



up front

autumn / winter 2016

waronwant.org

**THE NEW
COLONIALISM:
BRITAIN'S SCRAMBLE
FOR AFRICA'S RESOURCES**

**Ethical fashion?
Exposing Uniqlo's hypocrisy**

**MIGRANT WORKERS' RIGHTS:
SIGN UP TO OUR NEW CAMPAIGN**

**WAR ON
WANT**

FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY

WELCOME



After twelve years this *Up Front* will be my last. It's been an honour and a privilege to lead War on Want and I am proud

to have worked for such an inspiring cause. Thank you for supporting War on Want.

The values and principles that War on Want upholds have never been more important. In this edition of *Up Front*, read about our urgent new campaigns for migrant workers' rights and for a radical trade agenda that puts people and planet first.

Also in this edition we are proud to showcase our partnerships with social movements around the world. Read about how our partner SACOM is exposing workers' rights abuses in China and how MONLAR in Sri Lanka is helping small farmers fight the corporate capture of the food system. Read too about Britain's new scramble for Africa's resources.

John Hilary

John Hilary
Executive Director



FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY

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Building a move

War on Want is proud to work in partnership with grassroots social movements, trade unions and other progressive voices around the world.

Our work with partners is crucial to War on Want's fight against the root causes of poverty and human rights violation and puts us at the heart of the worldwide movement for global justice.

Whether defending indigenous peoples' land from mining companies in Colombia, fighting for workers' rights in China, challenging the corporate control of food production in Mozambique, or demanding the right to decent housing for shack dwellers in South Africa, our long term partnerships provide the foundation for our politics and are central to our work.

Our partners' struggles are focused on addressing the systems that exploit, marginalise and oppress them. Particular to these struggles is the fight against racism and patriarchy which manifests itself in the unequal relationships that still exist between the North and the South. Exploitative trade arrangements are still being forged between Northern governments and governments in the regions where War on Want works. The global South is still seen as the under-developed supplier of raw materials and cheap, unskilled labour, the recipient of aid whose people need to be saved by the North through a neoliberal approach to development. Through foreign policy and trade arrangements, neoliberalism has come to resemble a new form of colonialism in the global South.



ment for global justice

Our work then is not about handing back power, but supporting our partners to reclaim what is rightfully theirs. War on Want seeks to create platforms for our partners to speak with their own voices. We see our partners as equals and respect the ambitions and politics of all we work with. It is why War on Want has been singled out as a trusted channel of support for radical groups around the world.

We know that being a charity based in the UK gives us access to powerful institutions right on our doorstep. We use this opportunity to make demands driven by our partners, on the government, companies and donors.

We know too that our partners will always be best placed to determine their own needs, their own demands, and their own methods of resistance. Our approach to working with partners is to develop their capacity to enable them to do just that. We have a record of important victories that we have secured with our partners, through working in this way.

MONLAR in Sri Lanka successfully opposed a new Seed Act which sought to give agrochemical corporations control over seed production, and criminalise the indigenous practice of sharing native seeds between farmers; SACOM in China has exposed human rights violations of international brands and helped improve working conditions for thousands of factory workers; and Abahlali baseMjondolo in South Africa won two court victories, helping to strengthen eviction laws in South Africa and benefiting over 4 million people living in informal settlements.

Together we are making a genuine and lasting impact on the lives of dispossessed people across the world. We are fighting back. And we are winning.

What our partners say

“War on Want has been a key supporter of the rights of informal traders to trade freely in Kenya. With the help of War on Want we have built a strong, democratic and inclusive organisation for informal traders.”

KENASVIT, Kenya

“Abahlali feel honoured by the partnership we have with War on Want. The partnership allows us to set our own agenda and determine our own destiny.”

Abahlali baseMjondolo, South Africa

“War on Want took a conscious decision to support the work of COSPACC, recognising our efforts to help with the organising, mobilising and training of communities and victims of multinational crimes in the department of Casanare. Making these stories visible has been central to the search for truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of no repetition of the atrocities committed.”

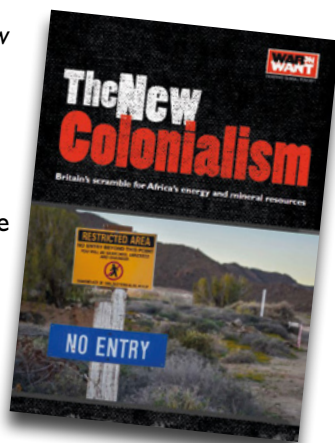
COSPACC, Colombia

The New Colonialism

British companies, aided and abetted by the UK government, are at the forefront of a new 'scramble for Africa'.

