Excellency,

Education International (EI), the Global Union Federation of education unions, joins the International Trade Union Confederation to protest against the arrest of the General Secretary of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, Mr. Jan Sithole, on 20 August.

EI is concerned that the trade unionist has been subjected to harassment and then arrested and briefly detained without charge for having participated in a public rally. The arrest, even if only briefly, of trade union leaders for exercising legitimate right to freedom of opinion and expression is a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In addition, the arrest of trade unionists may create an atmosphere of intimidation and fear prejudicial to the development of trade union activities in the country.

EI urges the authorities of Swaziland to ensure, in all circumstances, respect for human and trade union rights, as well as fundamental freedoms. EI also urges respect for the physical integrity of all citizens, in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Swaziland.

Sincerely yours,

Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary

cc: Swaziland National Association of Teachers, SNAT +268-506.03.86
Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, SFTU