

up front

autumn / winter 2014 waronwant.org

**TTIP: DEALER
TAKES ALL**

**Gaza under
attack**

Labour rights in China

WELCOME



In July Israel launched its third military assault on Gaza in five years, killing more than

2,000 people and displacing tens of thousands more. In this edition of *Up Front* you can find out more about how to join our Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign to bring Israel in line with international law. We also shine the spotlight on the EU-US trade agreement being negotiated in secret, set to deal a devastating blow to ordinary people the world over, and our campaign to stop it.

John Hilary
Executive Director



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TTIP: DEALER TAKES ALL

THE SECRET EU-US TRADE DEAL SET TO TAKE OUR JOBS, OUR PUBLIC SERVICES AND OUR DEMOCRACY

It will cost at least one million jobs. It will pave the way for the introduction of genetically modified food into Europe. It will irreversibly extend the privatisation of key public services such as the NHS. And it will give US corporations the power to sue the UK and other states for loss of profits when these governments introduce public policies designed to protect their citizens. It is the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

Few people realise that trade agreements concretely affect their lives on a daily basis, right down to the food they and their children eat. But on this occasion people can be forgiven for their lack of awareness of the perils of TTIP. This major new pro-corporate deal is currently being negotiated in secret between the European Union and the USA. If it goes through, TTIP will represent the greatest transfer of power to transnational capital that we have seen in a generation. In the words of *Guardian* columnist George Monbiot: "Wake up, people we're being shafted."

Barack Obama announced the intention to launch TTIP negotiations in February 2013, with the first round of negotiations taking place between European Commission and US officials in July that year. Since then, the negotiating teams have met every two months, with the aim of signing the agreement by the end of 2015. That means we've got just one year to stop this assault on our democracy.



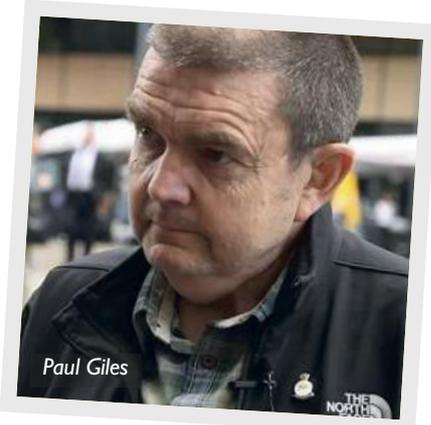
As both sides acknowledge, TTIP is not a traditional trade agreement designed to reduce tariffs between economic partners. With tariffs between the EU and US already at minimal levels, the stated aim of TTIP is to remove regulatory 'barriers' which restrict the profits to be made by transnational corporations on both sides of the Atlantic.

But these 'barriers' are in reality some of our most prized social standards and environmental regulations such as labour rights, food safety rules (including restrictions on GM food), regulations on the use of toxic chemicals, digital privacy laws and even new banking safeguards introduced to prevent a repeat of the 2008 financial crisis.

The official impact assessment commissioned by the European Commission estimates that at least one million people will lose their jobs in the EU and USA as a direct result of TTIP. With unemployment already at record levels in much of Europe, the Commission admits that many of these people will find it impossible to get new jobs.

In addition, TTIP will open up public services and government contracts in key sectors such as health and education to competition from multinational corporations. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 already introduced a wave of private sector delivery within the NHS and politicians have admitted that TTIP would make NHS privatisation irreversible in the future. TTIP would spell the end of the NHS as we know it.

TTIP would also enable huge multinational companies to sue governments for loss of profits resulting from public policy decisions, allowing a secretive panel of corporate lawyers to overrule the will of parliament and destroy our legal protections. This 'investor state dispute settlement' mechanism (see overleaf) threatens to undermine the most basic principles of democracy in the EU and USA alike.



Paul Giles

Cancer patient Paul Giles travelled to Brussels to find out how TTIP could threaten the NHS. With negotiations taking place behind closed doors, he didn't get any of his questions answered. Trade unions are calling on David Cameron to exclude health services from TTIP negotiations.

