

## **UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND AFRICAN EMANCIPATION"**

Johannesburg (South Africa) 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2011

### **Concept note**

#### **JUSTIFICATION**

It is obviously saddening to admit that Africa is still poor after fifty years of independence of most of its states. It cannot even feed its inhabitants. Every year, the volume of food aid provided by the international community keeps on increasing. In the past, there were great civilisations in Africa, but it is now destitute.

However, despite the rather pessimistic vision of the future of the black continent and in spite of the difficulties in promoting the foundations for a genuine economic and social development, one can say that Africa is nevertheless forging ahead.

A lot has been written about African emancipation or renaissance. The new dynamics in Africa is occurring in a context of economic crisis and need to change the social and political order. Africans no longer entertain the traditional ideologies and the neoliberal practices proposed to them. They are increasingly aware of their rights and freedoms and are drawing attention to hitherto unrecognized rights. Several civil society organisations disappointed by political parties are occupying the socio-political stage and becoming masters thereof. What the social movements are seeking above all is to provide answers to essential human needs where society has failed. Therefore, they have a crucial social function. As essential role players and genuine representatives of workers, trade unions can make significant contribution to workers and African emancipation.

One of the greatest challenges for the trade union world is formulating such a vision and making it a rallying point.

However, one of the major problems that the trade union movement is experiencing is undoubtedly the division of trade union forces in Africa. Due to this division, the trade union movement carries no weight before social, political and economic partners.

Unity must become a priority goal for ITUC-Africa's action and pave the way for the achievement of a better organization of workers, greater solidarity, greater effectiveness and coherence of trade union action.

It is therefore necessary to continue obstinately and methodically the process of unification of the trade union movement in Africa for the emancipation of Africa.

**OBJECTIVE**

- A diagnosis of the trade union unification process in Africa
- Identification of the alternatives for a united trade union movement in Africa and for African emancipation.

**TARGET GROUP**

Leaders of ITUC-Africa's affiliates

**ACTIVITIES**

- Discussion on the process of trade union unification in Africa
- Group work on the alternatives for a united trade union movement in Africa and African emancipation