

## RESOLUTION ON ESWATINI

**The Education International Africa Regional Committee (EIARC), meeting online on 9 and 10 March 2022,**

1. Observing that the Government of Eswatini ratified all the 8 ILO Fundamental Conventions, including C87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and C98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining;
2. Noting that despite the ratification of international treaties, workers' rights violations in Eswatini have continued unabated, resulting in the ITUC 2020 *Global Rights Index* **Rating of 5 (No guarantee of rights)**;
3. Observing the incessant violation of trade union and workers' rights by the Government of Eswatini and the fact that Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) cannot effectively engage the Government on all matters pertaining to the welfare, development, and retention of teaching personnel in the country, including making policy and operational inputs on the recruitment, conduct, discipline, and remuneration of teaching personnel;
4. Concerned that any strike or protest action by the workers of Eswatini, even when legal with due process, followed by the union attracts violence against workers as indicative of the continued incidents of police brutality and the denial of the right to strike of public and other workers in the country;
5. Seriously concerned about the brutal attack on workers on 20 October 2021 in Mbabane, while they were on their way to deliver a petition to the Municipal Council of the capital city, appealing for decent working conditions, a salary review, and basic trade union rights;
6. Appalled by further incidents of intimidation of workers as in the charges of misconduct preferred against the current SNAT President, Comrade Mbongwa Dlamini, amounting to victimization by the government and a gross violation of freedom of association and expression and the right to organise as they stem from his involvement in trade union activities;
7. Concerned about the extent of union-bashing as seen in the Government sponsored splinter groups, casualisation of teaching, print and electronic media threats, suspension of union officials, implementation of the 'no work no pay' policy, use of threats, spying, and vilification of SNAT;
8. Noting also the consequences of the Government's deliberate actions to weaken SNAT, leading to increased intimidation, decrease in SNAT membership, increase in conflicts and grievances in schools, fear to assume union leadership positions, low turn up in union activities, favouritism, and incapacitated leadership;
9. Reaffirming EI Africa Region's unequivocal solidarity and support for SNAT, its leadership and membership, including their struggle for trade union and labour rights;

### **The EIARC urges the Government of Eswatini to:**

10. Respect international labour standards, in particular the Conventions it is signatory to and ceases to abuse the laws to undermine SNAT in its efforts to improve teachers' working conditions, restore open dialogue, promote policy reform and social justice, and the free exercise of freedoms of expression and association;
11. Stop violation of workers' rights to organise, associate, and express their opinions by refraining from the use of violence and instead engage in genuine social dialogue; and,
12. Restrain from victimising union officials and respect the right of union leaders to participate in union activities.