



## TRADE UNION CONGRESS OF SWAZILAND (TUCOSWA)

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17<sup>th</sup> June, 2014

The Editor  
Times of Swaziland  
P.O. Box 156  
**MBABANE**

Dear Sir;

### **RE: SWAZILAND SCORES ILO VICTORY**

We believe that it helps if the print media does not come out with misleading headlines as was the case with the Sunday Observer of 15<sup>th</sup> June 2014, proclaiming that **SD SCORES ILO VICTORY**.

Maybe it would have been nice were it true. Reading the story in the inside of the paper itself, it becomes clear that there was no such victory, only a lucky escape, even then a temporary one. At least the Minister of Labour and Social Security was honest in her appraisal of the situation, having been in the thick of things. She claimed no false victories as shamelessly did the Sunday Observer.

At page 3, the paper goes on to tell those of us who were not in Geneva, that Governments came in great numbers to support Swaziland, especially those of Africa. Goodling the record though of the proceedings, it shows that only 6 African Governments spoke in support of the country and even then not in the usual sense where you would see the region being represented by one country speaking for all of them. Some great number that given that there are about 13 SADC members and over 50 African Governments! Namibia, Botswana, Morocco, South Sudan, Egypt and of course as would be expected, Zimbabwe, spoke as individual Governments in support.

Where were the majority of even the SADC countries, as surely the three from the region, let alone the total that spoke cannot be signaling “**support in great numbers**”. The paper was simply misleading the public and by extension, those that give advice where it matters.

It would serve the country well to read what the Governments of the US, the EU and eight other countries represented by Greece said, to appreciate that even before the next conference, the country is going to be under serious pressure to make good the expectations of the agreements it has signed to as regards adherence to basic worker and human rights. Whilst the outcomes of the International Labour Conference (ILC) are a guide, these countries have their own yardsticks and are not held hostage by the deliberations and outcomes of the Conference. Seemingly, and appreciatively so, the Minister realises that there is no time to rest as we believe she is aware of the dangers.

The time for playing games with the rights of the workers and general human rights is over and now the close scrutiny will come. If the Government continues to be obstinate and not move in the general direction of respect for these rights, then we may easily see more of our trade agreements coming under threat. As a labour organisation, we call upon the Government to do what is in the interests of a positive future for the country and not individuals. Pass the relevant amendments and open up the political space without further ado before it is too late.

Yours Faithfully



**Vincent V. Ncongwane**  
**Secretary General**