



**ITUC INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION CSI CONFÉDÉRATION
SYNDICALE INTERNATIONALE
CSI CONFEDERACIÓN SINDICAL INTERNACIONAL IGB INTERNATIONALER
GEWERKSCHAFTSBUND**

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TUR/JS

18 September 2008

Arrest of several trade union leaders

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

Only one month after the arrest of two trade union leaders, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), is again obliged to write to you to protest against the arrest of the secretary general of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) Mr. Jan Sithole, Vincent Dlamini, SNACS, General Secretary, Mr Mario Masuki, PUDEMO President, Mr Jabulani Dlamini, Acting Deputy Secretary General, PUDEMO, Mr Theodorah Malindzisa, Deputy General Secretary, Swaziland Federation of Labour and four others.

The ITUC has been informed that they were arrested while they were proceeding to the Swazi-South African border in protest over the worsening political, economic and social crisis in Swaziland. They were planning a blockade at the border in cooperation with their South African trade union brothers and sisters.

In accordance with ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association and the right to organise, ratified by your country, you have an obligation to refrain from arresting trade union leaders carrying out legitimate union activities. Under the jurisprudence of the ILO, freedom of assembly is a fundamental right of trade unions. Trade unions have a right to demonstrate against all policies impacting the economic and social conditions of trade union members.



The international trade union movement is strongly urging you to ensure the immediate release of our colleagues and ensure that no charges are made against them. Should the trade union repression continue, the ITUC might consider bringing these incidents to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association.

The ITUC hopes that you will pay prompt attention to this very serious matter.

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary

Cc: The Royal Embassy of Swaziland to Belgium_