

HE Colonel Christian Katsande
Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe House
429 Strand
WC2R 0JR

23 July 2019

Dear Ambassador

Publicly denounce the death threats to ZCTU leadership

I write on behalf of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) representing over 5.5 million workers in the UK to bring some urgent matters to your attention regarding the ongoing repression of trade unionists in Zimbabwe.

We are deeply shocked and appalled by the recent reports of death threats being issued to the leadership of Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and their families. It has been reported that last week a [letter](#) was received along with live ammunition bullets addressing both the ZCTU President Peter Mutasa and Secretary General Japhet Moyo, for organising trade union meetings. This has reached a new low as members of their families including innocent children were directly threatened with death by bullets. These threats are being made in the context of the repressive, anti-trade union environment that is perpetuated by the government of Zimbabwe.

We deplore and strongly condemn the threats of violence and death threats against trade union members and their children in retaliation for them exercising their legal right to implement ILO convention 87 on Freedom of Association. The government of Zimbabwe is obliged to ensure that workers can exercise their right to freedom of association in a climate that is free from violence, pressure or threats of any kind against their leaders and members. By failing to protect this right and not calling this action out, the government is in breach of article 58 of its Constitution but also the provisions of ILO Convention No 87 on Freedom of Association that it is bound by.

These threats of premeditated murder are not acceptable by any means and adds to the shocking record of ongoing violent repression of workers in Zimbabwe that we have written to you about on several occasions in the past.

We are aware that the economic situation in the country has been characterised by a debilitating liquidity crunch, foreign currency shortages, rising inflation, spiralling basic commodity prices, erosion of disposable incomes, power outages and low productivity,

but nothing will be improved by oppressing those who are reflecting the generalised discontent with government policies which affects workers and wider society.

We ask that your government;

- Publicly denounce these death threats to Peter Mutasa, and Japhet Moyo and his family.
- Uphold your obligations under article 58 of your Constitution and ILO C87
- Engage in good faith negotiations with the ZCTU leadership to agree on a peaceful and constructive way out of the current economic crisis with full respect for human and workers' rights.

I look forward to hearing that our concerns have been expressed to your government and we would be willing to meet with you in the next few weeks to discuss these in detail.

Please get in touch with us to arrange a convenient time to meet.

Yours sincerely

FRANCES O'GRADY

General Secretary

cc H.E. Ms Melanie Robinson, HMA Zimbabwe
Grant Calder, FCO