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ESSAYS

by Anna Baldinetti and Laura Morreale

# The International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU): Pan-Arabism, Labour Diplomacy, and the Maghreb Countries, 1956–1962*

## Abstract

This article explores the early history of the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU), which was the first pan-Arab labour organisation. Founded in 1956 on the initiative of trade union leaders from Egypt, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, the ICATU became an instrument of the Nasserist regime to spread pan-Arabism into North Africa and the Arab Middle East. After describing the birth and early activities of the ICATU, the article examines the relationship between the confederation and trade unions in the Maghreb countries — Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. Analysing attempts by the ICATU to expand, the study covers the period from its foundation to Algerian independence in 1962. The paper discusses how the spread of pan-Arab trade union internationalism in the Maghreb countries competed with pre-existing patterns of transnational solidarity, in particular the idea of Maghreb trade union unity and allegiance with international union confederations shaped by Cold War polarisation.

## Keywords

ICATU; Pan-Arabism; Trade Unionism; Maghreb; Nasser

* Both authors contributed equally to all the sections.

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## Introduction

Academic interest in international and transnational solidarity networks in the Global South has recently increased. In the 1950s, many African and Asian countries remained aloof from the alliances of the Cold War (Lüthi 2020). The Bandung conference of 1955 enhanced new networks for political and cultural cooperation (Finnane and McDougall 2010). At the same time, African and Asian solidarity movements proved capable of challenging the polarisation of the Cold War and boosting the decolonisation process (Lee 2010).

Exploring these dynamics, scholars have recently paid new attention to the establishment of transnational trajectories of labour cooperation in colonised and formerly colonised countries. The role of trade unions has been acknowledged "not only in organizing labour but in connecting local unions with regional and global ones" (Stolte 2019: 331). In Africa, trade unions cultivated strong ties with nationalist movements and became important actors in the fight for political independence (Freund 2019; Meynaud and Salah-Bey 1967). Moreover, the emergence of African labour diplomacy led to the creation of several pan-African umbrella confederations. Scholarly interest has focused on the history of pan-African trade unionism and its interplay with the Afro-Asian solidarity movement and the Cold War politics of trade union confederations (Agyeman 2003; Bellucci 2020; Busch 1983: 83–100). Conversely, the articulation of networks of labour cooperation in the Arab region has received little attention. Studies on Arab trade unions have privileged a nation-based approach, focusing on the institutional history of labour organisations rather than their transnational relations (Ayache 1993; Beinin and Lockman 1998; Bouchama 2014; Bou Khater 2022; Kraïem 1980).

This article addresses this gap in the literature by investigating the foundation and early activities of *al-Ittihad al-duwali li-niqabat al-ʿummal al-ʿarab* (the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, ICATU). Established in 1956 to unite Arab trade unions under the common banner of pan-Arabism, the ICATU provided a platform for trade union cooperation in the region. However, its history has received very little attention, with the only exception being Willard A. Beling's book *Pan-Arabism and Labor* (1961), and a few mentions in works in the Arabic language (al-Hani 2015; Bouyahiya 1991; 2002).

The first section of this article discusses the origins of the ICATU in the wider regional context influenced by the leadership of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser.[1] The second section delves into the growth of the ICATU and highlights its connections with the national trade union confederations in the

Maghreb countries. Studying the relations between trade unions in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya and the ICATU provides new insights into regional labour networks and national divergences towards pan-Arabism. Placing the history of the ICATU within the evolving Cold War order, the article highlights the attempt to build a unified front in the name of the unity of Arab peoples, merging the concept of the Arab nation with the class dimension. However, this model struggled to affirm its legitimacy in the Arab world, as evidenced by ICATU's relations with trade unions in the Maghreb countries, which were initially sceptical about joining the confederation. The article spans from the establishment of the ICATU in 1956 until Algerian independence in 1962, which constitutes the embryonic phase in relations between the ICATU and the Maghreb unions.

The research draws on two main sets of primary sources. Official publications produced by the ICATU allow retracing the early activities of the ICATU, its trajectories, and the image that it sought to present at the international level. The second group of sources includes material gathered from the archives of international trade union confederations.[2] These sources provide information on how the ICATU was perceived by other union organisations, which tended to look at the labour movements in the Arab region through the lens of the Cold War.

## The Origins of Pan-Arab Trade Unionism

The creation of the ICATU was the result of dynamics in the Arab region, where pan-Arabism, international trade union politics, and Afro-Asian solidarity were expanding. Pan-Arabism evolved as a political ideology "constitutive of both a discourse and a practice, seeking to unite Arabs across the boundaries of the different Arab states" (Mohamedou 2018: 168). The idea of nationalism based on Arab identity initially developed in the late 19th century in the Mashreq as a regional ideology opposed to Ottoman nationalism (Dawn 1991). Originally, pan-Arabism did not include Egypt and the Maghreb, which only started to be considered part of the Arab world in the 1920s (Tibi 1997: 210–11).

Egypt was actively involved in pan-Arabism starting from the late 1930s, when a group of Egyptian intellectuals conceptualised the "total realization of Arab unity" in the form of a "large and comprehensive Arab state" (Gershoni 1981: 72). Moreover, they envisioned a special role for Egypt as an "enthroned" and "chosen" leader "with a sublime mission for the Arab nation" (*ibid.*: 74).

From the 1940s onwards, the spread of pan-Arabism went hand in hand with intensified cooperation at the government level, especially among Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen (Dawisha 2016: 122). The establishment of the Arab League in 1945 further enhanced a sense of solidarity and constituted a concrete step towards developing Arab nationalism in an institutionalised framework (Gomaa 1977).

Mirroring these trends, the importance of fostering unity and coordination at the regional level became a prominent dimension of Arab trade unionism. Interestingly, the first attested call for the establishment of a pan-Arab trade union came from the Palestinian labour movement during a national conference held in Haifa in June 1946. The positive reaction that followed this proposal led Palestinian trade union leaders to send delegations to Syria and Lebanon to further discuss the idea of a pan-Arab union organisation (al-Hani 2015: 125–28).