Furthermore, the lead EU negotiator on TTIP has confirmed that all the key documents relating to the agreement will remain closed to the public for up to 30 years. While the entire TTIP negotiations are shrouded in secrecy, the European Commission is reserving its tightest restrictions for the most significant documents, namely the deregulation demands being made of European countries by US negotiators. Our own MPs are denied any access to those documents, even though our future as a society hangs in the balance.

EU and US negotiators are adamant that the agreement will set the standard for all future trade and investment rules across the world, making the battle to stop TTIP a battle for our common future. If the backroom negotiators succeed in getting it through, TTIP will change the face of the world economy and people's lives forever.

Huge corporations are set to reap the rewards, leaving ordinary people around the world to lose out. Permanently. The stakes could not be higher. The fight to stop TTIP is a fight we cannot afford to lose.



So sue me!

One of the most dangerous aspects of TTIP is the new power that it would give multinational companies to sue European countries. Under TTIP, transnational corporations could claim millions in damages for loss of profits resulting from any public policy decisions that harm their bottom line. In other words, if a European country introduced a piece of legislation designed to protect its citizens – for instance, raising the national minimum wage – these companies could sue the government for loss of profits.

It sounds like the pipe dream of a wealthy businessman, but in reality it's already happening. This mechanism is found in some existing treaties and, in their quest for ever bigger profits, companies have already started using it:

- US tobacco giant Philip Morris is suing the Australian government for billions of dollars in lost profits over the public health policy that all cigarettes must be sold in plain packaging.
- Swedish energy company Vattenfall is suing the German government for €3.7 billion over the country's decision to phase out nuclear power in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear disaster.
- French company Veolia is suing the Egyptian government for loss of profits as a result of the country's decision to raise the minimum wage.
- Ecuador has been ordered to pay Occidental Petroleum \$1.77 billion in damages for terminating the oil giant's contract, even though the company had broken the law.

The so-called 'investor state dispute settlement' (ISDS) mechanism would allow US companies to bypass domestic European courts and sue governments – essentially holding us to ransom. Worse still, this would take place before secret arbitration tribunals, with cases being heard behind closed doors. This threatens to undermine the most basic principles of our democracy.

The arbitration tribunals themselves are no more than kangaroo courts. Arbitrators are not tenured judges with public authority, but a small clique of corporate lawyers who are appointed on an *ad hoc* basis, many of whom work for the companies themselves.

These corporate lawyers have been found guilty of so many legal errors that even those who support the idea of ISDS admit they have lost any credibility. A public statement issued by over 50 law professors and academics has called for the system to be abolished and the right to adjudicate returned to domestic courts.

The good news is that there has been huge uproar about these plans. Thanks to massive people-powered campaigns across Europe, the European Commission was forced to suspend negotiations on ISDS at the beginning of 2014 and conduct a public consultation. A record 150,000 people took part in the consultation – including War on Want supporters – and the overwhelming answer was 'no'; we don't want companies to be handed these destructive powers.

Despite this, the European Commission has confirmed its intention to press forward regardless and to use TTIP to introduce the controversial new powers. So it's time to show them that we mean business; we won't let them shake hands on a deal which allows giant corporations to set the agenda.



© Pete Riches

TOGETHER, WE CAN STOP TTIP

War on Want has joined forces with trade unions and campaign groups across Europe and the USA to draw public attention to the terrible threat that TTIP poses.

Over the summer we ran a national tour and day of action on TTIP which drew in thousands of people from across the country. Together with anti-fracking groups, Occupy activists, food campaigners and the People's Assembly Against Austerity we're building resistance to this catastrophic trade deal. The Keep Our NHS Public coalition has been hard at work up and down the UK fighting the irreversible privatisation of the health service if TTIP goes through.

The trade union movement is also on board with the campaign to stop TTIP. GMB, Unite, CWU and PCS have come out in full opposition, and UNISON's annual conference voted overwhelmingly for a national campaign of action against TTIP. The teaching unions NUT and UCU are also actively building resistance to the agreement.

