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## **ITUC-Africa Statement on International Workers Memorial Day 2022: Acting together to build a positive safety and health culture in Africa**

28 April - as we know - is set aside as Workers' Memorial Day. All across the world, workers and their representatives come together to honor and remember the millions of workers who were injured and those who have lost their lives while at work. The day also aims to provide better safety regulations at workplaces.

Workplace deaths - often arising from neglect are preventable deaths. However the latest figures show that a worker dies at least once every ten seconds. The ILO estimates that some 2.3 million women and men around the world succumb to work-related accidents or diseases every year; this corresponds to over 6000 deaths every single day. Worldwide, there are around 340 million occupational accidents and 160 million victims of work-related illnesses annually.

In Africa, in addition to the absence of adequate and proper labour inspection mechanisms and limited ratification and implementation of Occupational Health and Safety conventions and standards, these statistics are even more alarming.

Furthermore, the impacts of COVID-19 have aggravated the precarious conditions of work and further deteriorated health and safety conditions within the workplace leaving many more men and women at risk.

In commemoration of this year's IWMD, the Africa Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) joins the Global Trade Union Movement to mobilise around the theme 'Make occupational health and safety a fundamental right at work'.

We join the ITUC and its affiliates to call on governments to take action by:

- Ratifying and implementing core ILO health and safety conventions;
- Ratifying and implementing all sectoral or hazard-specific conventions;
- Establishing national health and safety bodies bringing unions and employer representatives together;

- Requiring occupational health services for all, and proper compensation including making Covid-19 a recognised occupational disease.

We further call on affiliates across Africa to advance the campaign to 'Make occupational health and safety a fundamental right at work' as we commemorate this important day.

We recognise that workers who have passed away in the line of duty and due to unsafe and unhealthy workplaces, have left us with responsibility, that of working to eliminate the risks that threaten lives at work.

As we mourn our brothers and sisters on this solemn day, we urge workers across Africa to stand together to build a positive safety and health culture at work

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