



up front

spring / summer 2018

waronwant.org

WHY WE **WON'T** BE SILENCED

Justice for Palestinian
political prisoners

Food sovereignty
in North Africa and West Asia



FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY

WELCOME



War on Want's values and our mission are the same today as when we were founded: to be a radical and fearless

force for equality and social justice. In this edition of *Up Front*, read about how in the face of threats and bans, we won't be silenced in the fight for global justice. We also focus on our food sovereignty work in North Africa and West Asia, introduce you to some of the powerful women we work with resisting oppression, and update you on our impactful trade democracy campaign. Read too some highlights from the past few months, including Israeli Apartheid Week and how our partner in Papua New Guinea is fighting for land rights.

In solidarity,

Asad Rehman
Executive Director



FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY

War on Want

44-48 Shepherdess Walk

London N1 7JP

tel 020 7324 5040

email support@waronwant.org

web waronwant.org

Registered Charity No. 208724

Follow us:

@waronwant

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

Please help spread the word and save money by sharing this copy of *Up Front*

Front cover: Anne Paq / Activestills.org

All images © War on Want unless otherwise stated

WHY WE WON'T BE SILENCED

2018 marks the 70th anniversary of the Nakba, when 750,000 Palestinians were forced from their homes. Today, millions live in chronic poverty, denied the right to return.

Remaining strong in the face of oppression, Palestinians called on people of conscience everywhere to take up Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns to support their struggle for justice. Committed to working with the Palestinian people to realise their rights, War on Want answered that call. For this, in January 2018 we appeared on the Israeli government's 'BDS travel ban' – but it will not silence us. Why? Because of you. Since the ban, we have been overwhelmed by solidarity from our members and supporters, old and new. For that, we want to thank you – and to promise that we will never be silenced.

War on Want has a proud history of speaking truth to power. We call out big business for building itself on the backs of the poor; a society stacked against women and people of colour; a global economy where the rules are written for the powerful. From confronting capitalism and imperialism to racism and patriarchy, we know that to win the war on want we must tackle root causes, not just symptoms.

This radical perspective has kept us at the cutting edge of movement building for 65 years. In the 1980s we broke new ground campaigning on international debt, women's rights and





freedom struggles in apartheid South Africa, Eritrea and Western Sahara. By the 1990s we were at the heart of an international movement fighting to protect the lives and livelihoods threatened by neoliberal globalisation.

The challenges we face in doing so pale in comparison to the repression confronting our partners in Palestine and beyond. Increasingly, authoritarian leaders criminalise social justice work to dampen resistance and cling onto power. In many countries, defending human rights means risking your life. In January alone two defenders working with our partners in Brazil and Colombia were murdered.

That is why your support is more important than ever. Our mission is the same today as when we began: to be a radical and fearless force for justice. But we know that justice is won on the frontline. We cut a path for other organisations in the global North to follow by demonstrating active solidarity with our partners in the global South and leading hard-hitting campaigns that tackle poverty and injustice.

Tens of thousands of members, supporters and activists give their time and money to work with us every year. It is only because of you that we can go toe-to-toe with governments and big business, no matter how daunting or controversial the issue.

In 2018 we commit ourselves to asking: *how can we build a genuinely inclusive movement, rooted in the struggles of the global South and that connects all the challenges we face; that has the power to turn back the tide and transform the world?* Our internationalism is at the heart of the answer. Active solidarity with all those fighting exploitation and

oppression, wherever they are and wherever they come from, guides everything we do.

Our roots in social movements and trade unions will continue to help us support workers fighting back against the system, whether they're McStrikers or NHS workers in the UK or garment workers, land activists and human rights defenders in the global South.

Internationalism means understanding that none of us are free until all of us are free. It means refusing to believe that 'there is no alternative' to a system that divides us to exploit us. The alternative is a world where people and planet come before profit; one where everyone has the right to a dignified life and the realisation of their rights. We see that vision because we join the dots between all these struggles. We have hope in that vision because we see our partners building and defending it every day: the women, workers and communities defending their land, lives and livelihoods from extractivism, exploitation, occupation and oppression. And we see it here in the UK, every time someone mounts a challenge, big or small, to the toxic agenda of austerity cuts, weakening labour rights, privatising our NHS and the racist scapegoating of refugees and migrant workers.

