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## LABOUR DAY MESSAGE BY ITUC AFRICA - MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> 2017

### ORGANIZE AND STRUGGLE FOR PROGRESS

On the occasion of Labour Day 2017, the African Regional Organization of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) salutes the hundreds of millions of African workers and workers all around the world for their forbearance and struggle to take care of themselves and their families and for their immeasurable contribution to the progress and well being of their communities and societies.

While the world of today boasts of unprecedented rise in knowledge, technological advancement and productivity, workers in Africa and around the world face growing inequality, precariousness and uncertainty in their lives. For majority of African workers, including the teeming numbers in the informal economy, inadequate or absent social protection threaten them with poverty and deprivation. And for the bulging youth population of Africa, unemployment and limited opportunities foster despair and push them to desperate acts, including migration under extremely dangerous conditions. In the meantime, corruption and greed of African elites combine to ensure that the continent is shortchanged in its relations with the rest of the world.

The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the turn of the century and the renewed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted last year with objectives, including the end of poverty and the achievement of decent work, are testimony to the recognition by the global elite of the needs of the underprivileged among humanity. To wit, the powerful and well placed in the world know what has to be done to promote the well being of the peoples. What clearly remains is the will to do what has to be done.

On our part as workers, labour day provides us with the reminder that working people can only make gains and sustain such on the basis of organization and struggle.

ITUC-Africa urges unions around Africa to recommit to organizing and to bring into the fold of the union movement the teeming numbers of workers who remain outside and who

need to be organized to fight for their rights and interests. It is only on the bases of organizing, mobilizing and uniting around issues of concern to workers that we can push for policies and programs that serve the interests of workers and bring us clear benefits.

In Africa, we face enormous challenges of industrialization and employment creation; for achieving social protection for the majority; and for safeguarding our resources through fighting the illicit financial flows that allow tens of billions of hard currency to be stolen out of our continent annually.

Labour Day is the occasion for workers to rededicate themselves to the organization and struggle of workers and our peoples and to renew solidarity with people who stand up everywhere against injustice, inequality, poverty and all that these impact on workers and their families.

**LONG LIVE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' SOLIDARITY!**



**Kwasi Adu-Amankwah**

**General Secretary**