

AFRICA MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNION NETWORK (AMALGUN)

NAIROBI DECLARATION

We, the leaders and representatives of Trade Unions organizing workers in Local and Regional Governments of the African region, which congregate under the network called African Municipal and Local Government Unions Network (AMALGUN) and are affiliated to the Public Services International (PSI), the global trade union federation representing 20 million workers who deliver public services in more than 160 countries, met in Nairobi, Kenya, on 23- 24 October in Nairobi, Kenya.

We, representing the city and community workers who daily deliver those essential services that operate cities and towns; keep communities to life; and make local economic development possible

Expressing deep concern over the following common issues:

1. Trade union rights of local and regional government workers: several African countries continue to pass legislation that derecognizes trade unions and/or puts threshold and obstacles to trade union recognition and collective bargaining (Kenya and Botswana); bans collective bargaining (Swaziland) or de facto do not implement such fundamental human and labour rights;
2. Privatization of essential public services: despite extensive evidence showing the failure of public private partnerships and privatization worldwide and in Africa to deliver quality public services in the interest of the people, many governments and municipalities continue to promote and embrace PPPs of essential public services such as water, electricity and waste; health and social services; education and culture services and even private emergency services (PES) among others. Privatization hinders user access to essential public services by:
 - a. increasing user costs and shrinking service coverage to those who can afford to pay for them;
 - b. stripping public services of essential revenues that can be reused in the service and used to ensure decent working conditions for public service workers and goes into shareholder payments instead
 - c. creating extensive opportunities for corruption and conflict of interest
3. Precarious employment in essential public services: the widespread practice of hiring public service workers under precarious working conditions - including lack of employment security, low wages, non-payment of wages, lack of social security (pension and unemployment dues) and the hiring and firing public service workers on a short-term basis - hinders the quality of the public services delivered and undermines the livelihoods of public service workers, their families and their communities;
4. Corruption: corruption practices and conflict of interest within local and regional governments strip of public service utilities and institutions of the resources they are

allocated to operate correctly continues harming service users and workers alike, becoming a major obstacle to the attainment of universal access to public services, sustainable development and decent work for all;

5. Poor occupational health and safety, training and capacity building for public service workers: public service workers are hardly provided with the equipment – including personal protective equipment (PPE) – as well as the training and the capacity building they need to provide quality public services to the users and communities they are to serve.
6. Failing social security and social protection coverage: the widespread introduction of precarious employment within the local and regional government service workforce and unsustainable levels of public debt in some countries have eroded workers' accumulated social security dues and pension entitlement and are making them unsustainable; pushing them towards a systemic collapse of a major social security crisis.

Recalling among others:

- The 1992 [ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#) that binds all ILO member states to promote, respect and implement the 8 fundamental ILO Conventions including C87 on freedom of Association and C.98 on Collective Bargaining;
- The Sustainable Development Goals 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and 11 (inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements);
- The transformative commitment of UN Habitat members states to realize the Decent Work enshrined in the 2016 [New Urban Agenda](#);
- The [2018 ILO Tripartite Guidelines on Public Emergency Services \(PES\)](#);

Urge central, local and regional governments of African countries; UCLG Africa, the UN system and international financial institutions (World bank, IMF) as well as African Union (AU), SADEC and African Development Bank (ADB) - as relevant and appropriate - to:

- Fully uphold and abide (or promote and require compliance with) by ILO C. 87 on Freedom of Association and C. 98 and Collective Bargaining in local and regional government services - be them public or privately run - by recognizing free and democratically elected local and regional government trade unions and meaningfully engage with them in constructive collective bargaining
- Ratify and uphold ILO Conventions 151 (Labour relations in the Public Service) and 154 (Collective bargaining in the public sector)
- Halt the privatization of public services and invest into financial, human and political capital in publicly owned and managed solutions, drawing on good practices emerged from the region considering remunicipalization, public-public partnerships and inter-municipal cooperation as part of the solution.

- Recognize and fully involve local and regional government trade unions as key stakeholders in the development of urban policies that work for the African people.
- Work with local and regional government trade unions and stakeholders to establish sustainable financing systems including addressing tax justice issues for local communities and progressive municipal tax systems - to ensure the adequate financing of accessible and high-quality essential public service to users and communities and to take full advantage of public service provision to promote decent work opportunities.

Nairobi, 24 October 2018

BOTSWANA - Botswana Land Board & Local Authorities & Health Workers Union

GHANA - Civil and Local Government Staff Association of Ghana

NIGERIA - Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees

SOUTH AFRICA - South African Municipal Workers Union

SWAZILAND - Swaziland National Public Services and Allied Workers Union

TANZANIA - Tanzania Local Government Workers Union

UGANDA - Uganda Local Government Workers' Union

KENYA - Kenya County Government Workers Union