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Fact-Finding Mission to Southern Africa To Investigate Abuses At Africa's Largest Multinational Employer

Trade union leaders, academics, human rights attorneys and NGO leaders will visit Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa as part of a fact-finding trip to Southern Africa to investigate Africa's largest multinational employer, Group 4 Securicor. The delegation will begin its work in Johannesburg on April 16, travel to Maputo and Blantyre and conclude its investigation April 20.

The delegation's visit to Southern Africa was prompted by several incidents:

* A case referred to South Africa Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration in which workers allege that Group 4 Securicor managers at the airport in Johannesburg refer to guards as "kaffirs" and "baboons"

*A professor investigating conditions in Malawi reported that guards there aren't properly compensated for their overtime hours, despite basic pay of only US \$23 a month

* Police broke up a rally in Mozambique called to protest the company's failure to pay back wages owed to guards

The delegation will meet with workers employed by Group 4 Securicor, leaders of African trade unions, government officials, clients of the security firm, as well as G4S officials.

The delegation will also identify attorneys willing to work with a legal aid fund established by UNI Property Services earlier this year with seed money from security workers and cleaners from around the globe. The goal is to link African cleaning and security workers whose rights have been violated with attorneys. The fund, "African Workers Rights NOW" will provide remuneration to attorneys who agree to take workers' cases.

A list of delegates follows:

War on Want, Jackie Simpkins; Ver di, Peter Bremme; International Centre for Trade Union Rights, Ijeoma Omambala; London School of Economics Professor John Logan;

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human rights attorney Ashwini Sukthankar; Transport and General Workers Union, Dave Ritchie; Service Employees International Union, Gerry Hudson and Bill Ragen; UNI Property Services Global Union, Christy Hoffman.

Background on Group 4 Securicor

Group 4 Securicor, a British firm, employs more than 82,000 workers in 18 African nations. It's not only large but it's also growing. Only weeks ago, it announced it had purchased a security firm in Mozambique.

The company provides an array of services to multinationals operating on the continent including banks, oil and gas companies, mining operations as well as international organizations and embassies. The wealth gap has created a market for the firm's security services in residential neighborhoods in major African cities. For example, Group 4 Securicor guards patrol gated communities in Johannesburg.

About UNI Property Services Global Union

UNI Property Services Global Union, an organization of labor unions from around the world which represent cleaners and security workers, among the world's most low paid and vulnerable employees.

For more information visit www.union-network.org/property. Delegates will blog while on the mission, to view their posts as well as photos, visit www.focusongroup4securior.org