

**INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS  
AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANISATION  
(ICFTU-AFRO)**

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON  
THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBALIZATION IN AFRICA: THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN  
PROMOTING BALANCED DEVELOPMENT  
(The Stanley Hotel, Nairobi 27-29 May, 2002)**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the African trade union representatives of the independent, free, democratic trade union movement affiliated to the ICFTU and ICFTU-AFRO, including representatives of the CLC, AFL-CIO, ACILS, SATUCC ITS's, ILO, IMF, World Bank, meeting in Nairobi, Kenya during the ICFTU-AFRO Regional Conference on "The Challenge of Globalization in Africa: The Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Policies of Balanced Development" held from 27-29 May 2002,

Having considered the reports on Globalization and NEPAD as well as the inspiring opening statements made by Honourable Joseph Ngutu, Minister of Labour and Human Resource Development, Mrs Regina Amadi-Njoku, ILO Regional Director for Africa, Mr. Francis Atwoli, Secretary General of COTU(K), Mr. Andrew Kailembo, General Secretary of ICFTU-AFRO and the participants' views arising from the debate during the conference,

**PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

**1. Globalization**

Aware of the growing influence of globalization on national economies including those in Africa;

Conscious of the predominant role of free markets in driving the process of globalization, to the extent of negating other universal values such as social justice and equity;

Noting that the African workers are victims and continue to be excluded from the benefits of globalization ;

Recognizing the important role and contribution of Africa's resources in the development of the global economy, despite its continued marginalization ;

Noting the enormous influence and control on the global economy by undemocratic institutions in the name of the IFIs, the WTO and the TNCs ;

Noting the increasing threat to Labour Standards by MNCs and TNCs under the guise of liberalization and that workers in Africa bear the brunt of globalization; through increased poverty, environmental degradation, job losses and social decline.

Cognizant of the differentiated gender impact of globalization;

The following actions must be undertaken:

- (a) campaign for democratisation, transparency and accountability of the global institutions such as the WTO, IMF and World Bank;
- (b) demand equitable distribution of benefits of globalisation through market access of African exports into the industrialised markets and levelling of the playing field e.g. removal of agricultural subsidies by rich nations and other forms of trade and non-trade barriers to trade.
- (c) trade unions to play a more visible role in influencing national, regional and international policies to ensure a more balanced approach to sustainable development;
- (d) trade unions to continue campaigning for implementation of ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up in all African countries as an integral component of anti-poverty policies.
- (e) Call upon African governments and all stakeholders to ensure that peace and security must be a reality in Africa instead of being a mere declaration of intent in order to achieve a successful regional integration.
- (f) Exhort African governments through the AU to encourage economic, social and political regional integration under which trade unions are also fully involved as the only way of consolidating Africa's position in the global economy and reduce its marginalisation.
- (g) trade unions must constitute strong and democratic organisations to face the challenges of globalisation

## **2. New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**

Welcoming the launch of NEPAD by the African governments';

Taking cognisance of the DAKAR DECLARATION of February, 2002 by the African Trade Unions and appreciative of the efforts made by the Pan Africa Trade Union Movement representatives, to convey the Dakar Declaration to the Heads of State Summit held from 15-17 April 2002 in Dakar, Senegal,

Aware of the serious limitations of NEPAD as a 'New' development initiative for Africa's Development and that NEPAD cannot succeed without full support, active involvement and the creative participation of workers, Trade Unions, Employers and Civil Society Organizations in Africa;

Noting that NEPAD is increasingly taking centre stage as African home-grown initiative that is generating enormous interest in the west in particular the donor community;

Aware that the Donor Community is seriously considering NEPAD as the possible window for future assistance to Africa ;

Recognizing that the African trade union movement must play a significant role in the NEPAD because it has a direct impact on workers in Africa.