Africa is today facing a new colonial invasion, no less devastating than the one it suffered during the nineteenth century. Its wealth in natural resources is being seized by foreign, private interests, and there is no sign of this stopping anytime soon.

War on Want's report, *The New Colonialism: Britain's scramble for Africa's mineral resources*, reveals that 101 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE), most of them British, have mining operations in Africa. These companies now control resources of oil, coal, gold, diamonds, gas and much else, worth in excess of \$1 trillion.



While the scale and scope of British mining companies' involvement in the exploitation of Africa's resources is staggering, so too is the devastating trail of social, environmental and human rights abuses they are leaving in their wake.

In Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara, the indigenous Saharawi people have been denied their right to self-determination and freedom in their own land since 1975. They have also consistently protested against oil exploration.

Yet British company Cairn Energy is one of several companies to have been handed permits by the Moroccan government to explore for oil off the coast of Western Sahara. It is foreign oil investment that boosts Morocco's frail veneer of international legitimacy and finances the expensive occupation.

By doing deals with the Moroccan government to exploit Western Sahara's natural resources, British companies such as Cairn Energy are complicit in the illegal and violent occupation.

There are many more examples of people's lives and livelihoods being devastated, as British mining companies plunder natural resources in the pursuit of profit. Rio Tinto's operations in Madagascar and Glencore's in Zambia are but two.

Yet, rather than rein in these companies, successive UK governments are actively championing them through trade, investment and tax policies. This has to end. It's time British companies and the British government were held to account.

War on Want's partners in Africa are demanding that mining be done differently. Together we are calling for mining revenues to stay in the countries where they are mined and for governments to act to protect mining-affected communities.

Read our report:
waronwant.org/TheNewColonialism



© Congreso de los Pueblos

Fighting for a different kind of peace

As the Colombian state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) announce an end to hostilities, what next for the millions of Colombians who took to the streets this summer to demand a different kind of peace? War on Want's Seb Muñoz, who joined the protests, explains.

The human impact of Colombia's 70 year conflict is stark: 220,000 people dead, thousands disappeared, and many more victims of sexual violence. Almost 7 million people have been forced from their homes, often violently, making Colombia the country with the second largest number of internally displaced people, surpassed only by Syria.

The central feature of the conflict is rampant inequality. For indigenous and Afro-descendant small scale farmers, inter-city truck drivers, teachers, women-led organisations, students, workers and all who joined the two-week national strike, only a peace agreement with social, economic and environmental justice at its heart will do.

Negotiations to bring about an end to Colombia's armed conflict have all too often centred on government talks with the two armed insurgency groups, the FARC and the National Liberation Army (ELN), leaving the vast majority of Colombians sidelined and the voices of grassroots social movements silenced.

Predictably, those who have benefitted most from the war are the established elites, who have historically controlled access to land and its natural resources.

At the same time, government policies are conceding large swathes of land to deeply destructive mining projects and leading to the privatisation of basic services, already denied to most Colombians.

Now, in an historic move, the Colombian state and FARC have announced an end to hostilities.

However, the social movements at the forefront of the struggle – made up mostly of survivors of violence and human rights abuses – know only too well that the prospect of peace in Colombia does not rest solely on the deals done between the rebel groups and the state. Many more people have a stake.

War on Want supports the Congress of the Peoples, one of many social movements who have clear proposals about how to bring about a lasting and sustainable peace. If ordinary Colombians' land, livelihoods and culture are to be protected, they must be heard.

Find out more on our website:
waronwant.org/profitting-conflict

FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE

War on Want is proud to work in partnership with grassroots social movements, trade unions and other progressive voices seeking to challenge the root causes of poverty and injustice. Here are just a few examples.

