



## **STOP THE POGROM IN ZIMBABWE NOW!**

- **Text of a Press Statement Released at the NLC's Organized Protest to the Zimbabwean High Commission, Abuja on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019**

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has followed with absolute shock and a sense of outrage the ugly incidents that have trailed the mass protests in Zimbabwe. The protests were occasioned by the sudden increase in pump prices of petroleum products by the government of Zimbabwe.

We have it on good authority that many leaders of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and several civilians have been harassed, hounded, tortured, illegally detained and murdered for participating in peaceful protests against what many Zimbabweans perceive as insensitive policy choices by the government of Zimbabwe.

The Nigerian working class family is sad that what should have passed on as a civil action in democratic climes was met with disproportionate use of force by the Zimbabwean military and security forces. The brazen show of force culminated into widespread suppression and violation of the fundamental human rights of ordinary Zimbabweans who were exposed to an orgy of violence, bloodshed and acts of state cruelty.

The NLC is particularly concerned about allegations of home raids, killings, rapes, robbery and physical assaults against workers, women, children and civilians generally during the so-called crackdown of protests by the Zimbabwean security forces. The action of these security officers has led to a number of disappearances, and displacements, with attendant physical and psychological injuries to victims, their relatives and colleagues.

There is no doubt that the fundamental human rights and basic dignity of Zimbabweans which are guaranteed by relevant conventions and protocols of the United Nations and the African Union, have been severely trampled upon by the action of members of Zimbabwean security forces.

**We need to also remind the authorities in Zimbabwe especially the Zimbabwean President, Mr. Emmerson Mnangagwa, that the action of the Zimbabwean security forces against leaders of the Zimbabwean Trade Union Congress (ZCTU) is in dire violation of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 87 on the right to unionize and organize.**

**The Nigeria Labour Congress reiterates its firm support for democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights cum dignity everywhere and at all times. We, therefore, extend our strong solidarity to the workers and people of Zimbabwe as they express their democratic rights to peaceful assembly and protest.**

**We stand with you today, 1st February, 2019, and always as we lead Nigerian workers and all lovers of democracy, freedom and civil liberties on a march to the Zimbabwean High Commission, Abuja, in protest against the descent of President Emmerson Mnangagwa's government to a reign of cold-blooded dictatorship, brutality and tyranny.**

**We use the opportunity of this protest march to call on the government of Zimbabwe to immediately stop the ongoing pogrom going on in Zimbabwe and call the security forces to order. The evil being perpetrated right now in Zimbabwe is out of tune with democratic tenets and certainly not in tandem with Mr. Mnangagwa's promise of a new Zimbabwe.**

**We also specifically call on the government of Zimbabwe to release, unconditionally the General Secretary of the Zimbabwean Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), Japhet Moyo, and other trade union leaders arrested in connection with the protests. The government should also stop the siege on the homes of labour leaders and activists across the country.**

**While we call on the Zimbabwean government to deploy dialogue rather than brute force in matters of this nature, we urge the government to ensure adequate treatment, rehabilitation and compensation for the victims of this unwieldy, cruel and barbaric deployment of brute force against Zimbabwean workers, trade union leaders and citizens.**

  
**Comrade Ayuba Wabba, mni**  
**President, Nigeria Labour Congress**  
**1<sup>st</sup> February 2019**