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**Beyond a Civil War in Sudan – A Proxy Insurgency Against People, Workers, and Communities, and African workers' call for enduring justice for the people of Sudan**

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa www.ituc-africa.org) issues this statement following a high-level solidarity mission to Port Sudan from 12–16 January 2026, undertaken pursuant to a resolution adopted at the ITUC-Africa Peace and Security Meeting held in Kenya on 21-22 November 2025.

This mission was an act of African worker solidarity, grounded in direct engagements with Sudanese workers, trade unions, women, students, public institutions, and state authorities. Our findings, based on first-hand testimonies and institutional evidence, have been formally documented in the ITUC-Africa Sudan Mission Report, which is publicly available at www.ituc-africa.org.

**A War Dangerously Misframed**

What is unfolding in Sudan cannot be accurately described as a civil war or a power struggle between rival military leaders. The evidence gathered demonstrates that Sudan is facing an externally enabled rebellion and proxy insurgency, marked by the systematic targeting of civilians, workers, labour institutions, and critical national infrastructure. This false framing has contributed to international inertia and failed to reflect the reality of deliberate destabilisation, mass displacement, and social destruction.

**The Human Cost and the Suffering of Workers and Communities**

Sudanese workers, businesses, and communities are bearing the heaviest burden. Millions have been displaced, livelihoods destroyed, wages unpaid, savings lost, and labour institutions dismantled. Electricity networks, hospitals, schools, water systems, banks, transport corridors, and housing have been deliberately attacked, rendering entire regions unliveable and deepening humanitarian suffering.

Women shared harrowing testimonies of mutilation, rape, sexual violence, forced displacement, and terror tactics used systematically as weapons of war. Children are growing up amid trauma, violence, and despondency. These are not incidental consequences of conflict but intentional strategies designed to break communities and erase futures.

**Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing, and Demographic Erasure**

The mission documented clear patterns of ethnic cleansing and acts amounting to genocide, particularly against Sudanese communities of African descent, including the Masalit, Zaghawa, and Fur. Entire villages have been emptied, civilians targeted

because of their identity, and women's bodies used as instruments of terror to force permanent displacement. These crimes must be named, confronted, and prosecuted.

**External Actors and the Role of the UAE**

The scale and military sophistication of the violence cannot be explained by internal dynamics alone. The mission documented compelling evidence of external financing, arms flows, mercenaries, and logistical support sustaining this insurgency.

In particular, credible international reporting and consistent testimonies during our visit point to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a key external actor providing financial, logistical, and strategic support to armed groups responsible for atrocities in Sudan. Similar patterns of proxy violence and external interference have also been observed in Libya and Somalia, pointing to a wider regional crisis driven by geopolitical and economic interests at the expense of African lives. The UAE must be openly named as a financier of destabilisation in Africa and must be called to desist forthwith.

**A Call for Justice, International Action, and Rebuilding Sudan**

ITUC-Africa calls on the international community to reject false narratives, demand an immediate, permanent, and verifiable ceasefire, guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access, and pursue justice and accountability, including for external enablers of violence. Silence in the face of mass suffering is not neutrality—it is complicity.

Beyond ending the violence, Sudan urgently requires coordinated international support for reconstruction, rehabilitation, and reintegration. Infrastructure must be rebuilt, livelihoods restored, and displaced populations supported to return safely and with dignity.

ITUC-Africa calls for an international summit on Sudan's reconstruction, anchored in justice, accountability, and worker-centred recovery, with trade unions recognised as strategic actors in rebuilding labour markets, public services, and social dialogue.

**Justice as the Foundation of Peace**

There can be no sustainable peace without justice. Accountability for war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and the systematic destruction of civilian life must be pursued at all levels. The International community, including the International Labour Organisation (ILO), must stand with the people of Sudan in their quest to shape recovery pathways grounded in dignity and decent work.

For African workers, neutrality in the face of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and mass dispossession is neither possible nor acceptable. Sudan deserves truth, justice, solidarity—and a future rebuilt on the foundations of peace and social justice.

Lome, Togo, on this 30th of January 2026.

**Akhator Joel ODIGIE**
**General Secretary**