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STATEMENT ON PLANNED FINNISH MEASURES

ITUC-Africa joins other trade union organisations around the globe to express its shock and dismay at the announcement by the Finnish government of measures that worsen the terms and conditions of workers.

We are bound to ask what is becoming of the Finnish society which has been developed on the bases of consensus and indeed became a model with existing labour legislation that is designed to protect the weaker party that employees constitute in the employment relationship and which many have sought to emulate.

These proposed changes that go against the accepted norms of collective agreements are intended to protect the interests of employers by shortening annual leave, eliminating two bank holidays, making the first day of sick leave unpaid and cutting extra pay for working overtime and on Sundays, etc..

ITUC-Africa hereby denounces the attempts by the government to worsen the conditions of low paid workers, especially women who will be the most affected. This is but another example of taking away from the vulnerable to give to those who are already wealthy and powerful.

ITUC-Africa totally supports and applauds the mobilization and joint demonstration by three Finnish trade union confederations against the government plans on Friday 18 September in Helsinki.

ITUC-Africa calls on the Finnish government to drop the proposed legislation and enter into constructive negotiations with the trade unions in conformity with long standing Finnish tradition of genuine social dialogue and consensus building in order to preserve the uttermost interest of workers.

Long live the Finnish workers and their trade unions!

Long live the world trade union movement!

United we stand, divided we fall.

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Kwasi Adu-Amankwah
General Secretary