Thanks to all this hard work, awareness of TTIP is growing. In fact, the more that people learn about it, the more outraged they become. The problem is, not enough people know about it! It's not on TV, the mainstream media are hardly covering it, and all the negotiations are happening in secret. That's where you come in. We need you to help spread the word about the deal set to hand a scary amount of power to big corporations and privatise even more of our vital public services.

European Citizens' Initiative: add your name now

In order to defeat TTIP we need to build the movement across Europe. So from September 2014, War on Want is helping to launch a European Citizens' Initiative that calls on the EU to repeal the negotiating mandate on TTIP.

A citizens' initiative has to be backed by at least one million EU citizens, coming from at least seven out of the 28 member states. A minimum number of signatories is required in each of those seven member states. War on Want is the UK representative on this initiative, and we need to get 54,750 signatures in this country to fulfil our quota.

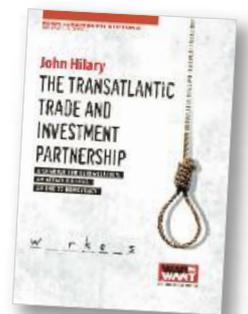
Add your name here to help stop TTIP:
waronwant.org/ECI

Other ways to stop TTIP

- **Write to your MP explaining your concern and asking them to sign Early Day Motion 202 on TTIP**

Order some MP action cards: email support@waronwant.org or call 020 7324 5040

- **Order TTIP campaigning materials to spread the word in your local area – including the TTIP briefing we published with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, now available in seven European languages: email support@waronwant.org or call 020 7324 5040**



- **Follow us on social media and share updates about TTIP:**

 [@waronwant](https://twitter.com/waronwant) #NoTTIP

 [/waronwant](https://www.facebook.com/waronwant)

With negotiations taking place behind closed doors, governments and big business are relying on a lack of public awareness in order to rush through their plans and seal the deal without too much resistance. So it's up to us to spread the word and stop TTIP before it's too late.

GAZA UNDER ATTACK

© Reuters/Suhailb Salem

On 8 July 2014, Israel launched its third military assault on Gaza in five years. The latest attack has wiped out entire neighbourhoods, with even more people killed than in the massacres of January 2009. Buildings hit include Gaza's main hospital, a home for the elderly and disabled, a UN school which constitutes Gaza's principal evacuation centre, a busy food market and Gaza's main electricity plant. With the Israeli military targeting schools, mosques and hospitals, families in Gaza have found that nowhere is safe to shelter.

Gaza has been under siege since 2007, with Israel limiting the incoming food supply to a maximum of 2,279 calories per person. The siege means that Palestinians living in Gaza are

denied basic aid and daily essentials. The humanitarian situation is deteriorating rapidly, with people queuing for hours to buy bread despite the risk of being hit by an Israeli air strike. Doctors cannot perform basic medical procedures because of the lack of electricity.

Israel can only repeat its murderous assaults on the Palestinian people because of the continued support it receives from Western states. Despite David Cameron condemning the "appalling loss of life in Gaza", the UK government continues to engage in a two-way arms trade with Israel, regardless of its blatant violation of human rights and international law. By rewarding Israel for its continued aggression, the UK is complicit in Israel's illegal Occupation and oppression of the Palestinian people.

TAKE ACTION FOR PALESTINE

As long as governments around the world maintain their support for Israel, it is up to people like us to stand with the people of Palestine and take action. At War on Want we're building a successful campaign as part of the global movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it meets the following demands: an end to the Occupation; the right of return for Palestinian refugees; and equal rights for Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Here's how you can join the BDS campaign:

1. BOYCOTT

Boycott Israeli products – all Israeli products

The Palestinian people are living under an apartheid regime, and the governments of the world do nothing about it. So it is up to us to hold Israel to account for its crimes. Apartheid in South Africa was defeated with the help of a global boycott campaign. While boycott is an individual act, it becomes much more powerful if it is promoted collectively, so check the labels

on the fruit, vegetables and products you buy and if it states 'made in Israel' – don't buy it!

