

ZCTU President receives international courage award

Lovemore Matombo, President of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), has been honoured with the prestigious 2009 Courage Award by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Worker Group.

Following the ceremony in Geneva on the 19th August, Lovemore said he was humbled and honoured on receiving the award, which recognises courage in defending the rights of workers.

“I am really encouraged and very humbled by the award, recognising the efforts of the ZCTU, after years of fighting and struggling for decent salaries and respect for the workers rights,” Lovemore said.

The ZCTU President is one of a number of union leaders who have regularly been subjected to arrests and beatings at the hands of the Zimbabwean police. In 2006 Lovemore and several ZCTU leaders were severely injured after their protest for better pay was brutally broken up by the police.

He selflessly told journalists “On behalf of ZCTU, I am encouraged and humbled by the award recognising the efforts of the ZCTU in pushing for decent salaries and respect for the workers rights. The ZCTU will continue lobbying to restore the dignity of Zimbabwe workers.”

Lovemore received countless congratulatory messages from civil society organisations from Zimbabwe and across the globe. The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition said “Matombo’s bravery and commitment have not gone unnoticed. The citation of the veteran trade unionist came as no surprise as his sacrifices over the years have put him on the map as one of the most resilient advocates for worker’s rights world over.”

ACTSA has sent a message of congratulations to Lovemore Matombo on this well deserved recognition, paying tribute to his dedication, fortitude, humility and leadership.

The abuse of the ZCTU’s leaders and members is currently the subject of a commission of enquiry by the ILO.