You can find more at waronwant.org

HONDURAS

Violence against women is widespread and systematic in Honduras. Our partner CODEMUH (the Honduran Women's Collective), is fighting for better living and working conditions for garment factory workers. From providing legal advice on domestic abuse cases to taking direct action to advocate for women's labour rights, CODEMUH creates a community of strong women who are able to challenge rampant machismo and gender-based oppression.

waronwant.org/honduras

WESTERN SAHARA

Ever since Moroccan military forces invaded Western Sahara in 1975, the indigenous Saharawi people have seen their natural resources exploited. War on Want continues to highlight the violent and illegal occupation of Western Sahara and the ongoing human rights crisis.

waronwant.org/western-sahara

KENYA

Street vendors and informal traders make up the majority of Kenya's workforce but barely earn enough money to survive. Every day they face harassment, abuse and the threat of eviction. Our partner, Kenya National Alliance of Street Vendors and Informal Traders (KENASVIT), is supporting this vulnerable group to fight for their right to work in the city.

waronwant.org/kenya

COLOMBIA

Against the backdrop of civil war, mining operations have forced people from their land, polluted the environment and led to widespread human rights violations. War on Want's Oil Justice Project, in partnership with Colombian grassroots organisation COSPACC, is supporting victims to speak out against injustice and to hold companies to account.

waronwant.org/colombia

PERU

The plunder of natural resources is intensifying, fuelling violence and conflict. Our partner, Plataforma Interinstitucional de Celendin (PIC), is supporting indigenous communities as they fight to save their land and livelihoods from the threat of the 'Conga' gold mining project.

waronwant.org/peru

SOUTH AFRICA

The South African government's failing housing programme is plagued by corruption, political patronage and poor quality construction. Our partner, Housing Assembly, is working tirelessly to organise people living in shacks, informal settlements and social housing to campaign for their right to decent shelter.

waronwant.org/south-africa

AROUND THE WORLD

CHINA

Workers' rights abuses are rampant in Chinese garment factories. But in spite of widespread repression by the Chinese government, the labour movement is growing. Our partner, Worker Empowerment (WE), is at the forefront of the garment workers' fight for a living wage, safe working conditions and the right to join a trade union.

waronwant.org/china

PALESTINE

Palestinians have faced Israeli repression and human rights abuse for over 60 years, during which time governments around the world have allowed Israel to act with impunity. Our partner Addameer advocates for the rights of Palestinian political prisoners and works to end torture and other rights violations.

waronwant.org/palestine

BANGLADESH

Three years from the Rana Plaza disaster and since the hard-won Bangladesh Safety Accord came into effect, workers are still fighting to ensure factories are safe. Progress has been made and our partners are seeking to build on that, with a workforce that is more aware of their rights and fighting better together than ever before.

waronwant.org/bangladesh

MOZAMBIQUE

The Mozambican government is handing over large swathes of land to private corporations and mega agricultural projects. Our partner, The National Union of Peasant Farmers (UNAC), is fighting for the rights of small scale farmers to access land and control food production.

waronwant.org/mozambique

SRI LANKA

Our partner, The Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform (MONLAR), is supporting farmers and fishers to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, following Sri Lanka's bloody and bitter 25-year civil war. They are working to improve the self-reliance of communities through sustainable farming, and campaigning for agricultural and land policies that protect them.

waronwant.org/sri-lanka



Farming for a better future

In Sri Lanka, War on Want's partner, **The Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform (MONLAR)**, is supporting farmers to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, following decades of war and conflict.

Small-scale farming is the main source of livelihood for Sri Lankans. There are more than 3.2 million small farms and home gardens in Sri Lanka, accounting for more than 80% of all agricultural land. Yet, since the end of the bloody and bitter civil war, the government has seized much land under the guise of economic development and security. Access to land is vital, and it is why War on Want's partner, MONLAR, is campaigning for agricultural and land policies that put small-scale farmers first.

MONLAR is also promoting sustainable, safe farming practices, such as the use of organic fertilisers, while at the same time raising awareness about the severe detrimental health impacts of some chemical pesticides. Many farmers have only ever used chemical fertilisers and pesticides. These are harmful to health, damage the environment and deplete the soil.

MONLAR is introducing farmers to new techniques, such as mixed-cropping (planting two or more plants simultaneously in the same field), composting and seed cultivation – all of which are sustainable, inexpensive and promote self-reliance.

This work has helped farmers and their families access a variety of nutritious foods. Any surplus produce is then sold at local markets and provides households with much needed money for education and health care.

War on Want, in partnership with farmers' movements such as MONLAR, has long called for a food system based on sustainable small-scale farming methods, not corporate control.

Across the world a handful of multinational corporations dominate the food production market at the expense of small-scale farmers and communities. Appropriating land from local communities to produce food on an industrial scale, these multinational corporations profit hugely from promoting damaging agricultural practices through harmful pesticide use and genetically engineered seeds.

