



Centre for  
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Corporate Tax  
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國際公務勞運



# Global Union Corporate Tax Campaigning Seminar

*Building Union Capacity to Challenge Corporate Power*

**8 – 10 October 2018**

**Centre international de conférences, 17 rue de Varembe, Geneva**

## CONCEPT NOTE

### What

The seminar will provide unions with insight and guidance on how to identify and execute corporate tax campaigns to achieve industrial and political objectives.

The three-day seminar will explain critical campaign tools that challenge corporate power, enable unions to integrate tax issues into union campaign strategies and explore how this fits with the efforts to change the rules for multinational corporations.

Successful case studies will be presented by senior global trade unionists, investigative journalists, civil society tax campaigners and researchers. Participants will learn when such campaigns can be successful, how to integrate the techniques into your current campaigns and what issues need to be addressed.

The program is structured so that the first day is suitable for senior union leaders to attend (who may not have time for the full three days) whilst other staff will attend the full three-day program.

### Who

Campaign or sectors leaders, researchers, strategists and leaders from national unions, national centres and global union federations who are dealing with multinational corporations. Any unionist interested in corporate campaigning and changing the rules regulating MNEs.

There is a strong preference for participants who are leading specific current, or planned, campaigns and want to integrate tax approaches into that work. In these cases, we encourage pairs (or triplets) of senior participants from the union who between them are responsible for bargaining, campaigning and research. Participants are expected to read short introductory materials prior to arrival.

### Where

Centre international de conférences (CICG), 17 rue de Varembe, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland.

### Why

While multinationals increase global market share and profits, worker exploitation increases. Profit shifting not only reduces tax revenue, but also reduces the ability of unions to bargain for higher wages. If there are no profits to pay taxes at the point of production, there is no money to increase wages either.

Unions need to be armed with effective tools to combat global corporate power and the resulting increase in inequality. Finding out where the money is hidden and how it got there is core business for unions who

want to bargain for higher wages. It is also core business for workers who rely on well-funded public services to meet basic needs for health, education, water energy and housing.

Corporate tax avoidance is also a key manifestation of excessive corporate power and a driver of increasing global inequality. Corporations that disrespect workers are likely to disregard other stakeholders as well, including governments, through aggressive tax avoidance. Multinational tax avoidance can have broad social impacts and generate wider public support than the abuse of workers' rights. Building coalitions to expose and combat tax avoidance may increase the ability of workers to gain rights and improve conditions.

In the last three years, a small number of unions have chased the money and tried to hold the corporations to account. Working with the growing tax justice movement, they have realised that many companies that treat workers badly are commercially vulnerable when their tax practices are examined. In Australia, a union-led campaign helped force Chevron to pay \$1 Billion in back taxes and changed the rules so that Chevron and others will pay \$10 Billion more in additional taxes over the coming decade. In Europe, unions convinced the EU to investigate McDonald's.

The lessons learned from these campaigns are valuable for all unions seeking to pressure multinational corporations – and have the added advantage of creating public pressure to change the broken tax and finance rules that facilitate the theft of workers' money.

## **Outcomes**

Participants will better understand how corporations shift profits and how to find out if they are doing it. They will learn about research and media techniques best suited to union tax campaigning and how to find civil society, academic and media partners to build their campaign. They will learn how other unions successfully mobilised workers, members and the public to build industrial, political and commercial pressure on multinational corporations.

Participants will meet other unionists, journalists, civil society activists and academics who can share ideas and assist in their future campaigns. Further outcomes will be the production of resources for future trade union use, an introduction to the resources available to unions from the newly launched trade union Centre for International Corporate Tax Accountability and Research (CICTAR) and the identification of possible future joint union priorities.

## **Further Information**

For further background information please see the International Union Rights Journal FOCUS on TAX JUSTICE (Special Edition) Volume 25 Issue 1 2018 <http://www.world-psi.org/en/focus-tax-justice-international-union-rights>

To register or for further practical details please contact [tax@world-psi.org](mailto:tax@world-psi.org).

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