That vision is a long way from the world that confronts us today: a world more unequal than ever, in which the rights of the poor are violated every day and black and brown lives don't seem to matter. Yet, it is precisely when imagining the alternative is most difficult, that it is most important. Every individual act of courage and contribution to collective struggle builds the movement for global justice. It is because you stand with us, that we will never be silenced.

JUSTICE FOR PALESTINIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

We're proud to work together with Addameer, a Palestinian human rights charity which advocates for the rights of Palestinian political prisoners.

Addameer's legal aid team had no break over the winter holiday season. Palestinians were on the streets protesting Trump's announcement that the USA will recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital, and Israel cracked down with military force and arrests. In December alone, Israeli occupation forces arrested over 900 Palestinians, adding them to the thousands already held as political prisoners.

Ahed Tamimi (16) was one of them. Ahed and her family have been at the forefront of protests against Israel's settlements, and have been targeted because of it. Just hours before her arrest, Israeli soldiers had shot Ahed's cousin in the head with a rubber bullet. Weeks later another cousin was killed by Israeli soldiers.

Ahed's story is the rule, rather than the exception. Arresting children and targeting them with violence is an age-old colonial tactic, designed to break the will of communities resisting oppression. Israel holds 350 Palestinian children as political prisoners. This number has more than doubled in three years.

Thousands of War on Want supporters lobbied MPs last year demanding that the government take action to secure the rights of Palestinian child prisoners. But we need to keep up the pressure and to continue supporting Palestinian human rights defenders, like the tireless advocates at Addameer, at the forefront of the fight for justice.

Find out more: waronwant.org/justice-palestine



© Oren Ziv Active Stills.org

CORPORATE COMPLICITY: HOLD HSBC ACCOUNTABLE

Israel's oppression of Palestinians depends on a chain of complicity that includes governments and corporations around the world. BAE Systems sells weapons to Israel used in deadly attacks on Palestinians. JCB and Caterpillar sell equipment to the Israeli military used to demolish Palestinian homes. HSBC provides financial services to these companies and others.



All of these companies are guilty of shirking their obligations under international law to respect human rights.

Two years ago, the UN voted to compile a database of companies complicit in Israel's illegal occupation. The database, due to be published this March, will be a tool for governments

to hold these companies to account, and for campaigners to increase the pressure on them to change their ways.

War on Want has been campaigning against corporate complicity in human rights abuse for decades: from Nestlé, to Nike, to BHP Billiton and G4S, we've called out exploitative practices from Colombia to Palestine and beyond. Time and time again, we've seen how people power has exposed and helped roll back corporate criminality.

Will the UK government take the cue when the database is published? It will be on us to make sure it does!

Find out more: waronwant.org/hsbc

Women are the resistance

Women are the hardest hit by poverty and human rights abuse, whether at work, in war or at home. This is because in a society shaped by patriarchy, the system whereby men hold power over women, women experience gender-based oppression in every sphere of life. Patriarchy also means women are under-represented in positions of power, creating a vicious cycle.

Whilst there is growing awareness that the war on want is a war for women's rights, what remains less visible is that it is also a war fought by women. Across the world, the frontlines for social justice are lined by women resisting oppression. From garment factories to rural communities, women are the resistance.

Meet just a few of the powerful women we are proud to work with...



© Abiramy Jegatheeswaran

"It all comes down to power. It is no surprise that men with too much power, in the garment industry and even in our unions, abuse it. I risked a lot to speak out against powerful men abusing women, but I would do it again. All women are my sisters."

Hira Biswas, garment worker organising with the Bangladesh Accord on Health & Safety

"We want a country where everyone is treated equally, where government meets people's needs and makes wise use of our natural resources. Empowering grassroots women is our priority. Now there are more women like me, vocal on issues we have been shut out of. It is about our children's future."

