



STATEMENT FROM THE MALAWI CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (MCTU) REGARDING AN OPEN LETTER AUTHORED BY RAPHAEL SANDRAM, THE GENERAL SECRETARY FOR TOBACCO AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION, DATED 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2017 TO ILO GOVERNING BODY

The Malawi Congress of Trade Unions wishes to distance itself from the contents of the letter circulated by MCTU's affiliate, Tobacco & Allied Workers Union of Malawi (TOAWUM), addressing members of the ILO Governing Body, in which the letter states that TOAWUM demands that ILO stops its cooperation with the tobacco industry and the letter is urging all ILO member states of the Governing Body to stand with TOAWUM against ILO instituting cooperation and Public Private Partnerships with the tobacco industry at the upcoming 331st session of the Governing Body.

Some of the points raised in the letter to justify the calls for ILO not to preserve the Public Private Partnership with the tobacco industry are as follows:-

1. TOAWUM Members have seen little or no benefits from social responsibility projects administered by the Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco Growing Foundation (ECLT).
2. Poverty is exacerbated by contracting schemes developed by companies funding some projects for ECLT.
3. Tobacco companies in Malawi exacerbate the injustices that exist in the tobacco value chain by denying TOAWUM right to organize and enter into collective bargaining agreements.
4. It is inappropriate for TOAWUM to accept tobacco industry money and TOAWUM will not engage in any corporate charity schemes.
5. The structure of the Public Private Partnership with the tobacco industry by definition almost excludes the participation of the organization representing the workers on the ground making it inappropriate model to fund ILO programs.

Malawi Congress of Trade Unions wishes to inform all members of the ILO Governing Body that MCTU is the only legitimate National Labour Centre in Malawi and that there is no other splinter trade union centre in the country. As such, MCTU remains the legitimate body to represent all its affiliates one of which is TOAWUM, on all international, continental, regional and national labour issues.

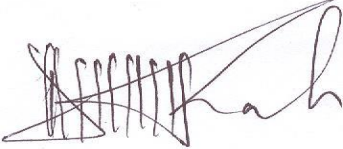
Malawi Congress of Trade Unions also wishes to bring to the attention of ILO members of the Governing Body that the tripartite forum in Malawi is working well and smoothly.

At no point had any of the members of the tripartite forum raised a concern over this matter and it was therefore heart breaking for Government, Employers` and Workers` Bodies to get such a sensitive issue from the international domain. Malawi Congress of Trade Unions wishes to reiterate that Malawi is an Agri-based country whose major forex earner is tobacco. For this reason, Malawi needs to handle this matter with sober mind as any attempt to threaten the Public Private Partnership existence would yield negative consequences on the economy of the country as well as the jobs of the many people TOAWUM purports to represent.

Malawi Congress of Trade Unions also wishes to rebuke the manner TOAWUM has raised the issue as it puts to a disrepute the spirit of tripartism in Malawi which at the mean time is effective in its operations.

For this reason, Malawi Congress of Trade Unions is calling upon all members of the ILO Governing Body to totally ignore and disregard the letter and its contents as it does not reflect a true position of Malawi at a tripartite forum. If TOAWUM has a problem with the tobacco industry in Malawi, as the letter seems to insinuate, then TOAWUM is advised to use the appropriate local channels in submitting its grievances other than using the international domain. The ILO Governing Body and all international partners are hereby being informed that Malawi, as agreed by the tripartite forum, shall shoot down any efforts from which ever angle, of trying to strangle the preservation of Public Private Partnership between ILO and the Tobacco Industry during the 331st session of the ILO Governing Body.

Signed on behalf of Malawi Congress of Trade Unions.



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SECRETARY GENERAL

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