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World Social Forum 2011: Focus on Africa Issues

Brussels, 7 February 2011 (ITUC OnLine): An international trade union event at the World Social Forum in Dakar, Senegal on 9 February will address the causes of and solutions to the global economic crisis. Open to all the organisations and movements present in Dakar, other ITUC-supported activities at the Forum will deal with migration, domestic workers, access to social protection and trade and investment. Yesterday's opening march included a huge number of trade unionists coming from Africa, Europe, Latin America and Asia.

The World Social Forum (WSF) is an international event drawing thousands of people to exchange views on globalisation, human rights and workers' rights. A special focus in this year's forum will be on African issues, in particular developments in Tunisia and Egypt, as well as on lack of development and poverty in Africa.

"Because of the lack of a social dimension in globalisation, competition within and between countries to attract multinationals and foreign investment is heavily based on keeping wages low and engaging in unsustainable and environmentally damaging production methods" said Kwasi Adu-Amankwah, General Secretary of the African Regional Organisation of the ITUC, who is leading the ITUC delegation in Dakar. "Enough is enough. We are here to exchange ideas and promote effective and concrete solutions to answer the crisis and get the global economy onto a sustainable path which supports decent work for all" he added.

"It is more than urgent to change the current model of globalisation and put an end to the neoliberal orthodoxy that has left millions of Africans with underfunded education systems, poor health services and virtually no decent work opportunities. From the WSF in Dakar we are calling for a new agenda with full employment at its heart," said Mody Guiro, General Secretary of the ITUC-affiliated CNTS Senegal and President of ITUC-Africa.

The ITUC and its affiliates present in Dakar will join the international solidarity day with the Egyptian people on 8 February. On that day, around the globe, unions will organise demonstrations at Egyptian embassies, and continue to press their governments to demand democratic transition in Egypt and to ensure that those responsible for the violent repression of peaceful demonstrations are brought to justice.

The ITUC represents 176 million workers in 301 affiliated national organisations from 151 countries and territories. Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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