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ITUC-Africa Calls for Urgent Action to End Organ Trafficking and Exploitation in MENA.

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) strongly condemns the abhorrent and inhumane practice of organ trafficking and forced organ harvesting that continues to plague the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. We are gravely alarmed by the documented rise in this underground trade—an appalling violation of fundamental human rights that preys upon the most vulnerable in our societies: refugees, migrants, internally displaced persons, the poor, and children.

This vile trade thrives on desperation, conflict, and institutional breakdown. Evidence points to an expanding web of complicity involving unscrupulous medical professionals, brokers, criminal syndicates, and even terror groups who exploit regional instability and porous borders to operate with impunity. The commodification of the human body—where victims are abducted, misled, or coerced into giving up their organs—is a despicable crime and an affront to the dignity of all human life.

Of particular concern is the targeting of African migrants, refugees, and youth—many of whom are lured with false promises or trafficked across borders only to become victims of this modern-day barbarism. The intersection of this criminal enterprise with war economies and transnational trafficking networks reinforces a vicious cycle of exploitation, poverty, and suffering that must be decisively broken.

ITUC-Africa calls upon the African Union and all African governments to:

1. **Strengthen national and regional legal frameworks** to criminalize organ trafficking and ensure stringent penalties for perpetrators.
2. **Develop mechanisms for protection, prevention, and victim support**, particularly for refugees, migrants, and displaced persons.
3. **Enhance border control and surveillance measures**, while investing in the capacity of law enforcement and the judiciary to detect, investigate, and prosecute trafficking networks.
4. **Promote public awareness campaigns** to educate citizens on the dangers and illegality of organ trafficking, particularly in vulnerable communities.
5. **Cooperate with international partners** to dismantle cross-border trafficking rings and uphold the integrity of medical ethics and humanitarian standards.

The harvesting of human organs is a grotesque distortion of medical science and a symptom of deep social and political failures. It must not be met with silence. ITUC-Africa affirms our commitment to working alongside civil society, workers' organizations, and governments to uphold the dignity, rights, and safety of all people across our continent and beyond.

We demand justice for the victims. We demand action from our leaders. Africa must not be complicit—either in silence or inaction—in this grotesque trade in human life.

Issued by: Akhator Joel Afolabi Odigie



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