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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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ITUC Welcomes France's Refusal to Invite Mugabe

Brussels, 14 January 2007 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has welcomed a decision by the French government to refuse to invite Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe to a France-Africa Summit beginning on 15 February in Cannes. French trade unions, supported by their counterparts in Zimbabwe as well as the UK and other European Union countries, had called on the French authorities to uphold EU sanctions on Zimbabwe by not inviting Mugabe to the meeting.

"This decision by the French government is yet another reminder to the Zimbabwean regime that their use of violent repression against trade unions, their broader attacks on fundamental human rights, and their appalling mismanagement of the country's economy, is simply unacceptable", said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder. "President Mugabe and his coterie are turning Zimbabwe into an international pariah state, while the suffering of the Zimbabwean people gets ever worse", he added.

Attempts by the Zimbabwe Trade Union Congress and its affiliates to get the country's leaders to change course have been met with violence and intimidation. Inflation is now running at over 1,500%, basic services are collapsing, and large numbers of Zimbabweans are on the brink of starvation.

Founded on 1 November 2006, the ITUC represents 168 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 304 national affiliates.

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