2. DIVESTMENT

Boycott corporations profiting from Israel's illegal Occupation

Companies profiting from the Occupation of Palestine include SodaStream, Sainsbury's, Hewlett-Packard, Motorola and British security company G4S. You can find out more about how to stop G4S on the next page.

3. SANCTIONS

Call on the UK government to Stop Arming Israel

Israeli companies make enormous profits from military technology that is 'field-tested' on Palestinians. The UK government is buying this technology from Israel and selling British-made military equipment to Israel.

Call for an immediate two-way arms embargo:

waronwant.org/StopArmingIsrael

STOP G4S PROFITING FROM ISRAEL'S BRUTAL OCCUPATION

© War on Want/Rich Miles



War on Want is campaigning to hold British security company G4S to account after its repeated human rights violations, complicity in Israel's prison system and illegal Occupation of Palestine. G4S provides security equipment, including full body scanners, to Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank that form part of the route of Israel's illegal Wall. It also holds a contract with the Israeli Prison Service where 'administrative detentions' without charge or trial, as well as the torture of Palestinian prisoners, including children, are common practice. As such the company is actively supporting Israel and providing it with the means to continue its oppression of the Palestinian people.

We're calling on G4S to divest from Israel until it complies with international law. We know that the best way to do this is to hit them where it hurts: their reputation and their profit line.

So, together with 100 Palestinian and international organisations, we pressured the Gates Foundation to sell their £110 million stake in G4S. And they did. Then we targeted the G4S AGM in June, inundating the board with questions about their complicity in Israel's illegal Occupation in front of their shareholders. Unable to respond, G4S guards violently removed several protestors from the meeting. That same morning we also published a letter in the *Guardian* from renowned artists, academics and writers including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Angela Davis and Ken Loach calling on G4S to end its contract with Israel's prison authorities.

In response to this mounting pressure, G4S announced that it will not renew its contract with the Israeli Prison Service. This is a major achievement for our campaign as G4S had previously refused to be drawn on its contracts with prisons inside Israel. But this announcement hasn't changed

the facts on the ground. As the bombs drop on Gaza, G4S is still profiting from Israel's illegal Occupation. So we will continue to demand a commitment to end all involvement in Israel's Occupation with immediate effect.

As Randa Wahbe, from War on Want's Palestinian partner Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, said: "G4S is certainly feeling the pressure and reputational damage caused by the international campaign against its complicity in Israel's military Occupation. We will continue to approach shareholders and investors to divest from G4S. The British government must also hold the company to account for its numerous violations and end all contracts it currently holds with G4S. Help us keep up the pressure on G4S."

How you can help stop G4S:

1. **Join Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Angela Davis, Noam Chomsky, Alice Walker, Roger Waters, Ken Loach, Mike Leigh and thousands of others in calling on G4S to end its complicity in Israel's Occupation. Add your name here: waronwant.org/StopG4S**
2. **Order our free Stop G4S campaign materials to distribute to friends, your community and for events: waronwant.org/materials**
3. **Join us for one of our regular Stop G4S actions. Details of actions and where they are taking place will be posted at waronwant.org/StopG4S**

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN ACTION

Haidee-Laure Giles is War on Want's Senior International Programmes Officer. She's a passionate advocate of Food Sovereignty, an approach to the global food crisis that prioritises people's right to food and a food system free of corporate control. Here she tells us about her recent trip to Kenya to check progress on War on Want's project supporting small-scale farmers to take back control over what they grow.

"What do you produce?" I ask. "Maize, maize, maize," could be heard from all corners. The farmers looked at each other, thinking: "Is that all that we produce?" The farmers I was speaking to come from Kenya's Rift Valley, also known as the country's 'food basket' for its intense production of maize, vital to the national diet because it forms the basis of *ugali*, the dough-like starch eaten at every meal. Despite this, they are struggling to make a living from their crops and even to produce enough food to feed their family year round.