Effrey Dademo, co-founder, ACT NOW! Papua New Guinea

"Until 1955 women weren't even citizens. We had no rights in Honduras. Every gain we've made has been due to our work, not the government. It'll take all of us to change the dominant economic model, so I'm against half the population of the world being confined to four walls."

Maria Luisa Regalado, coordinator of CODEMUH: The Honduran Women's Collective



© Hal Rhoades

"Protecting our territory is our number one commitment. For us, territory is everything. It is life, water and food. It is where we pass on our culture and knowledge. It is where we practice our spirituality. For the Wayuu, it is the right to self-determination and our ancestral rights, based on our history."

Angelica Ortiz, co-founder, Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu (Wayuu Women's Force), Colombia

Food Sovereignty in North Africa and West Asia

© Mads Nissen/Paros Pictures

Countries in North Africa and West Asia (NAWA) are amongst the largest food importers in the world, relying on international markets for more than 50% of their food.

The world food crisis of 2007-2008 highlighted how crucial the issue of food sovereignty is. The famine and “bread riots” that swept several countries, like Egypt, exposed a broken food system controlled by corporations, seeking to maximise their profits by shifting away from farming staple foods, grabbing land, producing agro-fuels and exploiting agricultural workers. Women are the hardest hit, enduring dangerous working conditions, abuse and harassment in corporate farms and factories.

WHAT IS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY?

The global peasant movement La Via Campesina defined it as the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.

During the Arab uprisings it was the rallying cry of “bread, freedom and social justice” that echoed throughout the region in 2011. While the world focused its attention on urban rebellions in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and other countries, dissent in rural areas was also shaking the foundations of power. It is no coincidence that the Tunisian uprising started in Sidi Bouzid, an impoverished agricultural region where big agribusiness and speculation flourished. Neither is it any coincidence that the event which triggered a chain reaction of resistance across the region was when a Tunisian fruit vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, set himself on fire following prolonged harassment and humiliation by a municipal official.

Today, issues of food sovereignty and fair access to land are still at the heart of people’s socio-economic demands in North Africa and West Asia (NAWA). And no wonder. Three decades of economic restructuring and deregulation, imposed by International Financial Institutions (IFIs), have devastated small-scale agricultural communities. The neoliberal development model they enforce, which promotes an export-led agriculture of largely cash crops rather than of staple foods for local consumption, has undermined food security and seen costs of inputs (seeds, fertilisers, herbicides, etc.) soar beyond

what most farmers can afford. As a result, throughout countries like Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen, countless people have lost their land and livelihoods; their families thrown into poverty.

Alongside our partners, we have embarked on an action-research project on food sovereignty that puts small-scale family farmers and fisherfolk at the centre of a movement for transformative change. Covering Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Occupied Western Sahara, the project will work with grassroots organisations, farmers and activists. Together, we will research and co-create an investigation into radical alternatives, based on the principles of food sovereignty and environmental sustainability, which will inform collective action into the future.

WHAT OUR PARTNER IN TUNISIA SAYS ABOUT THE PROJECT:

There is a big regional disparity in Tunisia between coastal zones and marginalised interior rural regions that depend on agriculture. We are crippled by water shortages, unfair land distribution, the impacts of speculation, and agricultural policies oriented towards exporting cash crops and importing staple foods.

In this context, the question of food sovereignty takes centre stage as we investigate alternatives to the current development model. We are conducting field research in four regions focusing on different issues:

- a) Date palms and the issue of water in the south;
- b) Olives and the issue of access to land in the centre-west;
- c) Citruses and the issues of distribution and exports in the north-east;
- d) Vegetable growing vs. cereal crops and impacts on local populations in the north-west.

Once we have documented the experience of small farmers under these agricultural policies, we hope to present our findings in local forums in order to broaden the discussion on food sovereignty and explore possibilities for collective action.

Layla Riahi works with the Tunisian Observatory of Economy (TOE), a small organisation of young researchers, campaigners and policy analysts that focuses on issues such as: trade justice, tax justice, extractivism and food sovereignty.