The propagation of a shared idea of Arab labour solidarity must also be understood in the context of a polarised Cold War scenario in which communist and anti-communist organisations competed for the membership of trade unions in newly independent countries. Two main confederations, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), dominated trade union internationalism at the time. The foundation of the WFTU in 1945 was aimed to unite communist and non-communist trade unions "in the hope that the wartime collaboration that had spanned the ideological divide would be maintained" (Carew 2000a: 168). However, the WFTU soon became a Cold War battleground for its affiliated unions. The formation of the ICFTU in 1949 represented an effort by anti-communist trade unions to provide an attractive alternative to the WFTU (Carew 2000b: 200–34).

Going beyond the WFTU-ICFTU dichotomy, several Arab trade union leaders started to promote the idea of a pan-Arab confederation that could strengthen regional cooperation. A decisive step forward came from the Egyptians Muhammad Ibrahim Zayn al-Din, president of the union bringing together mechanics and motor drivers, and Fathi Kamil, president of the union representing employees of the Eastern Tobacco Company, who later became the first General Secretary of the ICATU.[3] Their participation as observers in the founding conference of the ICFTU prompted them to engage in discussions on the establishment of an Arab labour organisation (al-Hani 2015: 128–31). Apart from the Egyptian representatives, the only Arab unions present at the ICFTU

conference were the Lebanese Labour League (LLL), which joined the confederation on that same occasion (Stauffer 1952: 84–85), and the Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT), which participated as an observer (al-Hani 2015: 129–30). On this occasion, the Egyptian delegates realised that Arab workers had limited opportunities to achieve their aims in the international competition between communist and anti-communist unions. The ICFTU and the WFTU were believed to insufficiently address the issues of anti-colonial struggle and the economic dependence of newly independent nations on their former colonies. Therefore, the Egyptian unionists began to consider establishing a pan-Arab trade union platform to collaborate on matters of shared interest (al-Hani 2015: 130–31). This would have enabled Arab unions to exert a more significant influence in promoting particular regional issues that were arising at that time, especially the Palestinian question. Subsequently, Egyptian trade union leaders addressed the Arab League, the Department of Social Affairs of which supported unification of labour legislation across the Arab region (Beling 1961: 18). Their official visit to the League in the early 1950s was intended to help the pan-Arab trade union movement flourish. However, League representatives were doubtful about establishing a pan-Arab union due to the lack of trade union rights in many Arab countries (al-Hani 2015: 132).

At the time, Arab trade unions struggled with a lack of regional cohesion, which further hindered the prospects of forming a unified Arab labour movement. Such differences were strictly related to the bipolar order and the influence exerted in the region by the communist and anti-communist trade union confederations. The 1950s were indeed marked by the evolution of the rivalry between the WFTU and the ICFTU, which both aimed to attract African and Asian trade unions into their spheres of influence. The definition of the ICFTU's diplomatic aims in Africa started in 1951 when a delegation of representatives from the ICFTU and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) went on a mission to North, West, and East Africa (Carew 2000b: 226). Trade unions in the Maghreb affiliated with the ICFTU due to its support for the anticolonial struggle, as opposed to the WFTU that supported the local branch of the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), the French communist trade union. Although the UGTT had initially joined the WFTU in 1946, it withdrew from the confederation in 1951 due to a conflict between its General Secretary, Farhat Hached, and the WFTU leadership (Beling 1964: 561). As Anthony Carew showed, the ICFTU credited Tunisian trade unionists with playing a vital role as its agents throughout North Africa. At the time, Hached

was one of the two African delegates on the ICFTU Executive Board (Carew 2000b: 227). In 1951, the newly born Federation of Libyan Workers' Unions (FLWU), which federated twenty-four Tripolitanian unions, also joined the ICFTU (Baldinetti 2023: 214, 218). The Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT) sought ICFTU membership in 1955, while the Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens (UGTA) affiliated in 1956, at the time of its own foundation (Beling 1961: 74–75). In the Mashreq, the ICFTU had far less success. It was only joined by the above-mentioned LLL, which included workers from the Port of Beirut and the oil industry in the city of Tripoli (Stauffer 1952: 84–85).

In contrast, the WFTU had not identified African and Asian trade unions as a primary sphere of interest, and it only acted on the two continents after 1949 to counteract the ICFTU anti-communist agenda. As George E. Lichtblau (1962: 382) argued, the WFTU's "main preoccupation until 1953 remained with Europe, the center of the cold war." As a result, its presence among Arab trade unions was less widespread than that of the ICFTU. Although not an official member, the main bastion of the WFTU in the region was the Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation, which had close relations with the Sudanese Communist Party. Moreover, the Federation of Trade Unions of Workers and Employees in Lebanon joined the WFTU despite being an illegal organisation in its own country (Beling 1961: 87–88; Bou Khater 2022: 32).

Against this background of fragmentation at the international level, Gamal Abdel Nasser's rise to power in Egypt after the Free Officers coup of 1952 was a significant shift for the achievement of regional unity among Arab labour organisations. Egypt became the centre of pan-Arabism, with Nasser establishing himself as a revolutionary anticolonial leader. He progressively gained control over the Arab League, which became a real "vehicle for Nasser's influence in the Middle East" (Berger 2004: 17).

The project of a transnational pan-Arab labour organisation was deeply influenced by the new role assumed by trade unions in Nasser's Egypt. The new government introduced a series of laws to reshape Egypt's trade union movement by reorganising workers' associations "along corporatist lines" (Bianchi 1986: 430). As part of this process, a Permanent Conference of Egyptian Trade Unions (PCETU) was founded in 1955 "as a forum for a selected group of trade union leaders to conduct a dialogue with the Egyptian regime" (Beinin 1989: 75). Although workers generally improved their conditions, trade unions sacrificed autonomy and independence for greater involvement in public institutions. Trade union leaders, frequently part of the state machinery and closely

associated with the economic interests of the regime, tended to minimise labour-capital conflict while openly supporting Nasser's ambitions (Beinin 1989: 71–90). Kamil himself was engaged in "nonpolitical business unionism" and considered trade unionism "as one of the manifestations of Egyptian national revival" (Beinin and Lockman 1988: 307).

Co-opted by the regime and embracing Nasser's pan-Arab ideology, Egyptian trade union leaders resumed the project of a unified trade union organisation. The idea of a pan-Arab union went far beyond unification of the Arab labour movement, instead being aimed at consolidating Nasser's credentials as a pan-Arab leader. In this framework, Nasser sought the establishment of a pan-Arab labour organisation as an instrument for "developing mass support throughout the Arab world" (Beling 1961: 19). Such support was considered essential for the political unification of the Arab countries, which notably reached its peak in 1958 with the merging of Syria and Egypt in the United Arab Republic (UAR) (Podeh 1999).

