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Zimbabwe: ITUC Supports ZCTU Protest Action

Brussels, 09 April 2015 (ITUC OnLine): The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) is organising demonstrations on 11 April 2015 involving its six regional centres of Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Mutare, Masvingo and Chinhoyi. The demonstrations aim to highlight a range of issues affecting workers, including the decision to freeze and cut salaries, introduce labour market flexibility, the non or late payment of workers' salaries, and the failure to pass on membership subscriptions to the unions - all contrary to existing collective agreements.

Police in the cities of Bulawayo, Mutare and Masvingo initially refused to grant permission for the demonstrations, but reversed their decisions after the Harare police agreed to allow the demonstration there. A High Court decision on a ZCTU legal challenge was also expected on Thursday afternoon.

The Herald, a pro-government newspaper, has also released an article denouncing the ZCTU protest action claiming it is driven by external forces such as the Movement for Democratic Change.

An ILO Commission of Inquiry of 2010 found serious government interference in ZCTU meetings and demonstrations, especially through the requirement that trade unions seek police permission to hold such gatherings. This interference is a violation of ILO Conventions 87 on freedom of association and 98 on collective bargaining. The Government pledged to the ILO that police and security forces would receive training and education to prevent such violations in the future, but five years later the interference continues.

The government of Zimbabwe must respect the international conventions it has ratified as well as the provisions of its own Constitution. Structures of collective bargaining and social dialogue exist in the country, and instead of repressing union activity, the government should allow these to be used to help ensure social peace and economic development.

Read more on Equal Times: <http://www.equaltimes.org/zimbabwe-unions-grill-government#.VSZJ9pMnLqo>

http://www.equaltimes.org/will-zimbabwes-pensioners-finally-get-what-they-are-owed#.VSZJ_JMnLqo

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