equality and Social Protection programme.
- There was still a lot to be done for the implementation of a minimum of 40% women and good governance in all spheres of our trade union organisations. The institutionalisation of this percentage in grassroots structures remained a permanent challenge if we were to avoid building narrow-based organisations.
- Very few activities are carried out in respect of recruitment, unionization of women and the need to intensify the campaigns on gender promotion tools; women's rights and building alliances with civil society organisations.
- The informal economy that abounds with women and recruitment potential is ignored for lack of resources of the department and better structuring for a transition towards a social and integrated economy ;
- There is lack of synergy of action among women's committees at the national level, women's committees of the sub-regions, those of the GUFs and ITUC-Africa;
- The failure to activate the face-book social network due to the fact that leaders do not have operational e-mail addresses.

**4. The women's committee after**

- **Approving the 2014 action plan,**

- **Analysing the status of issues on gender equality in African organisations, the issue of social protection floor, weak communication, information dissemination and recruitment mechanisms in organisations,**
- **Took note of the different agendas at the regional and international levels.**

**5. The meeting recommends:**

➤ **To Women's Committees to:**

- reactivate the face-book page as a way of maintaining a solidarity-based network and enhancing visibility at the local, national, regional and international levels;
- set up mechanisms for recruitment of new members particularly the youth in order to prepare them for taking over the mantle ;
- propose a theme for the 2015 women's conference at the next Congress of ITUC-Africa
- send recommendations for the next congress of ITUC-Africa
- enhance the image of women trade unionists and their history
- encourage the making available of statistics in their organisations and mobilise more women within their organisations to vie for more leadership positions so as to reverse the trends of representativeness;
- strive for the institutionalization of policies in favour of gender dimension in their organisations.

➤ **To the Secretariat of ITUC-Africa**

- Continue supporting resource mobilisation efforts for the Equality and Social Protection programme;
- Support the target of 40% of women in all the decision-making structures of trade union organisations from the grassroots to the top by the year 2015. Encourage affirmative actions.
- Ensure that organisations holding their next congresses really integrate the dynamics of women's conference for the election of their representatives ;
- Ensure a gender friendly representation at all events at the regional and sub-regional levels;
- Address circulars to affiliated organisations to enable women's committees to send reports on activities carried out in the area of promotion of equality, gender and integration of women in ITUC-Africa regardless of the origin of the source of funding the activity.

➤ **The Women's Committee also recommends to the General Council :**

- to implement trade union strategies for the domestication of the social protection floor including maternity protection; to address

violence against women, social and integrated economy, domestic work, climate change, exclusion of women from social dialogue and economic and social brainstorming structures;

- to apply the recommendations of the participatory gender audits and make available of statistics in union centres at all levels;
- progressively institutionalise the 40% quota and its actual application by national centres in compliance with the Constitution of ITUC-Africa and decisions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of ITUC held in Vancouver;
- strive for greater synergy between the partners that support women's activities at the national/international level and the Equality Programme of ITUC-Africa.

**The Women's Committee of ITUC-Africa recommends to the General Council to**

- **adopt the recommendations made in paragraph 5**
- **instruct the Secretariat to undertake the necessary actions for the implementation of the measures proposed.**

Done at Accra, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of September 2013