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Our Ref:

May Day Statement

On this May 1st, 2026, the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) addresses workers in Africa, and around the world within the spirit of solidarity and salutes their struggle in a global context marked by wars, multiple crises, and upheavals that profoundly affect the lives of workers. Armed conflicts, persistent violence – notably in the Middle East – as well as the greed and predation against Africa further weaken societies and undermine fundamental rights.

The African continent is particularly characterised by recurrent conflicts, political instability in certain regions, and the threat of terrorism weighing on the security of populations and workers. Added to this are:

- Economic dependence;
- Impact of energy crises on socioeconomic development in Africa;
- The deterioration of living standards;
- Unemployment, especially among young people;
- The degradation of essential social services and basic needs;
- The expansion of poverty and the dominance of the informal economy;
- Threats to freedoms, democracy, and fundamental rights at work, and violation of freedom association.

In the face of these realities, OATUU reaffirms its principles:

- The struggle for workers' rights, and social justice;
- Respect of freedom association;
- Africa's economic sovereignty;
- The use of Africa's wealth for the development and well-being of its peoples and workers;
- The strengthening of international trade union solidarity for a world of peace and justice;
- The struggle for peace in Africa and in the world.

OATUU also demands:

- The creation of decent and sustainable jobs;
- The improvement of workers' purchasing power;
- Equality of rights between men and women;
- The expansion and strengthening of social protection and social security;
- The cancellation of Africa's debt;
- A free health and education system accessible to all;
- A resolute fight against corruption.

OATUU denounces wars and violence used as a means to attempt to save a failing and crisis-ridden order, and to seize the wealth of other nations by force at the expense of peoples and workers. Wars cost more than development and the resolution of the world's problems.

OATUU renews its solidarity with African workers fighting to improve their economic and social conditions, as well as with victims of violence, particularly women. It also affirms its solidarity with the workers and peoples of the Sahel countries, Sudan, and the Great Lakes region, who are facing particularly severe security, political, and social crises.

On this symbolic day of struggle and solidarity, OATUU calls upon its affiliates and all African workers to unity, mobilisation, and struggle to defeat all antisocial policies and all projects of destabilisation, domination, and plundering of our continent's resources. It also denounces the forced transfer and arbitrary expulsion of migrant workers, in flagrant violation of human rights and ethical principles, and ILO standards, sometimes even to destinations they do not know.

Finally, OATUU calls for the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which is currently facing major challenges that even threaten its existence. Defending the ILO is an essential condition for preserving social multilateralism and workers' rights worldwide.

Long live to workers' struggle and solidarity!
Long live a sovereign and just Africa!



Arezki MEZHOUD
Secretary General