Noting that African trade unions have not been consulted or involved in the conceptualisation and formulation of NEPAD;

Observing that NEPAD does not seem to provide concrete guarantees for ensuring good governance and upholding of human and trade union rights;

Conscious of the elevation of market force as the driving force Africa's new development initiative

Noting the remarkable absence of an effective social dimension in the new partnership;

Undertake the following actions;

- (i) NEPAD needs to be popularised extensively at grassroots levels in Africa in order for it to secure the requisite African ownership, participation and involvement of all the social partners that is necessary to guarantee the realisation of the goals of partnership;

- (ii) NEPAD needs the infusion of a heavy social dimension which must be anchored in the domain of the Trade unions, if there is going to be an effective response by the African Labour Leaders to the challenges of Globalisation and in particular, to put in focus the need to give the African workers adequate social protection and social justice;
- (iii) NEPAD among its prescriptions must be categorical on the issue of the African debt and encourage the unison demand by the African Nations for the total cancellation of the Debts;
- (iv) NEPAD should re-orient its focus away from suiting the needs of the International development partners and Industrialised Economies instead recognise the primary role Trade Unions have played and can play in the second Africa's Economic Liberation Struggle;
- (v) NEPAD in its revised format must include social, labour, gender, abolition of child labour, environment, HIV/AIDS policies and comprehensive agrarian land reforms programmes as part of the development agenda and philosophy for Africa;
- (vi) that the DAKAR DECLARATION of February 2002 be noted by the Conference and that the document be circulated for information and action to all delegates at the conference and to all national trade union centres not represented at the conference;
- (vii) Trade union leaders in Africa take initiative to popularise the ideals of NEPAD and the DAKAR DECLARATION at the grassroot, branches and national levels in building the top political leadership;
- (viii) Trade unions must also popularise the Constitutive Act of the African Union(AU);
- (ix) Trade unions must seek immediate participation and involvement in NEPAD at national, regional and international level;
- (x) Core International Labour Standards and ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work must underpin the new partnership in NEPAD;

- (xi) Effective and transparent governance at government and corporate levels must become the norm in order to be acceptable and deliverable within NEPAD;
- (xii) NEPAD must encompass a social dimension aimed at poverty reduction; and
- (xiii) ICFTU-AFRO to draft guide lines for trade unions participation on NEPAD and AU and convene national, sub-regional and regional forums for popularising these African blueprints for economic and social development.

### **3. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)**

Aware that most African countries are in the process of implementing PRSP as a replacement of the failed past SAPs of the IMF and World Bank;

Cognizant of the realities of poverty in Africa which has 32 out of 42 HIPC's.;

Aware that one of the key conditions for formulating PRSP is the need for broad negotiation and involvement of all key stakeholders including trade unions;

Undertaken the following actions:

- (a) Trade unions must be fully involved in the PRSP process and where they are not involved to immediately seek involvement using the ICFTU PRSP guideline;
- (b) Trade unions must develop alternative socio-economic policies as options in the PRSP reflecting trade union interests and vision;
- (c) The three social partners (trade unions, government and employers) to promote implementation of active employment and labour market policies as part of poverty reduction strategy;
- (d) Mainstreaming core labour standards and gender into poverty reduction strategies; and
- (e) Share information and strategies across countries implementing PRSP

#### **4. Capacity Building in Trade Unions**

Noting the urgent need to enhance strategic planning and thinking within the trade union movement in Africa.

Aware that lack of involvement by trade unions in national social and economic programming is to some extent a result of strategic thinking deficiency or lack of capacity on the part of the unions themselves;

Undertake the following actions:

- a) ICFTU-AFRO and national centres to develop deliberate activities and programmes at regional and national level to build and strengthen the strategic planning and thinking capacity in the trade unions movement in Africa.
- b) Initiate programmes/projects for resource mobilization for capacity building at both national and regional levels.
- c) ICFTU-AFRO to convene a regional evaluation conference a year from now to assess the implementation of the action plans at the national, regional and international level on participation of trade unions in the NEPAD/AU and PRSP processes in Africa.