

URGENT ACTION

STOP ACTION ON POLICE HARASSMENT IN SWAZILAND

Please stop sending appeals about the security forces' harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders and peaceful demonstrators from 6-8 September in Swaziland.

Between 6 and 8 September, human rights defenders, trade unionists and political activists in Swaziland were arbitrarily detained, assaulted and intimidated, as security forces attempted to disrupt two days of planned protest marches. The security forces conducted mass arrests with no legal basis and held human rights defenders, political opposition leaders and foreign trade union officials in unlawful detention. Instead of holding the security forces accountable, the Prime Minister of Swaziland appeared to condone their actions, suggesting during a press conference on 8 September that torture should be considered as a form of punishment against interfering foreigners and dissidents.

Over the past week the level of harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders and activists appears to have declined and no further incidents have been reported. However, no one has been brought to justice for the human rights violations that took place between 6 and 8 September. Although the Prime Minister and his office have made subsequent statements to "clarify" his comments about the use of torture, none of these reported statements amount to a clear rejection of the use of torture.

In addition to appeals sent in line with this Urgent Action, organizations in Swaziland and other international institutions have put pressure on the Prime Minister to retract his statement condoning torture.

Amnesty International's human rights concerns have now been brought to the Prime Minister of Swaziland's attention through this Urgent Action campaign. We request that no more appeals are sent at this point.

No further action is required. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 194/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR55/003/2010/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR55/005/2010>

FU on UA: 194/10 Index: AFR 55/006/2010 Issue Date: 22 September 2010

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

