



For Immediate Release

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ICE DEPORTS 10 MORE MEN TO ESWATINI UNDER CONTROVERSIAL \$5.1 MIL AGREEMENT Eswatini Government Resorts to Desperate Measures to Prevent Access to Counsel

Denver, USA - On October 5, 2025, ICE deported ten men, who are nationals of Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, Cuba, and Chad, to Eswatini, where they are now imprisoned at the Mastapha Correctional Centre, along with the other four so-called “third country deportees” who were flown there in July and remain illegally detained in Eswatini. One deportee, Orville Etoria, was [repatriated](#) to Jamaica in September following concerted efforts by his family’s lawyer and by the [Jamaican government](#).

On October 3, 2025 - following a protracted legal battle - the High Court of Eswatini had [ordered](#) that the attorney partnering with the detainees’ families and U.S. based attorneys, Sibusiso Magnificent Nhlabatsi, should be granted access to the four men who were deported from the United States in mid-July and have been imprisoned in Eswatini since, without meaningful access to counsel. However, the Eswatini government immediately filed a [notice of appeal](#), which resulted in a stay of the High Court’s decision. The matter now heads to Eswatini’s Supreme Court, and the deportees remain without access to local counsel.

“What does it say about the Eswatini government’s respect for basic notions of fairness and justice that it is fighting so hard to ensure the men it has imprisoned for nearly three months do not have access to a lawyer?” said **Alma David of [Novo Legal Group](#)**, the U.S.-based attorney for Roberto Mosquera del Peral of Cuba and Kassim Wasil of Yemen, two of the original five deportees to Eswatini. “In every representation the government has made to the High Court in this case, [it has told blatant lies](#), laying bare just how desperate it is to prevent exposure of the fact that there is simply no legitimate legal basis for these men’s imprisonment on Eswatini soil.”

The United States and Eswatini governments signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) in May 2025, which provides, among other things, that the U.S. will pay \$5.1 million to Eswatini to receive up to 160 deportees, including those with criminal backgrounds or who are suspected terrorists, and provide immigration status or “other legal accommodation under Eswatini law” to them for one year. It also provides that the United States government will engage with the International Organization on Migration (IOM) to arrange for the deportees’ relocation from Eswatini within a year of their arrival. IOM provides assistance in [repatriating migrants to their countries of origin](#), which calls into question the veracity of the U.S. government’s [statement](#) that the reason the men were deported to Eswatini in the first place is that they could not be repatriated to their countries of origin.

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