## Taking the First Steps: The Aims and Actions of the ICATU

In 1955, the ICFTU tried to include in its ranks the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU). At the time, the GFJTU had a strong Palestinian component, which turned the union into a popular anticolonial force.[4] Opposing this attempt, on 10 March 1955 the GFJTU issued a new call for the establishment of an international confederation of Arab unions (al-Mahdi 1958: 11). After a preliminary meeting between Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian trade union leaders, it was decided to prepare a draft constitution and launch a founding conference (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 10).

The founding conference of the ICATU was held in Damascus on 24 March 1956. Seven trade unions from five countries signed the founding statute of the new confederation. Egypt was represented by the PCETU, which one year later became the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF). Syria's representatives were the General Federation of Trade Unions in Syria and the Progressive Federation of Trade Unions in Damascus, which merged into a single national federation shortly afterwards (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 11). Lebanon was represented by two trade unions, the League of Trade Unions of Workers and Employees in North Lebanon and the Federation of Independent Trade Unions in the Lebanese Republic.[5] The above-mentioned GFJTU represented workers from Jordan and Palestine. The only Maghreb organisation among the founding members was the Libyan General Workers Union (LGWU), which

was established in May 1952. Although ICATU documentation identifies the LGWU as a representative of Tripolitania (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 11), it is important to note that the LGWU aimed to represent all Libyan workers at that time. Indeed, the two LGWU representatives at the ICATU founding conference came from both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (Baldinetti 2023: 219).

The founding statute of the ICATU explicitly articulated its pan-Arab principles. The preamble declared that Arab workers represented "an indivisible unit" the gathering of whom in a confederation was necessary to obtain socio-economic and political rights (al-Mahdi 1958: 14). Article 7 claimed that the new confederation represented "all national federations and trade union organisations of the Arab homeland […] whether currently existing or to be established in the future" (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 11). Clearly, the statute appropriated phrasing from Nasser's rhetoric. In fact, the expression "Arab homeland" had been a recurring theme in Nasser's speeches since 1954 (Jankowski 2002: 35).

The ICATU operated through three institutions: a congress, which according to the statute was supposed to be convened on an annual basis but in fact was held irregularly; a general secretariat, based in Cairo, which supervised day-to-day activities and represented the ICATU in meetings with other trade unions; and a central council, which had the tasks of convening the congress, proposing resolutions, and monitoring the activity of the general secretariat. The first General Secretary was Kamil, who was in charge until 1959. He was followed by Asad Rajiʿ, President of the petroleum workers' union in Egypt. The President of the central council was Subhi Khatib, formerly President of Syria's union of hosiery workers. Four vice-presidents were nominated: Sawi Ahmad Sawi (Egypt), Zaki Shaikh Yasin (Jordan), Muhammad ʿAli Fakhru (Lebanon), and Salim Shita, the LGWU General Secretary.[6] The other Libyan representative, Rejib Nayum, a unionist from Cyrenaica, was elected Assistant General Secretary (Beling 1961: 50). Shita initially assumed an essential role in the process of internationalising the ICATU beyond the Arab world. A few months after its formation, the ICATU through Shita endeavoured to establish an affiliation with the ICFTU. Although the affiliation was refused, the ICATU was elevated to observer status (Karfaʿ 2000: 294). In 1959, Shita replaced Khatib as President of the confederation (Beling 1961: 16).

In a resolution adopted by its first Congress,[7] the ICATU accused Israel of hindering "Arab progress and unity." Moreover, it hailed the struggle of the "people in the Arab Maghrib" and asked Arab governments to provide Algeria

with financial and military assistance. The ICATU also praised a 1955 joint declaration signed by Nasser, King Saud of Saudi Arabia, and Syrian President Shukri al-Quwatli, which pledged fealty to the principle of "positive neutrality" and condemned the Baghdad Pact.[8] The condemnation of foreign military presence in the region clearly entrenched the dimension of Arab unity.

The ICATU amplified Nasser's foreign policy with the aim of influencing other Arab countries through their trade union movements. In the aftermath of the Congress, in an interview with ʿAbd al-ʿAlim al-Mahdi for the Egyptian newspaper *al-Ahram,* Kamil emphasised the importance of Egypt in the ICATU (al-Mahdi 1958: 15–16). Al-Mahdi, an Egyptian journalist and trade unionist[9] authored a pamphlet entitled *Hadha huwa: al-Ittihad al-duwali li-niqabat al-ʿummal al-ʿarab* (This is the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions). The pamphlet provided a comprehensive account of the various cultural activities undertaken by the ICATU to strengthen the sense of belonging to the confederation and reach a wider audience. For instance, the ICATU held a competition to select a poem for its official anthem. The anthem, written by Mahmud ʿAbd al-Hayy and composed by the Egyptian composer Muhammad Sharif, articulated the sentiments of Arab nationalism and working-class pride (al-Mahdi 1958: 69). It was later broadcast by *Sawt al-ʿArab* (Voice of the Arabs), Egypt's influential radio created in 1953 that became the most prominent "arrow in the new regime's propaganda quiver" (Jankowski 2002: 55). Moreover, soon after its founding, the ICATU launched the publication of its official periodical in Arabic, *al-ʿUmmal al-ʿarab*, which reported the positions and activities of the confederation (al-Mahdi 1958: 67).[10]

In the years following the first congress, the ICATU articulated its agenda in three main fields. The first concerned economic, social, and labour issues such as harmonisation of labour legislation in different Arab countries, the fight against unemployment and exploitation of economic resources for the benefit of Arab people. The second field was more explicitly political, calling for unification of the Arab homeland, support for self-determination and anticolonial struggles, and the defence of freedom of expression. Finally, the ICATU had a specific international agenda focused on cooperation with other trade unions in Africa and Asia (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 12–14).

The initiatives of the ICATU were therefore not strictly limited to labour issues but broadly concerned international political matters. In its vision, the struggle against colonial and neocolonial powers was the premise for improving the living and working conditions of the Arab masses. Accordingly, one

of the first acts of the ICATU central council was to approve a resolution calling for a general Arab strike against the British government's decision to hold an international conference in London on 16–23 August 1956 on Egypt's nationalisation of the Suez Canal (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 29; al-Mahdi 1958: 31). The resolution threatened boycotting European-owned oil facilities and destroying foreign military infrastructure in Arab countries that could be used against Egypt (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 29–30).

