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Attention :

**Presidents and Secretaries General
of ITUC-Africa affiliates
organisations**

28 October, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

Solidarity Appeal for Ebola Affected Communities in West Africa

Many of us are concerned that our brothers, sisters and governments in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia are battling the Ebola Viral Disease (EVD) that is sweeping ferociously and wreaking havoc across these countries and has caused an unprecedented public health crisis in Africa. As of 24 October 2014, a total of 12,008 suspected cases and 5,078 deaths had been reported.

The numbers of casualties are mounting even as health commentaries suggest that the virus is mutating very fast and that it might take several months or years to rein in the EVD. Countless families are in pain and grief over the loss of their loved ones.

Health workers who are the first line of defense against the EVD have been the most affected and continue to be in danger of contracting the virus in the course of discharging their professional duties. So far, over 200 health workers have died and many are infected. We salute their sense of duty, bravery and sacrifice.

The outbreak of the Ebola Virus showcases the deep cracks in the African Public Health System. It is unfortunate to note that the access to health care, which is supposed to be a basic human right has deteriorated in many African countries. Health care infrastructure including hospital facilities have deteriorated to the extent that ordinary people have lost faith in the public health sector. An average African person has no guaranteed access to quality health care services. Significant numbers of medical personnel (doctors, nurses and other health care professionals) abandoned the public health sector in search of greener pastures either in the private health care sector or outside Africa. The very high Ebola fatality rates in West Africa have been attributed in part to the lack of adequate intensive care facilities and personnel to administer healthcare. It is alarming that many patients are even afraid to seek health services from the institutions that are supposed to save their lives.

The outbreak of Ebola is a call to African governments to invest more financial and human resources into the public health systems in African countries, including in infrastructural development that assures citizens access to healthcare facilities. Healthcare must take a priority place in the national budgets of African countries.

As part of the immediate efforts to combat the pandemic, governments of the affected countries and communities are taking actions, which include closing down schools, markets, quarantining suspected infected persons and cordoning off areas with infection. They have also scaled up awareness for hygiene and public sanitation practices by the people. Furthermore, the governments of the affected countries have made an urgent call to the international community to come to their help to control this pandemic.

ITUC-Africa joins its voice to this call to ask that the world wakes up, listen and contribute actions to help stop this pandemic that is cutting lives short and torpedoing the dreams of many in the affected communities.

ITUC-Africa also brings to your attention that the effects of the EVD are seriously hurting the affected communities economically. Closed markets, borders, offices and cordoned-off areas mean daily economic activities have been seriously affected. Reports reaching us show that distribution, availability and purchase of daily essential commodities are proving difficult, thus exacerbating the humanitarian crisis triggered by the EVD. This is a humanitarian crisis that calls for our help no matter how modest. We are therefore appealing to you, your organization and community to join us in our effort to **mobilize material and financial donations** to assist our brothers and sisters in these affected communities.

DONATE TO an EBOLA CRISIS FUND.

Donations can be sent to:

CSI-Afrique, Centre Fopadesc , Agoe, Lome, BP: 4401- Togo. Bank Account: 7080161408998902 with Ecobank. Swift code: ECOCTGTG. When sending please indicate "Ebola Crisis Fund"

For more information please contact the secretariat of ITUC-Africa.

We are confident you will act swiftly to reach out and offer hope to these persons battling the Ebola pandemic in these affected communities.

Together we can reduce the suffering of those affected and contribute to stop the Ebola Virus Disease.

Yours sincerely,



Kwasi ADU-AMANKWAH
General Secretary