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2026: The year to reset for Humanism, Peace, Multilateralism, Socioeconomic Inclusion, and furthering the quest for Africa's Shared Development

As we enter 2026, the African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa, www.ituc-africa.org) reflects on 2025 as a challenging year for African workers, marked by social, economic, and political pressures. Conflict, democratic regression, debt stress, and shrinking civic space weighed heavily on working people.

Despite these challenges, African workers are convinced that 2026 should be dedicated to resetting for humanism, peace, multilateralism, and socioeconomic inclusion. Therefore, ITUC-Africa's New Year message is anchored on renewal and hope.

Across the continent, from Sudan to the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, and in communities facing insecurity in Nigeria and elsewhere, African workers have continued to demonstrate remarkable courage, resilience, and solidarity, sustaining societies and keeping the promise of a better future alive. ITUC-Africa commends workers everywhere for their dedication and courage. We also recognise and commend African governments that govern in the public interest, managing national resources responsibly, investing in people, and advancing genuine economic emancipation.


For 2026, our priority is clear: decent jobs and social protection for all, especially young people, women, and persons with disabilities; public services; and public pathways to engineer a Just Transition that places people before profit. These actions will help drive humanism and socioeconomic inclusion. Also, we will continue to advocate for and demand better utilisation of social dialogue to resolve disputes and prioritise disarmament to ensure peace everywhere.

To further Africa's shared development, we urge African governments to tackle illicit financial flows, advance progressive taxation, deepen regional integration, and free mobility under the AfCFTA. African governments must tame the appetite for loan contraction that leads to debt traps and strengthen domestic inclusive debt management arrangements.

Further, we must remain vigilant to foreign manipulation, interference, and bullying aimed at keeping our continent as perpetual sites of extraction devoid of value addition. Equally, in a time of shifting geopolitics, particularly in the Global North. African unity is imperative. Africa must speak with one voice and strengthen its economic independence.

We call on African workers and governments alike to choose dialogue, inclusion, and cooperation. Together, we can build a peaceful, democratic Africa where opportunity is created at home and shared by all.

Happy New Year to all.


Akhator Joel Odigie
General Secretary, ITUC-Africa