Boycotts were part of a wider framework of economic sanctions imposed by the Arab countries on Israel. In 1945, the Arab League had institutionalised an Arab boycott of Israel implemented through the League's Central Office for the Boycott of Israel, which mainly consisted of trade and financial sanctions, blacklists, a naval blockade, and oil embargoes (Sarna 1986: 7–9, 38–45). After the military aggression by the UK, France, and Israel against Egypt in November 1956, Arab states intensified their retaliatory measures. Oil pipelines were sabotaged in Syria, Jordan, and Kuwait, while Saudi Arabia drastically reduced its oil supply, and Qatar blocked local production for twenty-four hours. The boycott of pipelines and the interruption of oil production posed a major threat to the European economies, the demand for oil of which was supplied mostly by Arab states (Daoudi 2018: 17–25). The Arab League also intensified its boycott efforts, extending to other countries that openly supported Israel (Feiler 1998: 32–33).

In an agreement with the Egyptian government, the ICATU promoted a new wave of boycotts in 1960. Starting in March 1959, the Egyptian government enforced a ban on Israeli ships passing through the Suez Canal, violating a tacit 1957 agreement (Barak 2004: 444, 466). This decision also had a negative impact on US commercial interests. Protesting against this policy and the alleged "harassment and mistreatment of American seamen in Arab ports," the American Seafarers' International Union picketed the Egyptian ship Cleopatra on 13 April 1960 (Feiler 1998: 152). In response, on 30 April the ICATU launched a boycott campaign against US ships trading with Israel, which eventually led to the release of the Cleopatra (Dawidowicz 1961: 191).

The international interests of the ICATU were not limited to inter-Arab affairs but also extended to the broader perspective of the rising Afro-Asian movement. This movement, which originated in the Bandung Conference of 1955, championed the cause of decolonisation and challenged the Cold War order imposed by the US and the USSR. After the Suez crisis in 1956, which recognised Nasser as the moral winner against neocolonial aggression, the

Egyptian President gained a prominent position within the Afro-Asian movement (Lee 2010: 12). Cairo became the main hub of the Afro-Asian solidarity movement, and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) was founded there in December 1957 thanks to the economic support of the Egyptian government. The first Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference (AAPSC) took place in the Egyptian capital in December 1957 and January 1958 (Baldinetti and Biondi 2023: 896).

With its headquarters also based in Cairo, the ICATU was fully exposed to Afro-Asian political and cultural exchanges. Accordingly, it embraced the principles of Afro-Asian solidarity and pledged to develop the Arab trade union movement into a larger organisation encompassing African and Asian trade unions (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 23). A first attempt at encouraging the idea of an Afro-Asian trade union confederation was made by Anwar Salama, representative of the Egyptian Petroleum Workers Federation,[11] at the 1956 International Labour Organisation (ILO) annual conference.[12]

Between 1956 and 1959, the ICATU attended meetings with representatives of Asian trade union organisations from India, Indonesia, China, Japan, and Ceylon (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 23–25). In Africa, it sent observers to the African Regional Trade Union Conference sponsored by the ICFTU and, most notably, to the All-African Peoples' Conference (AAPC), both held in Accra in 1957 and 1958 respectively (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 25). The AAPC gathered pan-African nationalist parties and trade union leaders aiming to attract support for Ghanian President Kwame Nkrumah's pan-African foreign policy (Grilli 2018: 64). The participation by the ICATU in the AAPC was proof of the increased political collaboration between Nkrumah's Ghana and Nasser's UAR, which both endorsed pan-Africanism and "shared a similar vision of African politics" (Grilli 2018: 95).

In this context, the ICATU regarded the WFTU-ICFTU rivalry as a major obstacle to the creation of an Afro-Asian trade union confederation (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 37). In particular, it opposed the ICFTU's efforts to develop a pan-African union organisation under its auspices (Zeleza 1986: 70–72). On the other hand, the ICFTU was concerned about the expansion of the ICATU in Africa. At the fifth ICFTU congress held in Tunis in 1957, ICFTU General Secretary Jacobus H. Oldenbroek heavily criticised the ICATU for its marked anti-Israel position and for prioritising international political affairs over workers' rights.[13] As a response, members of the ICATU published a pamphlet entitled *Plots of the ICFTU against the African and Arab Workers*, accusing the

ICFTU of endorsing US imperialism in Africa.[14] This prompted the ICFTU to blame the ICATU for violating trade union solidarity values and to criticise its close relations with the WFTU.[15] Regarding this, the ICATU General Secretary pointed out that "the East-West divide does not serve the interests of Arab workers" and that the ICATU was opposed to any international influence in the form of "tutelage, directions or paternalistic so-called aid."[16]

## Looking Westwards: Trade Unions in the Maghreb Countries

One of the main areas of confrontation between the ICFTU and the ICATU was the affiliation of trade unions from the Maghreb countries. Indeed, they were of utmost significance to the ICATU given their contribution to both the anticolonial struggle and the development of a sense of regional unity (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 6). The ICATU therefore considered the Maghreb countries a strategic area for affiliations of local trade unions, as they "would represent a major step forward in both its Arab and African programs" (Beling 1961: 56). Nevertheless, the UGTA, the UMT, and the UGTT did not seek membership in the aftermath of the foundation of the ICATU. This hesitance originated chiefly from the robust connections between governing political elites and trade union leaders. Significant overlaps between union leadership and the executives of major nationalist parties evolved during the anticolonial movement. Consequently, trade unions predominantly emphasised the nationalist political agenda over pan-Arab ambitions and regarded the ICATU primarily as a conduit for Nasserist influence. As mentioned, the LGWU was the only Maghreb trade union that joined the ICATU as a founding member. Unlike the other countries in the region, Libya had already achieved independence in 1951. In Algeria, which was still embroiled in its liberation war, an independent confederation only saw the light in February 1956 with the establishment of the UGTA.[17] Morocco and Tunisia both attained independence around the same time as the ICATU founding conference, in March 1956. At the national level, the UGTA, the UMT, and the UGTT emerged as parts of liberation movements, and all affiliated with the ICFTU to find support for the anticolonial cause.

