

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

ITUC OnLine
164/060911

ITUC Calls on King of Swaziland to End Brutal Repression of Union Leaders and Workers

Brussels, 6 September 2011 (ITUC OnLine): Swaziland's Independence Day on 6 September will be used by the international workers' movement to highlight the ongoing attacks on freedoms and workers' rights in the Kingdom.

The most recent in a series of attacks on democratic freedoms was the detention on 24 August of a number of young student union leaders after a protest about the closure of the University of Swaziland.

Trade unions, including those in Belgium, South Africa, and the UK, will deliver letters to their Swazi ambassadors calling on King Mswati III to put in place fully-fledged human and trade union rights. Mswati is one of the last remaining absolute monarchs in the world.

Speaking from a protest outside the Swaziland Embassy in Brussels organised by the ITUC and Belgian trade unions, ITUC Deputy General Secretary Wellington Chibebe said: "We stand in support with Swazi workers in demanding constitutional reform, multi-party democracy and the full respect of trade union rights.

"The issue of democracy can never be wished away.

"It is not a question of whether there will be reform but a question of when.

"For workers' rights, the time is now."

Read the letter from the ITUC to the Prime Minister of Swaziland: http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/11-09-06_Letter_to_PM_Int_1_Day_of_Action.pdf

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 151 countries and territories and has 305 national affiliates.

<http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

For any further information, please contact the ITUC press department on: +32 2 224 02 04 or +32 476 62 10 18

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