WHAT OUR PARTNER IN MOROCCO SAYS ABOUT THE PROJECT:

Agriculture is a very important sector in our country, especially at the social level. This sector has witnessed an increasing economic liberalisation, imposed from outside, which led to the impoverishment and dispossession of peasant families as well as deepening our food dependency. Understanding and measuring the real impacts of corporate agriculture is crucial if we are to bring to light the damage being done to our communities and the possibility of alternatives based on food sovereignty.

It is our hope that this project will achieve exactly that. Research and field work will help us diagnose the problems undermining living and working conditions. The project will also engage agricultural workers to share their vision of alternatives. Ultimately, this work will help us lead awareness-raising campaigns around agribusiness and empower people to continue fighting for justice.

Jawad Moustakbal works with ATTAC-CADTM Morocco, a grassroots organisation that carries out campaigns and popular education initiatives around issues such as: debt, trade, extractivism and food sovereignty.



© Nada Trigu

Find out more: waronwant.org/NAWA

Fighting for **workers' rights** across the globe

Workers' rights have always been at the heart of what we do at War on Want. Work is crucial, not just to provide for ourselves and our families but also to shape the world around us. When labour struggles are won they don't just impact the workplace but ripple out through whole communities, deepening democracy and bringing societies together.

Workers everywhere, especially women, often face threats, intimidation, harassment and dismissal for organising into trade unions and speaking up for themselves and each other. We work in active solidarity with grassroots groups and unions organising to win decent pay and conditions.

War on Want supports marginalised groups such as migrant workers and those on precarious contracts and many others who face seemingly insurmountable barriers. We do this because we know that the rights of workers are indivisible and that together we are all stronger.

McStrike

On 4 September McDonald's workers made history when they went on strike for the first time in the UK. They were striking for £10/hour minimum wage, an end to zero hour contracts and for respect on the job. The workers at two stores in Crayford, South East London and Cambridge were members of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union, which War on Want is working closely with.



UNIQLO

The UNIQLO campaign coalition, led by War on Want, is inching closer to securing the unpaid wages that are owed to 4000 workers in Indonesia, with another smaller brand recently committing funds. UNIQLO has been forced to make a public statement responding to the campaign, in an attempt to justify their position and dodge responsibility for the rights of garment workers who made their clothes – and made them rich.

Find out more: www.waronwant.org/workers-rights



DEMANDING TRADE DEMOCRACY

The government has learned from the defeat of TTIP. Now, they see any public debate on trade as a threat. That's why Liam Fox is consulting big business on the Trade Bill while leaving parliament and the public in the dark.

Last year's Queen's Speech promised an 'independent trade policy' after Brexit. But with elite interests crowding round the Trade Bill, it's looking more like a declaration of corporate independence. MPs are not allowed to know, let alone set limits on what those talks might cover. Hundreds of thousands of people have lobbied their MPs to demand trade democracy. In February, people from 38 constituencies came to London to take part in our trade mobilisation with Global Justice Now! protesting and lobbying their MPs.

Thanks to this immense grassroots effort, over 150 MPs have already called for parliamentary scrutiny over trade deals. Secret talks with the USA on a new deal are already under way. With parliament unceremoniously elbowed out of the way, the government plans to keep the content of the talks secret for four years after they finish.

This makes sense from the government's perspective because it was public scrutiny and protest that took its trade agenda down last time. War on Want came together with people across the UK and EU to build a movement that took TTIP from an obscure acronym to a lightning rod of resistance.

Despite government assurances that the present Trade Bill will just transfer existing trade arrangements from EU to UK agreements, the reality is that most will have to be altered or entirely re-written: something Liam Fox intends to do behind closed doors. TTIP may be dead but its spirit is still haunting Westminster.

Widespread concerns around food safety standards and the NHS reflect a growing awareness that corporate influence is in conflict with and compromising the public interest. We need decent pay, protected public services and a government that is accountable to us. The corporate lobbyists want what they always want: a deal that will deregulate the financial sector, create a market for public services and drive down wages to boost their profits.