Moreover, the UGTA, the UMT, and most notably the UGTT were engaged in attempting to build a Maghreb trade union federation (Kraïem 1980: 33–42). A meeting in Brussels in July 1956 hosted by the ICFTU relaunched the idea of a united Maghreb trade union bringing together the leaders of the UGTT, UMT, and UGTA (Belaïd 1985: 262–63). Libyan trade unionists were excluded,

most probably due to their involvement in the ICATU, which was viewed as a divergence from the shared aim of a unified Maghreb union front (Baldinetti 2023: 220).

The previous attempts to form an inter-Maghreb union and the affiliation of the UMT, UGTT, and UGTA with the ICFTU posed a major challenge to the ICATU's aspirations in the area. The UGTT, which was the main promoter of the Maghreb front within the ICFTU, was particularly doubtful about a pan-Arab trade union organisation led by Egypt. Its General Secretary, Ahmed Ben Salah, explicitly stated that the political agenda of the ICATU was at odds with "the interests of the working classes in the region."[18] At that time, Tunisia faced criticism from Egypt for its compromising attitude to France during decolonisation and for its moderate orientation regarding the European powers (Masri 2018: 185). For his part, Habib Bourguiba, Prime Minister and later President of Tunisia, opposed Nasser and his pan-Arab ambitions, fearing that his influence could be a factor of instability for the success of Tunisian nationalism (Masri 2018: 203–5). Bourguiba's stance was also shaped by his rivalry with Salah Ben Youssef, General Secretary of the Neo-Destour party until 1955, who was greatly influenced by Nasserism and advocated for Tunisia to be aligned with the principles of pan-Arabism (Oualdi 2022: 136–41).

Mirroring the orientation of the government, the UGTT was wary of the Nasserist nature of the ICATU, in which anti-European and anti-American sentiments prevailed. The UGTT had attempted to dissuade the LGWU from participating in the ICATU preparatory works (Bouyahiya 1991: 37). This caused a rift between the LGWU and the UGTT, which had previously been one of the primary interlocutors of Libyan trade unionism (Baldinetti 2023: 218-220). For its part, the ICATU mistrusted the UGTT, most probably due to its close contacts with the ICFTU. At the first ICATU congress in 1956, representatives of the founding confederations were advised not to cooperate with Nouri Boudali,[19] co-founder of the UGTT with Hached and ICFTU special representative in the Middle East in 1954–56 (Bouyahiya 1991: 27).

Nevertheless, the ICATU was determined to establish ties with the Tunisian union in order to expand its Arab membership. For this reason, it sent Shita as one of its representatives to the sixth congress of the UGTT held in September 1956 (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 25). On the occasion, Shita emphasised the importance of uniting the labour forces in the Arab world and avoiding taking sides in ideological conflicts between the East and the West (Baldinetti 2023: 220; Bouyahiya 1991: 38). The sixth UGTT congress witnessed a split among

its members and the founding of a new confederation, the Union Tunisienne du Travail (UTT). The schism was encouraged by the Tunisian government, which envisaged the removal of Ben Salah as General Secretary for divergences on the country's economic policies (Moore 1967: 654–55; Temimi 2016: 67–70). The ICATU regarded positively the birth of the UTT, seen as a potential ally in a country where it had scarce appeal (Beling 1961: 56). However, the union was dissolved in less than a year after its leaders secured some places at the UGTT bureau, and Ben Salah was substituted by Ahmad Tlili (Moore 1967: 655).

Similarly to the Tunisian government, Morocco aimed to maintain good relations with the US and the European powers, thus making the country less inclined to align with Egypt's revolutionary and neutralist positions. The tense relations between the Moroccan monarchy and Nasser delayed the adhesion of Morocco to the Arab League, which it only joined in 1958, and prevented any official visit by King Muhammad V to Cairo until 1960 (Stenner 2016: 173–74).

Despite strained relations between the Moroccan and Egyptian governments, the UMT was keen to have profitable diplomatic relations with the ICATU. At its national council held in Casablanca in 1956, the UMT dispatched a telegram to the ICATU expressing "active solidarity with the Egyptian people in their struggle against imperialist aims."[20] In 1957, Kamil took part in the UMT May Day festivities to enhance cooperation between the two organisations (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 68). In November 1957, another ICATU delegation visited the UMT headquarters in Casablanca. The result of the visit was a unified statement that declared their willingness to foster worker solidarity and strengthen regional unity against colonialism.[21]

In February 1958, the UMT periodical *al-Tali'a*[22] praised Arab workers for "forming the ICATU as a unified centre to gather forces and coordinate their fight."[23] Another meeting held in Cairo in April 1959 resulted in a joint statement signed by Kamil and the UMT General Secretary Mahjoub Ben Seddik. Labour questions were linked with principles of anticolonial solidarity, not only among Arab countries but also with the nascent pan-African labour movement (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 68–70). Indeed, it was in December 1958, on the occasion of the AAPC, that Nkrumah announced the creation of a pan-African trade union centre, the All-African Trade Union Federation (AATUF) (Waters 2020: 78).

The potential impact of these developments alarmed the ICFTU, which inquired about the nature of the UMT's cooperation with the ICATU. Perhaps

conveniently, the UMT recognised that the ICATU was merely "an instrument of Nasser" and provided an assurance that their relationship with it was aimed to "influence some of its leaders" in order to counterbalance Egypt's undisputed control of the organisation.[24] In fact, in April 1959, the UMT participated for the first time as an observer at the second congress of the ICATU.[25]

The enhanced cooperation between the ICATU and the UMT was part of the latter's increased commitment at the Arab and African levels. In May 1961, the founding congress of the AATUF took place at the UMT headquarters in Casablanca, in which "some sponsors and particularly the Ghana Trades Union Congress engaged themselves in a hostile and scurrilous campaign directed at the ICFTU and its affiliates in Africa" (Agyeman 2003: 140). Indeed, the AATUF opposed ICFTU-WTFU interference in Africa's trade unionism, proclaimed its neutrality and rejected any form of colonialism, imperialism, or foreign interference (Zeleza 1986: 175). At the founding congress, Ben Seddik was appointed first President and the headquarters of the AATUF were established in Casablanca (Busch 1983: 95). Ben Seddik stressed that the creation of the AATUF was prompted by a need to protect African trade unions from foreign interference and to create a broad network of worker solidarity (1st All African Trade Union Conference 1961: 19–20). The AATUF project was also welcomed by the ICATU as an opportunity to foster cooperation with African trade unions.[26] However, Opoku Agyeman (2003) argued that "the relations between the Africans and the Arabs in the AATUF were not more than a marriage of convenience" (Agyeman 2003: 22), with Maghreb and Egyptian trade unions trying to use the AATUF as an asset to bolster their influence beyond the borders of the Arab world.

