



American Federation  
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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AFT Teachers  
AFT PSRP  
AFT Higher Education  
AFT Public Employees  
AFT Healthcare

March 29, 2007

Robert G. Mugabe  
President  
Causeway  
Harare  
ZIMBABWE

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By Fax: 011-262-4-70-38-58

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the 1.3 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I am writing to condemn the recent targeting by government police and armed forces on Zimbabwean trade unionists and political activists.

Most disturbing has been the news of the government's detention and beating of Morgan Tsvangirai, a trade unionist and leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, along with other civil society, church and opposition parties' activists who were peaceably assembled on March 11th. As reported in the worldwide media, the violent confrontation resulted in grave injuries to Mr. Tsvangirai and many others.

Regrettably, this incident is only one in a long series of disturbing reports we have received concerning democratic and human rights violations in Zimbabwe. We, along with the entire international community, have been shocked by reports of government-initiated violence against political activists, including intimidation, numerous arrests, physical assaults, and the refusal to allow travel for medical treatment.

We also strongly protest the targeting of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) by members of the Central Intelligence Organization and the police. In a March 13th attack on ZCTU offices, three staff members were assaulted and an administrator detained. During the raid, information containing the names of union organizers and supporters was removed from the ZCTU offices by police.

Many trade union and human rights organizations in Africa and elsewhere around the world have denounced the violence in Zimbabwe. Today the AFT joins with H.E. Alpha Oumar Konare, Chairperson of the Commission of the Africa Union, himself a teacher, who has spoken of his "great concern" over recent developments in your country, and in a March 16th statement officially expressed "the need for the scrupulous respect for human rights and democratic principles in Zimbabwe."

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Mr. President, we urge you and your government to take immediate steps to guarantee the rights and liberties of all Zimbabwe's citizens. As a signatory to the Harare Declaration, Zimbabwe must recognize that honoring the dignity and equal rights of all is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace. Your country's membership in the Africa Union, the United Nations, the International Labor Organization, and the world community requires no less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Edward J. McElroy".

Edward J. McElroy  
President

EJM : dlp opeiu#2 afl-cio