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Zimbabwe: Trade Unionists Freed, Charges Thrown Out

Brussels, 12 November 2009 (ITUC OnLine): Lovemore Matombo, president of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, and four other unionists, Michael Kandukutu, Percy Mncijo, Dumisani Ncube and Nhawu Ndlovu, have been released on the order of a Zimbabwean Magistrate and the charges against them thrown out by the Court in Victoria Falls. The five were detained by police on Sunday, and charged under the notorious Public Order and Security Act (POSA), which has been used against the ZCTU and its affiliates on several occasions over a number of years by the Mugabe regime.

In throwing out the charges, the Magistrate criticised the police for their over-zealous behaviour, and stipulated that the POSA does not apply to trade unions.

"We welcome this decision by the magistrate, which once again shows how those close to President Mugabe continue to harass trade unionists and repress legitimate trade union activity," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

The ITUC represents 170 million workers in 158 countries and territories and has 316 national affiliates.

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