

Geneva, 22 January 2019

His Excellency Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of Zimbabwe  
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## IndustriALL Global Union calls for an end to persecution of union leaders and to engage in social dialogue

Your Excellency President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa,

On behalf of our affiliates in Zimbabwe and [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org)'s fifty million workers in 140 countries, we are calling for an end to the persecution and harassment of union leaders, and for the government to engage in social dialogue that involves trade unions and other stakeholders to resolve the economic crisis in Zimbabwe and to arrest the hyperinflation environment that is impoverishing workers. We believe that sound economic policies, whose formulation is inclusive, are some of the ways to deal with the crisis.

We are extremely concerned over the persecution of union leaders. We have received reports indicating that armed police and the army visited the home of comrade Peter Mutasa, the President of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). He was not at home at the time and his whereabouts are not known. We urge you to guarantee Peter Mutasa's safe and unharmed reappearance.

We have also received reports that the Secretary General of the ZCTU, Japhet Moyo, was arrested at Harare airport yesterday and charged with subversion for his role in organizing strike action. We urge you to release Japhet Moyo without charge.

We strongly condemn the intimidation and gross human rights violations against Zimbabwean workers and protestors by the security forces, including the police and the army. The violation of workers' human rights to protest and disproportionate use of force during the stay away 14-16 January is unacceptable and ultra vires the Zimbabwean Constitution. On 15 January, the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights said they treated the injured with gunshot wounds and for abdominal and blunt trauma and said close to 10 people or more could have died in Epworth, Harare, Chitungwiza and Kadoma.

We urge the Government of Zimbabwe to adopt the recommendations of the Motlanthe Commission of Inquiry on the matter, as the reaction of the security forces to protests is to use excessive force.

The workers' human rights should be respected as they are the ones who continue to bear the brunt of the government's austerity measures with increased taxation on their meagre wages and the rising prices of basic food items. Your announcement of a petrol increase, by over 150 per cent, has hit the workers' pockets hard considering that this comes only a few months after the introduction of the 2 per cent tax on electronic payments.

The government must be sensitive to the workers' plight as most Zimbabwean workers are the working poor because they earn far less than what they need to meet their basic needs. We agree with the workers when they argue that the economic situation has "incapacitated" them. According to the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe's food basket, workers needed at least \$600 in August 2018 to make ends meet, which means that with the recent price increases they need higher wages.

In addition, the government must deal with currency reforms, which are worsening the suffering of the workers. Cash shortages have seen workers sleeping in bank queues to access their hard-earned money and are charged more when they use electronic forms of payment. The multicurrency system is not benefiting workers as some goods are more expensive in the Zimbabwe Dollar Bond notes than when bought in US dollars. This explains why workers are demanding that they be paid in US dollars.

IndustriALL condemns the government's Internet blackout, which again is infringing on the workers and citizens' right to communicate and access information as well as payment systems and medical services.

We reiterate that this dire economic situation should not be allowed to implode and needs urgent social dialogue.

With best regards,



Valter Sanches  
General Secretary