



Geneva, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022

Ambassador Ashraf Suliman  
Director: Political, Defence and Security integration  
Department of International Relations  
Government of South Africa  
Pretoria  
By email

## **IndustriALL and ITUC call upon South Africa to expedite inclusive dialogue for democratic reforms in Eswatini within the SADC framework**

Dear Ambassador Ashraf Suliman,

We write to you from IndustriALL Global Union, which represents 50 million workers from 140 countries in sectors that include the automotive, base metals, energy, garment and textile, and other manufacturing sectors and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which represents 200 million workers from 163 countries. We wish to express our deep concerns about the continued workers and human rights violations by the government of Eswatini under King Mswati III, and to call upon the government of South Africa to support the expediting of the processes towards an inclusive dialogue for a democratic dispensation in the country.

Global and pan-African trade unions support the initiatives for dialogue by SADC special envoys and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa as the chair for the SADC organ on defence, politics, and security. However, we are concerned by the slow pace and lack of political will, especially with law enforcement agencies continuing with the repression. We have written [letters](#) to the Prime Minister of Eswatini [Cleopas Dlamini](#) and to the [United Nations Human Rights Council](#) to express the same concerns.

We are also campaigning for the suspension of Eswatini from the Commonwealth for rights violations including failure to comply with the Commonwealth Charter commitments and obligations on democracy, equality, freedom, human rights, and good governance. Unions in the Commonwealth are urging governments represented on the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group to insist that Eswatini fulfils its obligations under the Commonwealth Charter, or face suspension, for the reasons outlined in detail in [Holding Eswatini to account](#).

According to the Amalgamated Trade Union of Swaziland (ATUSWA) and the Swaziland Electricity Supply, Maintenance, and the Allied Workers Union (SESMAWU) and the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA), affiliated to IndustriALL and ITUC respectively, over 100 people have been shot dead, and hundreds injured and arbitrarily arrested in incidences where the police and the

army used excessive force against prodemocracy demonstrators. The security forces are continuously violating human and workers' rights to freedoms of expression, assembly, association, and the right to life. This has made life unbearable to the workers who are living in harsh conditions characterised by increasing poverty, high unemployment and the pandemics of Covid-19, and HIV and AIDS.

We look forward to the South African government's support for the immediate commencement of inclusive dialogue as well as an end to workers and human rights violations.

Yours sincerely,



**Atle Høie**  
General Secretary  
IndustriALL Global Union



**Sharan Burrow**  
General Secretary  
ITUC



**Kwasi Adu-Amankwah**  
General Secretary  
ITUC-Africa