

ITUC Interregional Union Networks on Migration of Africa, the Americas and Europe: Declaration

The organisations active within the ITUC interregional networks of unions organising migrant workers in Africa, The Americas and Europe gathered for two virtual workshops convened by the ITUC on 9 and 16 November 2020;

- Having observed that migrant workers and their family members have been severely affected by the deep health, social and economic crises engendered by the pandemic.
- Recognising that migrants' circumstances are inseparable from that of nationals and that the abuse, violations and exploitation to which some migrant workers are victims have a direct impact on the work and living conditions of all workers.
- Condemning the failure of many governments to uphold their human rights obligations to enable asylum seekers to claim asylum in the countries of their choice as well as leading them to be concentrated in inhuman, unsafe detention camps.
- Appalled by the proliferation of hate speech and normalisation of all forms of discrimination, racism and xenophobia within societies, fuelled by the disinformation and political manipulation of issues around migration and refugees.
- Recognising that the denial of asylum seekers' rights, and more generally the rights of migrant workers, only benefits unscrupulous employers, enables the abuse of all workers' rights, and drives division among workers, as well as the lowering of conditions and pay for all workers.

The Network hereby demand that governments:

- Ratify and uphold relevant international and regional Conventions and Protocols, the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families of 1990; and ILO Convention 143 on Migrant Workers; ILO Convention 97 on Migration for Employment and the Council of Europe's Convention 144 on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level.
- Provide legal protection to refugees and asylum-seekers and ensure that asylum-seekers or refugees are not returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom.
- Significantly increase safe and regular channels for asylum seekers, including the putting in place of humanitarian corridors for asylum seekers.
- End the criminalisation of solidarity and assistance to migrants and refugees.
- Reduce the risk of irregular border crossings by facilitating the movement of persons and reject any form of subcontracting of visa application processes to private agencies.
- Grant asylum-seekers the right to work in all member states and assure that employers collectively bargain with trade unions to ensure all asylum seekers receive decent treatment.
- Separate employment rights and immigration status to ensure all undocumented workers can claim their human rights to health care and social security, and employment and trade union rights.
- Multiply and simplify pathways to regularisation in order to fight against forced labour and social exclusion, whilst reducing the effects of "social dumping".
- Cooperate with the social partners to fight the structural causes of forced migration between countries.

- Invest in green jobs and cooperate with the social partners to ensure these are decent jobs that pay living wages.
- Ensure adequate funding for public services and health and social care.
- Re-establish good governance as a pillar of international cooperation and as a main tool for addressing the underlying causes of migration.
- Promote the Fair Recruitment and Decent Work for All agenda by putting social dialogue at the heart of the development and monitoring of migration policies.

The ITUC networks are committed to supporting all union activities aimed at organising asylum seekers and migrants, regardless of status, in collaboration with key actors in civil society, based on strategic partnerships and the coming together of the movements.

16 November 2020