In today's world, trade deals affect almost every area of our lives – from accessing public services and essential medicines to our privacy. Trade democracy will be essential to ensure the new deal works for all of us, not just an elite few. Like history books, trade deals reflect the interests of their authors. If we've learned anything from the past decade, where the majority have struggled to make ends meet in Austerity Britain while the rich have kept their bailouts and their bonuses, it's to not let the 1% write our futures for us.

Find out more: waronwant.org/trade-justice

VICTORY FOR TEXTILE WORKERS IN BANGLADESH

● Five years ago, War on Want supporters helped secure the first binding agreement holding fashion brands responsible for the conditions of the garment workers making them rich. After the Rana Plaza collapse killed over 1100 people, the Bangladesh Accord on Health and Safety was signed by several fashion brands, committing them to improve building safety.

Now, we've seen that victory in action. In January 2018, unions representing Bangladeshi textile workers reached an unprecedented \$2.3m settlement with a multinational apparel brand over delays to fixing hazards on factory sites. This shows how crucial legally binding agreements can be in holding corporations to account.

Israeli Apartheid Week

● War on Want sponsored several exciting events for Israeli Apartheid Week 2018, focusing on the key role played by artists in the fight against apartheid. First up was Palestinian-American poet Remi Kanazi. We supported university students in Leeds, Bristol and Brighton to host Remi on their campuses to perform poetry and host discussion on art, politics, and student activism. Remi ended his tour in London, where he opened our concert for Benjamin Zephaniah, poet, actor and long-standing anti-apartheid campaigner. Our favourite East London venue Rich Mix was pumping with energy, a true demonstration of the political power of poetry and music.



Celebrating migrant communities through One Day Without Us

● On 17 February groups around the country took action to celebrate the presence of migrants, past and present in the UK. The day highlighted how politicians scapegoat migrants for social and economic problems they did not cause and, in fact, are hardest hit by.

Migrant communities have always been at the centre of struggles against precarious work, poor housing and poverty. War on Want's *Stand with Migrant Workers* campaign supports these struggles. We're working to highlight how the immigration system is being used to undermine hard-won economic, social and workers' rights, creating a race to the bottom that allows bosses to push down wages, working conditions and living standards for everyone.

Standing in solidarity with Latin America

● War on Want joined a packed out UK Latin America Conference 2017 for a day of solidarity with Latin America – against the backdrop of a new push for corporate trade deals, and the expansion of deadly extractive industries. War on Want co-hosted a panel alongside Argentina Solidarity Campaign (ASC): *The WTO Summit, free trade imperialism and resistance in Latin America*. Trade campaigner Mark Dearn spoke at the panel alongside our partner Camila Mendez, a Colombian land defender, former Argentinian ambassador to the UK Alicia Castro, and Gabriel Rodriguez of the International Transport Workers' Federation & ASC.



Fighting for land rights in Papua New Guinea



© ACT NOW!

● The first year of our project in Papua New Guinea (PNG) has placed the issue of illegal land grabs firmly on the agenda. War on Want's Asia Programme Officer visited to spend valuable time with the local partner and discuss international advocacy plans. This project is part of War on Want's support of indigenous land rights and self-determination, which for peoples of the Pacific are concerns that have often been eclipsed by a focus on the environmental impacts. Our extensive field research has documented the human impact of land grabs. The campaign work by our local partner, ACT NOW!, captured public attention across Melanesia, focussing the agenda in the election year on the issue of customary land being seized by foreign logging and palm oil companies under the guise of development, and successfully drawing international attention by pushing for a visit from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Standing up against the global mining industry

● As the global mining industry met for its annual Mines and Money conference in November, War on Want co-hosted human rights defenders who travelled to London to expose the true costs of the UK's extensive ties to this sector.