## Enhancing Solidarity: The Algerian Independence Cause

One of the ICATU's main strategies to strengthen its position in the Maghreb was to support the Algerian liberation struggle. In the late 1950s, anticolonial solidarity for Algeria gained momentum as a global cause. Algerian liberation resounded in a world that demanded freedom for all peoples, becoming part of a large network of anticolonial solidarity that bridged Algeria to Palestine and Vietnam, and encompassed Latin American and North American civil rights movements (Sajed 2023). Support for Algeria was pursued with wide cooperation between governments and non-state actors mobilising organisations of different types all over the world. Significantly, the Afro-Asian movement, including its women's branch (Baldinetti and Biondi 2023: 895-909), viewed

Algerian independence as a major identitarian cause (Abou-El-Fadl 2019; McGregor and Hearman 2017).

During the decolonisation war, Algeria became a "Cuba for Africa" (Byrne 2016: 73) attracting the support of leaders such as Nkrumah and Nasser (Brazzoduro 2020). The Egyptian President was indeed a staunch defender of the Algerian cause who supported the evolution of solidarity networks that prioritised complete decolonisation across the Arab region. As Fathi Al Dib (1985), an Egyptian official in charge of Arab Affairs during the Nasserist period, testified, engagement with the Algerian fight for liberation was one of the most important instruments of influence in Africa for Egyptian foreign policy. Significantly, the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) chose to establish its operative headquarters in Cairo in 1957 (Al Dib 1985: 241–43).

On the trade union front, the UGTA worked intensively to promote Algerian independence (Von Bülow 2019: 463–66). For its part, the ICFTU aimed to keep the local trade union movement in the anti-communist field. According to Von Bülow, the rise of the ICATU was one of the main factors that led the ICFTU to admit the UGTA as an affiliated member (Von Bülow 2019: 466). This clearly posed a further challenge for the ICATU to be recognised as one of the main supporters of Algerian independence (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 17). In 1956, the ICATU expressed harsh disapproval of the French occupation of Algeria and asked the Arab governments to provide the Maghreb countries with "money and arms and to boycott France politically, economically and culturally."[27]

In October 1956, the kidnapping of FLN representatives and trade union leaders on a flight from Rabat to Tunis sparked outrage internationally. The ICATU reacted by calling for a general strike in the Arab countries. A few months later, in February 1957, it lodged a complaint against the French government with the Director General of the ILO, denouncing crimes of repression of trade union freedoms committed by the colonial authorities in Algeria (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 36).

After these first steps, the ICATU sought to establish direct contact with Algerian trade unionists. On the occasion of the above-mentioned first ICATU visit to Morocco in May 1957, the ICATU delegates met Algerian unionist Rashid ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, who was invited to Cairo in May and in August 1957 (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 20–22). Shortly afterwards, in March 1958, the ICATU General Secretary launched an appeal to "global trade unionists" to promote action demanding the end of the war and the liberation of Algeria.[28]

The ICATU initiative prompted other trade unions to organise awareness and fundraising campaigns in their countries to send aid to the Algerian resistance.

The most significant step was accomplished in September 1958, when the ICATU organised the founding conference of the International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the Algerian People and Workers, in cooperation with the WFTU and the UMT. The establishment of a global solidarity committee with Algeria had first been proposed at the fourth congress of the WFTU held in Leipzig in October 1957. The founding conference of the Committee for Solidarity was convened one year later, on 12–15 September 1958 in Cairo. With this initiative, the ICATU wished to put together the WFTU, the ICFTU, and independent trade unions from Asia and Africa to show coordinated worldwide mobilisation of labour organisations for the Algerian cause (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 37). Representatives of trade unions from South America and the Sino-Soviet bloc also took part in the event (Von Bülow 2019: 466).

However, the conference failed to gather the transnational support that its promoters had envisioned and eventually amplified the disagreement among the Maghreb trade unions. On the one hand, the ICFTU declined to send a representative due to the involvement of the WFTU in the initiative. The UGTT was absent, probably because of the damaged relations between the Tunisian and the Egyptian governments.[29] For his part, Shita was not invited to the conference, arguably due to the foreign policy of the Libyan government that the Egyptians perceived as too pro-Western. The prominent role played by the UMT in organising the conference irritated the leader of the LGWU and deepened the divisions among the Maghreb unions.[30]

Moreover, tension arose between the ICATU and the WFTU during the meeting in Cairo. The WFTU opposed a proposal by the Arab representatives to create a permanent secretariat for the Committee for Solidarity in Cairo. A compromise was reached establishing a temporary secretariat consisting of a delegate from the ICATU, one from the WFTU and one from the UMT.[31] Its primary objective was to rally trade union organisations to support Algeria by offering material aid and raising awareness of the Algerian cause particularly in the UN and the ILO.[32] The ICATU suggested establishing an international mission under the auspices of the ILO to inquire into the repression of trade union liberties in Algeria (al-Ittihad al-duwali 1959: 54). The Committee for Solidarity continued to operate until the advent of Algerian independence. In the following years, three conventions were hosted in Havana, Varna, and Casablanca (Von Bülow 2019: 466).

In addition to demonstrating solidarity at the international level, the ICATU also supported the liberation of Algeria internally. At its second congress, the ICATU adopted a resolution encouraging the member organisations to support the struggle of the FLN. Moreover, the congress urged the Arab trade unions to arrange an 'Algerian Week' in accordance with suggestions made by the above-mentioned AAPSC.[33]

One of the latest expressions of international solidarity with Algeria was the signing of a 'Manifesto of Solidarity between Arab Workers' at the 44th ILO conference in 1960. The text, signed by the ICATU General Secretary Rajiʿ and representatives of the UMT, UGTT, UGTA, LGWU, and trade unions from the UAR and Iraq, recognised the commitment of the signatories to support each other while considering "any attack on one of the organisations as being directed against the whole Arab labour movement."[34] Although not exclusively referring to the Algerian cause, the agreement represented a concrete step towards the aim of bringing together member and non-member organisations. As such, it constituted the first act that gathered all Maghreb union confederations in a common claim sustaining shared principles in the name of the broader Arab labour movement.