The farmers, men and women, are part of NGOMA, a grassroots organisation which sprang from the mobilisation of farmers in the maize and dairy sectors to lobby for better agro-policies favourable to small-scale producers in Kenya and the wider East Africa region. They are attending training on food sovereignty, which forms part of a two-year project with War on Want in partnership with NGOMA. The aim is to support small-scale farmers, especially women, to strengthen their livelihoods and demand that our global food system prioritises people over profit.



Haidee-Laure Giles
and Madam Dina

© War on Want

The morning discussions unveil that the farmers have been pressured by large agribusinesses into adopting a costly farming system based on monoculture of maize, lured into buying commercially imported seeds with promises of increased yield. These seeds require high usage of fertilisers, herbicides, pesticides and water to mature. They must also be purchased year on year from the same seed corporations, at ever increasing costs, locking the farmer into a cycle of corporate control.

Evidence from independent scientists backed by the UN makes clear that native seeds are better adapted to the local climate and soil – a fact echoed by the experiences of War on Want's partners in Sri Lanka and Brazil. Despite this, the Kenyan government has favoured investment in agricultural programmes that benefit large agribusiness and curtail the ability of farmers to save and exchange seeds that they have preserved year on year.

With support from War on Want, NGOMA farmers are taking back control by reverting to native seeds – and the results are astonishing: not only do the native varieties enable two harvests in one year, they are also more resistant to local pests and diseases, require less water and are significantly more nutritious and tastier! Alongside training in sustainable farming, NGOMA aims to make the voice of small-scale farmers heard at the national level, forging policies which prioritise small-scale agriculture and favour production using the food sovereignty framework to provide nutritious, affordable food now and into the future.

FIGHTING EXPLOITATION IN CHINA

At a time when thousands of workers are striking against unfair labour conditions in China, War on Want has forged partnerships with the Gagongzhen Migrant Worker Centre and Worker Empowerment to support 85,000 workers in Guangdong province in their fight for decent work.

Often referred to as the factory of the world, China's export-oriented economy relies on migrant workers who make up the majority of the workforce. They face poor working conditions, excessive and forced overtime, denial of basic workers' rights and are often unaware of unions in their workplace. Furthermore, national regulations on residency and gender have also led to widespread discrimination and marginalisation of migrant workers.

Despite new employment laws on collective bargaining developed in some provinces, and government attempts to raise the minimum wage, no major progress been made due to strong opposition from companies which profit from the cheap labour provided by migrant workers. The minimum wage has failed to keep up with inflation, increasing pressure on workers who struggle to provide enough food for their families and other basic needs. Furthermore, though recent years have seen more riots, strikes and protests from workers, few cases attract international attention.

So, together with the Gagongzhen Migrant Worker Centre and Worker Empowerment, War on Want aims to raise public awareness of the exploitation faced by migrant workers in China, and to ensure the issues they face are put firmly on the agenda of international unions that can raise issues concerning exploitative practices within global supply chains. We'll be demanding action from corporations operating in China to ensure they respect workers' rights.

Our two-year project also aims to build workers' practical skills on how to handle labour disputes and secure democratic union elections and collective bargaining. In order to attain this goal and long-term structural change in Chinese labour conditions, the Centre will undertake dialogue with officials of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions and the government. It will also collaborate with academics and civil society organisations, as well as international unions. Migrant women workers will feature at the heart of the Centre's work, building a network of women who actively tackle gender inequality at the workplace.

To find out more and see what you can do to help fight sweatshop exploitation in China, visit waronwant.org/china



© Julio Echarr



Britain says no to sweatshop exploitation

To mark the anniversary of the tragic collapse of the Rana Plaza building in Bangladesh, War on Want supporters organised actions outside Gap stores across the UK, demanding the retailer sign up to the Bangladesh Safety Accord.

A huge thanks to everyone who took part and special thanks to local organisers Nikki, Alison, Sarah, Jenny, Tansy, Stephen, Bet, Gypsy and Nigel for bringing the resistance to each of your areas.

