
Solidarity with Swazi trade unions
Week of action eye witness report
10 September 2010

Swazi trade unionists stand up for freedom

As reported since Monday and throughout the week, after a long week of twists and turns, highs and lows and a lot of bravery, the workers of Swaziland arose this week to demand change for the country.

The TUC salutes its Swazi brother and sister trade unionists and other pro-democracy activists who as members of the international Swaziland Democracy Campaign have just finished their first ever week of action. The TUC is a project partner of IRALE, the Swaziland Labour Academy and a more detailed report will be prepared once the dust has settled but for now, we want to share with you a personal testimony sent to us during the week from Thandie Beames from the SFTU.

“Today was our second day of our mass action. It was in the Capital- Mbabane which is where most ministries are including the office of the Premier. Our plan was to take petitions to the office of the Labour Minister, Minister of Natural Resources and the Prime Minister.”



She continues, "We didn't deliver any of the petitions because of the threatening attitude of the state police. At some stage we were surrounded by the police U formation and they were hell bent on a massacre. They spelt out the riot act to us and it was tense! They then collected some comrades who were later released at our insistence.



"Post the release of the comrades, they hunted down the President of the youth-SWAYOCO which is the youth wing of PUDEMO. They took him with and so far it's not clear where he is and we are worried for his safety.



“What is important and of note is that, the police were blood thirsty and looking for the slightest provocation to go for the onslaught!

“What I know is that people prevail all the time before the people of Swaziland realise their ultimate objective and it is nigh. It’s going to be a long and frustrating process but the people of Swaziland shall prevail.”

Thandie ends, “We wish to impress on you to shower us with solidarity in abundance at this time cause we need it most. We also want to thank you for taking up the cause of the Swazi people by affording us support and publicity which is of prime importance in this regard.”

With thanks to IRALE for supplying the photographs.