Eventually, the increased influence of the ICATU contributed to the marginalisation of the unification perspective among Maghreb trade unions, encouraging the integration of intra-Maghreb relations in the broader Arab context. The last gathering of national trade union confederations from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya that referred to the Greater Arab Maghreb as a political project was the Maghreb trade union conference held in Sfax in 1961 (Tlili 2022; Zehani 2021).

Despite these developments, the ICATU continued to perceive the Maghreb governments as excessively pro-Western, which adversely affected its relationships with local trade unions. This is illustrated by its failure to support solidarity initiatives with Shita and other Libyan unionists who were detained in Libya following a general strike organised by the LGWU to achieve an increase in the minimum wage in September 1961. In contrast, the ICFTU took a proactive stance and dispatched a delegation led by Tlili, who was then General Secretary of the UGTT and who also served as the ICFTU vice-president. However, the delegation was denied entry into Libya.[35] In addition, the UMT attempted to send a delegate as well (Karfaʿ 2000: 175).

## Conclusion

This article has shed light on the early history of pan-Arab trade unionism represented by the ICATU and its attempts to establish a unified platform gathering all Arab trade unions. Although previous calls to establish a pan-Arab labour organisation dated back to the late 1940s, the birth of the ICATU in 1956 was only made possible after Nasser's arrival in power. The ICATU ensured active political support for Nasser's ambitions by promoting pan-Arab nationalism among Arab trade unions. The activities of the ICATU — boycotts, strikes, and propaganda — closely aligned with the positions and aims of the Egyptian government, making the ICATU an instrument of Nasser's regional hegemony project.

Emerging in the context of intensified cooperation between Afro-Asian countries, which had Cairo as its main solidarity hub, the ICATU also aimed to be the first nucleus of an enlarged network of Afro-Asian trade unions that challenged the Cold War dichotomy. The ICATU situated its support for anticolonial movements within its political and labour discourses, significantly influencing the alignment and dis-alignment of Arab trade unions with both communist and anti-communist international confederations.

The ICATU indeed promoted a neutralist position towards the Cold War rivalry at a time when the competition between the ICFTU and the WFTU was deeply affecting trade union transnational alliances. By supporting regional anti-imperialist politics, the ICATU clashed with the ICFTU on several occasions. At the same time, it collaborated with the WFTU on the Algerian cause, although this cooperation remained limited to specific initiatives and never developed into a structural alliance. Anti-imperialism and Arab regionalism were united by the ICATU in its refusal to align with the broader global alliances of the Cold War system and in an effort to establish a vision of regional cohesion founded on pan-Arab labour unity.

Nonetheless, the challenges faced by the ICATU betrayed the fragmentation of interests within the Arab world even at the height of pan-Arabism. The ICATU's efforts to expand in the Maghreb have amply demonstrated the fluctuating interactions among Arab trade unions and the true impact of Egypt, which extends beyond the official governmental narrative. The ICATU faced challenges in establishing itself in the Maghreb since the idea of a unified trade union clashed with regional interpretations of trade unionism and their association with pan-Arab ideology. Trade unions in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya were advancing their agendas in accordance with their distinct

national and transnational orientations on the ICATU. On the one hand, the LGWU, one of the founding members of the ICATU, aimed to play a role in connecting Maghreb trade unions with other organisations in the Arab Middle East. On the other hand, relations with the UMT, the UGTA, and the UGTT did not follow a consistent linear pattern. These trade unions believed that the project of a unified Arab front cooperating under the banner of anti-imperialism could ultimately have resulted in legitimising and reinforcing Nasser's interference in their domestic affairs. And while the strong influence of Nasser on the ICATU was the main reason for hesitation, already existing alliances with the ICFTU contributed to delaying the adhesion of Moroccan, Algerian, and Tunisian trade unions to the ICATU.

The ICATU supported solidarity with Algeria's anticolonial struggle as an element of potential cohesion. However, the establishment of a Committee for Solidarity with the Algerian People and Workers fuelled further divisions among the Maghreb trade unions. It was only with Algerian independence in 1962 that the ICATU strengthened its leverage in the Maghreb. Local trade unions shifted towards more favourable pan-Arab positions, but this did not translate into an alignment with Egyptian aims. The use of the ICFTU as a platform to advocate national liberation and trade union freedoms in the Maghreb countries, which had been particularly significant during the second half of the 1950s, progressively lost its relevance. The ICATU eventually managed to win the membership of the UGTA and the UMT in the mid-1960s. However, open friction between the UGTT and the ICATU persisted until the end of the decade, with the Tunisian union only formalising its affiliation in 1974.

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## Notes

1 - For transliterations of Arabic, this article generally follows the guidelines of the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies (IJMES). Arabic names that have a standardised spelling in English or French (such as Gamal Abdel Nasser and Farhat Hached) are kept as such.

2 - ICATU's publications were provided by the libraries of Cornell University and

Princeton University. Archival records were gathered from the University of Maryland Special Collections and University Archives (UMD) in College Park, the archives of the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL) in Rome, and the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam.

3 - Fathi Kamil grew up in a middle-class peasant family and worked as a government functionary at the Health Department before being employed at the Eastern Tobacco Company in Giza. There, he became the first president of the employees' union, which was established in 1943 as a local branch of the national Tobacco and Cigarette Workers' Union (Beinin and Lockman 1988: 240, 299, 306).

4 - The General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions was founded in 1954 on the initiative of six trade unions. Its membership rapidly expanded to twenty-five labour organisations from both Trans-Jordan and the West Bank, which was at the time claimed by the Hashemite kingdom as part of its national territory (al-Hourani 2001: 13).

5 - The League of Trade Unions of Workers and Employees in North Lebanon and the Federation of Independent Trade Unions in the Lebanese Republic were both established in 1954 as a result of splits from the Federation of United Trade Unions (Bou Khater 2022: 33–34).

6 - University of Maryland Special Collections and University Archives (hereafter UMD): AFL-CIO International Affairs Department records, International Labor Organizations 0077-LBR-RG18-007 (hereafter AFL-CIO), International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, 1952–1958, 1961, 1968 (hereafter ICATU) 20/12, Report sent by Moshe Bar-Tal, American representative of the Histradrut, to George T. Brown, Deputy of International Relations, AFL-CIO, Arab Federation of Trade Unions, First Executive Council, n.p., 28 May 1956.