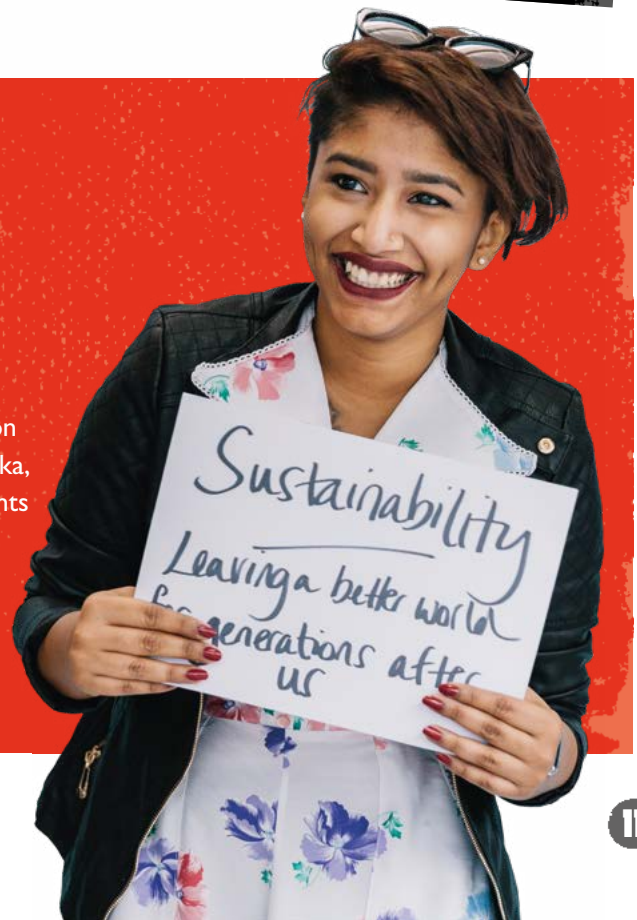
We hosted defenders from the frontlines of mining struggles in the Philippines, Colombia and Uganda. The delegation formed part of a week of creative action called *Rise, Resist, Renew: Alternatives to Mines and Money*. The action highlighted London's role in the expansion of global mining destruction, reminding UK citizens that deals struck here often mean displacement, destruction and death for communities living on mineral-rich lands around the world.

We hope you enjoy Up Front, and we would love to hear your feedback. Please visit waronwant.org/up-front to answer a few questions.

Get involved with TRAIID!

● Since 2010, the fashion charity TRAIID has supported War on Want's grassroots projects in China, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, working with local partners in their fight for labour and union rights in garment factories. TRAIID funds these projects by collecting wearable clothes and selling them in their charity shops. Support them by donating your wearable unwanted clothes!

Book a free fast collection www.traid.org.uk/wecollect or drop off your donations at a TRAIID shop or textile bank



© TRAIID



© CODEMIH

Donate today to help War on Want fight for justice

What your donation could help us do:

£25 could pay for vital campaigning materials, action cards and posters we need to help raise awareness of human rights violations around the world

£50 could help us to provide resources to communities being devastated by extractive industries, so they can mobilise themselves to stand up for their rights

£100 could help us research the insidious arms trade between the UK and Israel and help us to campaign against Israel's violations of international law



waronwant.org/give

Yes, I want to support War on Want by making a donation

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Yes, I would like more information on leaving a gift in my will to War on Want.

We want to make sure we keep in touch with you by the way you prefer. If you've already let us know how you want us to communicate with you – thank you! We'll continue to contact you the same as before.

How would you like to be contacted?

Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/> N
Post	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/> N
Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/> N
SMS	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/> N

I enclose a cheque / CAF Voucher / Postal Order made payable to **War on Want** (delete as appropriate)

Please debit my MasterCard / Visa / Maestro / CAF Card (delete as appropriate)

Amount £ _____

Card Number (shaded boxes for Maestro only)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Issue Number (Maestro only)

Expiry Date - Start Date -

Security Code (last 3 digits on your signature strip)

Name of Cardholder(s) _____

Signature(s) _____

Date _____



Make your gift worth 25% more – at no cost to you

I am a UK tax payer and I would like War on Want to reclaim tax on all donations that I have made in the last 4 years and all future donations that I make from the date of this declaration.

I understand that I must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year that is at least equal to the tax that all the charities that I donate to will reclaim in that year. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand that War on Want will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.

I am not a UK tax payer (if your circumstances change, please let us know).

Please fill in the whole form and return it with your gift to: **War on Want, 44-48 Shepherdess Walk, London N1 7JP**

Registered charity no. 208724

N17BC