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LABOUR RIGHTS

Introduction

This report considers the National Labour Rights of Ghana (Unemployment).

1. The information presented in this submission is based on interviews conducted by the above mentioned network of CSOs. Fact finding researches were embarked upon in consultation with The Trades Union Congress (Ghana), the media (who in executing their mandates as “watch dogs” brought to fore an accurate and tangible state of unemployment rates and its effect on indigenes (the youth)), as well as locally based civil society groups living and working in various communities. The information was further discussed at a pre-UPR submission workshop organised by Ghana Human Rights NGOs Forum (POS Foundation-Secretariat), KASA Initiative and UPR-Info Africa Office, Kenya on 21st and 22nd March, 2017 which was attended by more than 70 civil society organizations in Accra, and validated by same on 27th March, 2017. The submission subsequently highlights specific developments and follow-up measures by Ghana in relation to the summary prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution (16/21A/HRC/WG.6/14/GHA/3).

Unemployment:

2. The greatest challenge facing the youth in Ghana has been the lack of employment opportunities. In the last three decades, government has often focused its attention on the stabilization of the economy and in particular the achievement of single digit inflation rather than employment. This policy direction has often been reflected in budget statements which usually has very little to say about how government will create or help create employment on the scale required for a significant poverty reduction.

3. Data from the Ghana Investment Promotion Council (GIPC) show that in the last quarter of 2012, 34 out of the 94 newly-registered projects were in the services sector and 20 projects were in the trade sector. Only 13 projects were registered in building/construction while 12 projects were registered in manufacturing. This has been the pattern over the last decade, there has been no direct investment into sectors and areas that will help create jobs and add value to the country's natural resources

4. Like previous post-election year budgets, Ghana started the year 2013 with another round of austerity and fiscal consolidation with single digit inflation as the main policy objective. Unproductive spending which has become a feature of economic management every election year has led to what analysts have termed unsustainable deficit.

5. After the 2016 elections, the NPP Government presented its first Budget Statement and Economic Policies to Parliament on March 2, 2017. A careful reading of the budget indicates that new government recognizes the employment challenge as such and has a clear intention to address it. Government has promised to initiate special programmes such as the one-district-one-factory, one-village-one-dam, small business development, planting for food and jobs, national entrepreneurship and innovation programme, one-million-dollar-one-constituency, among other initiatives aimed at creating jobs for Ghanaians. Government has also promised to undertake employment audit of government-funded projects

6. According to the TUC, the successful implementation of these initiatives will go a long way to alleviate the employment challenge, however, the TUC observes with concern that there is a need for clear targets for employment creation to serve as a guide for assessing performance, sector by sector, region by region and district by district. Since women and the youth have suffered discrimination in terms of decent jobs, it will be important to assess Ghana's performance in terms of the proportion of new jobs that benefit women and young people directly.

7. The 2017 budget emphasized on growth and jobs and clearly reveals that government has set clear targets to measure growth within a year. Regrettably, there is no such target for job creation.

Obligations:

1. International Labour Organisation (ILO)¹

Recommendations:

We recommend that state party should:

1. Government must conduct in the nearest possible time, a comprehensive survey highlighting the high employment rate in Ghana and implement effective measures solve the problem.
2. Set clear employment targets for each region and district.
3. Review the Labour Act of which has been active for over 10 years without review.
4. Ratification of remaining 11 out of 51 International Labour Organization Conventions.

¹ http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11200:0::NO::P11200_COUNTRY_ID:103231