7 - UMD: AFL-CIO, ICATU 20/12, Arab Federation of Trade Unions, First Executive Council, n.p., 28 May 1956.

8 - Signed in February 1955, the Baghdad Pact was a military alliance between Iraq, the UK, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey which notably fostered the regional profile of Iraq as a military power (Podeh 1995: 20).

9 - Sami M., *ʿAbd al-ʿAlim al-Mahdi iltahaqa bi-l-jarida baʿda thalatha ayyam min qiyam thawra yuliu wa-sharaka fi taʾsis Ittihad ʿummal Misr wa-Ittihad al-ʿummal al-ʿarab*, "al-Ahram", 6 December 2019, https://tinyurl.com/5cu382ef (last accessed on 10 July 2025).

10 - We were unable to identify any extant copies of the review, despite conducting research in international library catalogues.

11 - Anwar Salama became president of the ETUF in 1957, maintaining the office until 1962 when he was appointed Minister of Labour in Egypt (Bianchi 1986: 439).

12 - UMD: AFL-CIO, ICATU 20/12, Letter from Daniel Benedict, International Representative AFL-CIO, to Loyd A. Hasskins, General Secretary of the International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers, Washington, 10 August 1956.

13 - Archivio della Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, Rome (hereafter CGIL): Affari diversi, Conferenze, B186/7, ICFTU 5th World Congress, Bulletin quotidien n. 3, Séance de l'après-midi du 5 juillet, Tunis, 5 July 1957, p. 2.

14 - UMD: AFL-CIO ICATU 20/12, Letter from C. H. Millard, ICFTU Director, to Kamil, n.p., 29 April 1958.

15 - UMD: AFL-CIO, ICATU 20/12, Letter from C. H. Millard, ICFTU Director, to Kamil, n.p., 29 April 1958.

16 - UMD: AFL-CIO, ICATU 20/12, Letter from Kamil to Jacobus H. Oldenbroek, ICFTU General Secretary, n.p., 14 May 1958.

17 - Shortly after the establishment of the UGTA, another independent trade union led by Messali Hadj — the Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Algériens (USTA) — was founded. However, the USTA was marginalised by the FLN and by the increasing cooperation between the UGTA, the UGTT, and the UMT. Eventually, the USTA was dissolved only three years after its creation (Stora 1981).

18 - Letter sent by Ahmed Ben Salah to Oldenbroek, 9 August 1955, published in Bouyahiya (1991: 49–50, appendix 7).

19 - UMD: AFL-CIO ICATU 20/12, Letter from Bar-Tal to Brown, n.p., 28 May 1956.

20 - The National Archives of the UK (hereafter TNA): Foreign Office (hereafter FO) 371/119550, Letter from Mr. Launcelot Pyman, British Embassy in Rabat, to Selwyn Lloyd, Commander of the Order of the British Empire, Rabat, 31 August 1956.

21 - *Fathi Kamil al-katib al-ʿamm li-l-Ittihad al-duwali li-niqabat al-ʿummal al-ʿarab. Hadf kull mawatin ʿarabi: wihda al-ʿarab*, "al-Taliʿa", 15 November 1957, p. 1, 6; *Al-ʿUmmal al-ʿarab yajiduna sufufahum li-masliha al-qadaya al-ʿarabiyya*, "al-Taliʿa", 20 December 1957, p. 7.

22 - *Al-Taliʿa* was a periodical edited by members of the UMT national council. It was launched on 1 May 1956 as a weekly. Starting from 1959, the UMT published a French version of the periodical, the bi-weekly *L'Avant-Garde*, which, however, was not a direct translation of *Al-Taliʿa*.

23 - *Al-Shaghalun fi al-watan al-ʿarabi*, "al-Taliʿa", 21 February 1958, p. 6.

24 - International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam (hereafter IISH): ICFTU Archives (hereafter ICFTU), Morocco 4121b, Memorandum on ICFTU Mission to North Africa (20 October-3 November 1958), n.p., n.d.

25 - *Baʿathat al-Ittihad ila al-jumhuriyya al-ʿarabiyya al-muttahida li-hudur muʾtamar al-Ittihad al-duwali li-niqabat al-ʿummal al-ʿarab*, "al-Taliʿa", 22 May 1959, p. 1.

26 - *Arab Trade Union Action: Past Achievements and Future Prospects*, "ICATU Review" n. 1, 1976, p. 16.

27 - UMD: AFL-CIO, ICATU 20/12, Arab Federation of Trade Unions, First Executive Council, n.p., 28 May 1956.

28 - UMD: AFL-CIO, ICATU 20/12, Appel du SG de la CISA aux travailleurs du monde, Cairo, 24 March 1958.

29 - CGIL: Solidarietà Algeria (1958) B175/1, Relazione sui lavori del comitato internazionale di solidarietà con i lavoratori e il popolo dell'Algeria, Cairo, 12–15 September 1958, p. 2.

30 - IISH: ICFTU, Morocco 4121b, Memorandum on ICFTU Mission to North Africa (20 October–3 November 1958), n.p., n.d.

31 - CGIL: B175/1, Relazione sui lavori del comitato internazionale di solidarietà con i lavoratori e il popolo dell'Algeria, Cairo, 12–15 September 1958, pp. 3–4.

32 - CGIL: B175/1, Comité syndical international de solidarité aux travailleurs et au peuple d'Algérie — Programme d'action, Cairo, 12–15 September 1958.

33 - CGIL: Relazioni internazionali (1956–66) B22/14, Egitto Cairo 1958–1966, Decisioni della II Conferenza dell'ICATU, 24–28 aprile 1959, Cairo, 6 May 1959.

34 - The Manifesto was published in: *Les organisations syndicales arabes considèrent désormais toute atteinte contre l'une d'elle comme étant dirigée contre l'ensemble des ouvriers arabes*, "L'Avant-Garde", 18 June 1960, p. 3.

35 - UMD: AFL-CIO, Libya, 1950–1963, 11/12, Report on a mission to Libya from 19 to 27 November 1961 for the ICFTU by F. Elwyn Jones, Q.C., M, P., n.p., n.d.

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