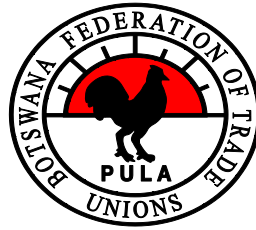


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ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL

BFTU/admin/c-2023/593

28 June 2023

The Minister
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Botswana
Private Bag 00368
Gaborone.

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: CONCERNS REGARDING H. M. KING MSWATI III'S ATTENDANCE AT THE US – AFRICA BUSINESS SUMMIT 2023

We hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. We are writing to you to express our deep concern regarding the attendance of H. M. King Mswati III, the Head of Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini, at the upcoming US-Africa Business Summit 2023, scheduled to be held in Gaborone, Botswana from July 11 to July 14.

As the national trade union federation representing over 25 private and public sector unions in Botswana, BFTU aims to promote and protect the rights and welfare of workers not only within our borders but also across the African continent. We have been closely monitoring the developments in the Kingdom of Eswatini, particularly concerning the human rights violations, trade union rights infringements, and the brutal killing of Thulani Maseko, a human and trade union rights lawyer.

The participation of H. M. King Mswati III in the US-Africa Business Summit sends a conflicting message, as it appears to overlook the ongoing human rights abuses and suppression of trade union rights in the Kingdom of Eswatini. We believe that the presence of a leader associated with such

actions undermines the principles of democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights that the summit seeks to promote.

It is disheartening to note that H. M. King Mswati III's attendance comes at a time when trade unionists, human rights defenders, and protesters in Eswatini continue to face intimidation, assault, arrests, and even extrajudicial killings. The ban on public gatherings, withdrawal of salaries, and threats to trade union subscriptions further illustrate the hostile environment for workers and civil society in the country.

As a nation that values democratic principles, respect for human rights, and the promotion of social justice, it is crucial for Botswana to maintain a consistent stance in upholding these values. We urge the ministry to reconsider the invitation extended to H. M. King Mswati III to attend the US-Africa Business Summit. We believe that allowing his participation without addressing the ongoing rights abuses would send a contradictory and detrimental message to the people of Eswatini and the international community.

We demand that you take immediate action to prevent the presence of H.M King Mswati III in Botswana. We believe that it is essential to promote and uphold the principles of democracy, human rights, and social justice during such prominent gatherings to ensure a meaningful and inclusive dialogue for the betterment of African nations.

We sincerely hope that our concerns will be taken into consideration, and appropriate actions will be taken to exclude H.M King Mswati III from the summit and to address the situation in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Yours sincerely



Thusang Butale (Mr)
SECRETARY GENERAL

Cc: ITUC-Africa
ITUC
TUCOSWA
SATUCC
OATUU