If you want to know more about being a local organiser for future events, just email TakeAction@waronwant.org – no experience necessary! You can see more pictures from our day of action here: waronwant.org/RanaPlazaActions



Stop Glencore's deadly mine

The Anglo-Swiss multinational company Glencore is planning to build one of the world's largest opencast copper and gold mines on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. But the proposed 10,000 hectare Tampakan mining development would force 4,000 B'laan indigenous people from their homes, and swathes of forest would be destroyed. Glencore, on the other hand, stands to make enormous profits.

Worse still, in the face of concerted opposition from B'laan communities affected by the mine, the Tampakan mining project has made payments to army and paramilitary forces which have been responsible for committing atrocities against the indigenous B'laan people.



More than 5,000 War on Want supporters took up our call to demand that Glencore withdraw from the Tampakan mining project. **You can help build the campaign to stop these gold diggers by watching and sharing our video: waronwant.org/stophemine**

Right to the city

It's now 20 years since the end of apartheid in South Africa. Despite this, many people are still fighting for their basic rights – including the right to a home.

But in a huge victory for War on Want's partner, the grassroots shack dweller movement Abahlali baseMjondolo, a landmark legal judgement will now prevent the demolition of shacks which have been erected for homes. The judge also ordered the reconstruction of shacks in the Marikana informal settlement in Cape Town that had previously been destroyed – giving hundreds of people the chance to rebuild their homes and their lives.

Leaving a gift in your Will

Over the last year, thanks to the amazing generosity of supporters who left War on Want generous gifts in their Wills, we have been able to invest in vital new partnerships in Nigeria and the Philippines and develop new technologies to help our online campaigns reach even more people and have a bigger impact.

To find out more about how you can make a difference through leaving a gift in your Will, please email legacies@waronwant.org or call **020 7324 5043** and request a copy of our free guide to making a Will.

New website coming soon

Thanks to the invaluable feedback we received from supporters like you to our online survey, development of our new website is well under way.

The new site will now be fully compatible with mobiles and tablets, making it easier for you to take urgent actions wherever you are. We also know that you want it to include more updates on the progress of our campaigns and more ways to get involved – so we're working hard to make it informative, inspirational and a true reflection of all we're achieving together in the fight for equality and justice.

Make sure you're among the first to see it when it launches by signing up for our email updates now: waronwant.org/updates



A fair day's pay for a fair day's work

In our campaign demanding a living wage for all, War on Want has been linking the struggle of workers in supply chains around the world with workers in the UK. So, together with nine trade unions including UNISON, Unite and GMB, we wrote an open letter to the Living Wage Commission calling for the living wage to become mandatory for employers. Keeping the living wage as a voluntary scheme has driven even more people into the ranks of the working poor; over five million people in Britain now earn below what they need to sustain a basic standard of living.

From Dhaka to Darlington we will continue to demand political action for the rights of workers.

Join the fight for a living wage and order some action cards today: waronwant.org/materials

New online shop

War on Want has launched a great new online shop in collaboration with the radical magazine *New Internationalist*. As well as all the usual War on Want ethical products like our popular Justice for Palestine t-shirts, you can now choose from a much wider range of goodies. Better still, if you visit the shop via this link:



waronwant.org/shop, War on Want will receive 10% of the retail price of these other products. There's a huge range of reading, gifts and garments – so check it out and share the link with your friends too. **Happy shopping!**

Boots issued with Public Health Notice



Despite earning over 40% of its income from the NHS, Boots has avoided over £1.2bn in tax since it was bought out by a private consortium in 2007. That's enough to pay for more than five million ambulance call outs.

So, together with Unite the Union and Change to Win, we've been putting pressure on Boots to come clean about its tax affairs and pay its dues. In June we demonstrated outside its flagship store along with Unite and MEDACT, the medical professional's campaigns organisation, highlighting the damage caused by corporate tax avoidance to public services around the world.

Find out more and join the campaign for tax justice: waronwant.org/tax

