
Solidarity with workers in Swaziland
Swaziland Democracy Day
7 September 2010

ACT NOW: support trade union rights in Swaziland

Trade unionists in Swaziland, a Commonwealth country in Southern Africa with the world's highest rate of HIV/AIDS and the longest state of emergency in Africa. Poverty and feudalism (the country is run by the King) are sustained by a dictatorship where unions are heavily restricted and activists are harassed, arrested and worse. Now, the Government wants to stop trade unionism from existing in the public services.

In response, the TUC and ACTSA are organising activities on Tuesday 7 September as part of Swaziland Democracy Day, which unions around the world will be marking. The aim is to mobilise support for democracy, good governance and respect for human rights in Swaziland, and oppose the Public Services Bill.

To get involved:

- encourage your colleagues and workmates to sign the ACTSA [e-action](#) against the Bill; and
- get your union branch to adapt and send in the following model letter to the Swaziland High Commission.

HE Mrs Mary Madzandza Kanya

High Commissioner

Swaziland High Commission

20 Buckingham Gate

London SW1E 6LB

Dear High Commissioner

I would be grateful if you would convey to your government the deep concern of [name of trade union] about the denial of freedom and rights endured by the people of Swaziland.

In recent months there has been a marked increase in the number of human rights violations perpetrated by the state against its own people, particularly those who stand up for democracy and rights.

In a country where political parties are banned, the trade union movement in Swaziland has been at the forefront of the struggle for democracy, despite enduring repression and harassment by the state. We stand in solidarity with the trade union movement in Swaziland in their campaign for democracy, rights and freedom from poverty, and fully support their demands for:

- a democratic, people led constitution;
- the un-banning of all political parties and the implementation of multi-party, democratic elections in line with the SADC principles and guidelines for democratic elections;
- the removal of repressive legislation that inhibits political activity including the Suppression of Terrorism Act and the Public Services Bill;
- respect for the ILO mandate and implementation of conventions on labour standards;
- a free and independent media and judiciary, as well as ending corruption; and
- the fairer distribution of national wealth through pro-poor policies and programmes, public expenditure and an end to corruption.

On 7 September trade unionists all over the world will be standing in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Swaziland and highlighting the lack of democracy and rights in the country. I urge your government to listen to these calls and take urgent action to address the poverty and repression suffered by the Swazi people.

Yours sincerely

[name]

[title]