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His Excellency Mr. Robert G. Mugabe,
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Zimbabwe

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TUR/JS

15 May 2008

Arrest and continued detentions of ZCTU leaders

Dear Mr. President,

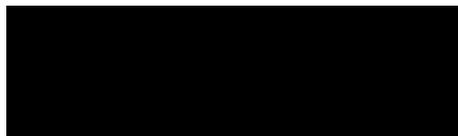
Six days ago the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) wrote to you to protest against the arrest the leaders of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). I now write to condemn the arrest of **Raymond Majongwe**, the General Secretary of the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ), and a member of the General Council of the ZCTU and the continued detention of ZCTU President, **Lovemore Motombo** and Secretary General **Wellington Chibebe**.

The ITUC has been informed that Raymond Majongwe was apprehended by the police at the High Court of Zimbabwe in Harare today, while he was attending the bail hearing of Lovemore Matombo and Wellington Chibebe.

The charges against Raymond Majongwe are not yet known, however, the ITUC has been informed that his arrest might be linked to PTUZ material concerning the violence and harassment of teachers at their workplaces during the current wave of political violence in your country.

The ITUC is extremely concerned that the High Court of Zimbabwe chose to reserve judgment on the request of the two ZCTU leaders to post bail. Justice Ben Hlatshwayo, reportedly needed time to weigh the need to protect the liberty of the accused and the protection of public order and safety and reserved judgment until 19 May. The ITUC deplores this court decision, since it is beyond doubt that the two leaders are no threat to public order and safety in any way, and have never used other than peaceful means to promote the right of workers and carry out legitimate trade union activities.

In effect this decision condemns the two to stay in prison four more days, a very long time considering the well documented abuse of prisoners in Zimbabwe. The ITUC also



recalls that Raymond Majongwe was among the PTUZ leaders and activists beaten and tortured on 19 February this year.

As you are undoubtedly aware, Zimbabwe has an obligation to respect fundamental human rights of trade union leaders in accordance with ILO Convention 87 on freedom of association and the right to organise. A convention ratified by your country.

The ITUC also wants to remind you that the Government of Zimbabwe has an obligation to include a representative of the most representative workers' organisation in your country to the 97th session of the International Labour Conference beginning on 28 May 2008. As the leaders of the ZCTU, the most representative international trade union organisation in your country, Lovemore Matombo and Wellington Chibebe, should be free to be part of the Zimbabwe delegation.

The international trade union movement is monitoring the situation in Zimbabwe very closely, and will report this new arrest to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association. We are now seriously considering bringing the matter of trade union repression to other supervisory bodies of the ILO. The ITUC has appealed to its affiliates and partners of the ITUC around the world, including Amnesty International, to call for the immediate release of all detained trade unionists.

The ITUC strongly urges you to immediately release Mr. Lovemore Motombo, Mr. Wellington Chibebe and Raymond Majongwe and drop all charges against them. In the meantime, we urge you, as a minimum, to guarantee their physical integrity and well-being.

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

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary

Cc: The Embassy of Zimbabwe to Belgium