



**PRESS STATEMENT BY  
H.E. MINATA SAMATE CESSOUMA, COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH,  
HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (HHS)  
ON  
WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR  
12 JUNE 2024**

**Theme: "Let's Act on Our Commitments: End Child Labour!"**

In commemoration of the International World Day Against Child Labour, the African Union (AU) reasserts its steadfast dedication to eliminating child labour and eliminating forced labour, human trafficking, and modern slavery throughout the continent in line with this year's theme; **"Let's Act on Our Commitments: End Child Labour!"**. This theme underscores the imperative call for collective action to honour our pledges and ensure a future liberated from the exploitation of children.

Child labour is a violation of children's rights stemming from poverty and socio-economic vulnerabilities, inadequacy of social safety nets, poor access to social protection and social services, as well as conflict and disruptions linked to climate change. It persists as a pressing concern in Africa, with millions of children trapped in activities that rob them of their childhood, educational and vocational opportunities, potential to grow as well as opportunity to play and rest

We reaffirm our commitment to the principles enshrined in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which calls for the protection of children from all forms of economic exploitation and performance of any work likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development as well as in the AU Ten-Year Action Plan on Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Africa (2020-2030) which aims to assist member states to scale up their efforts in the elimination of these forms of exploitation in children.

The AU is intensifying efforts to protect vulnerable children by addressing child labor and migration through a comprehensive Continental Response. This includes establishing programs to enhance knowledge, policy, capacity building, and partnerships in Africa. Additionally, the AU launched a Consortium on children on the move and child labor, involving key stakeholders such as ACERWC, IOM, ILO, and UNICEF.

Over the past decades, the African Union has achieved substantial progress in combatting child labour through targeted interventions and collaborative endeavors. These include championing National Action Plans (NAPs) on child labour, capacity-building programs and to educate communities about children's rights, and the perils of child labour. Furthermore, the African Union has fostered partnerships to address child labour comprehensively. Moving forward, the AU pledges to strengthen legal frameworks with member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), ensuring unfettered access to quality education for all children, devise tailored programs for high-risk sectors, and enhance monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for accountability.

As we commemorate the World Day Against Child Labour, the AU wishes to emphasize that the elimination of child labour is everyone's business, and requires the commitment of member states, RECs, workers' and employers' organizations as well as international partners. The AU reiterates its commitment to providing continuous leadership, guidance and frameworks for enhancing strategic continental coherence, collaboration and coordination in support of the agenda to eliminate child labour in Africa.

Together, we can forge a future and realize the "Africa We Want" wherein every child is liberated from exploitation, afforded the opportunity to flourish, and enjoy their childhood. Let us be remembered that the well-being and prospects of our children hinge upon the actions we undertake today. Children are our future and our hope for a stable, peaceful and prosperous Africa. – END-