It's time farmers had ownership and control over the land they work. Democracy should be at the heart of food production. This is why War on Want supports the international call for food sovereignty.

Find out more: waronwant.org/food-sovereignty

Exposing Uniqlo's hypocrisy

CHINA

Workers' rights abuses are rampant in garment factories in China. War on Want's partner, Students and Scholars against Corporate Misbehaviour (SACOM), is exposing the hypocrisy behind fashion giant Uniqlo's 'ethical' promises.

China is the biggest exporter of clothing in the world, with over 10 million garment workers producing clothes for major fashion brands. China is also the only major garment producer to deny workers the right to organise and join independent trade unions.

Behind fashion's glossy image, the exploitation of workers is rife and the clothes we buy come at a terrible cost – whatever fashion brands may promise.

War on Want's new report with SACOM, *This Way to Dystopia: Exposing Uniqlo's Abuse of Chinese Garment Workers*, exposes the hypocrisy behind Uniqlo's commitment to 'corporate social responsibility'. Excessive overtime, low pay, dangerous working conditions and oppressive management is rife in Uniqlo's supplier factories in China – the grim reality facing garment workers falls far short of the fashion giant's rhetoric.

Since 2005, SACOM has been at the forefront of uncovering human rights violations at factories in China supplying international brands such as Apple and Disney. So far, SACOM's campaign against Uniqlo has forced the company to improve working conditions for some 8,000 garment workers. But there is more to be done.

Garment workers are fighting every day to improve their working conditions – and they are winning. A record number of strikes and protests initiated by workers have paved the way for minimum wage increases and labour laws to protect workers' rights. In spite of widespread repression by the Chinese government, the labour movement in China is on the rise.

The biggest obstacle for labour rights groups and unions is the lack of transparency in supply chains. Fashion brands go to great lengths to keep their suppliers a secret – even workers are kept in the dark about which brand they are producing for.

Unless the fashion industry is transformed and brands are held to account for conditions in their supplier's factories, workers will continue to be exploited to produce clothes for the UK high street.

Join War on Want's campaign to get Uniqlo to publish its supply chain information. Together with SACOM we demand that Uniqlo commit to paying a living wage to workers, guarantee safe working conditions and ensure the right of workers to organise.

Find out more: waronwant.org/sweatshops-china



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Stand with migrant workers: together we can end precarious contracts

● The EU referendum result has created a huge amount of uncertainty for us all. It has given space to appalling racism and xenophobia. Now is the time to hold on to the values that War on Want has always stood for: internationalism, justice and solidarity. It is why we have launched our Stand with Migrant Workers: End Precarious Contracts campaign. The rights of workers have always been vital in the fight against poverty, yet in the wake of Brexit, big business is busy lobbying the government to weaken the rights of workers, especially migrant workers. Using the vote for Brexit as a licence to further erode workers' rights is a race to the bottom for all. We can't let this happen.

Find out more:

waronwant.org/StandWithMigrantWorkers



G4S reneges on promise to exit Israel

● British security company G4S came under fire for the sixth year in a row at its 2016 Annual General Meeting. Having announced it would sell its entire Israeli business in the next two years, it has since reneged on its promise. It is clear, now more than ever, that G4S cannot be trusted. Our Stop G4S campaign continues.

Find out more on our website: waronwant.org/G4S

SHOP AND SUPPORT THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

● There's a great way you can support our work and find fab presents, with an ethical edge, for your friends and family.

Go to wow.ethicalshop.org and everything you purchase will benefit War on Want's work.



Palestine: a victory for local democracy

● The High Court has ruled in favour of Swansea, Gwynedd and Leicester councils who faced a legal claim over council motions concerning illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The ruling is a victory for local democracy and freedom of speech, and affirms the right of local councils to act in solidarity with Palestinians and to ensure their policies are in line with international and UK law. Take action: Tell your MP to speak up to protect local democracy.

waronwant.org/protect-local-democracy

Time to organise for trade justice

● The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) was firmly on the ropes, even before the EU referendum, but Brexit means the British people will now no longer be subject to the powers of the secretly negotiated EU-US trade deal. In the coming months and years Britain will seek to negotiate its trade relationship with the EU and the rest of the world. We know TTIP is a template for such deals. The future direction of Britain's trade policy has ground-breaking implications and there is a real danger our most prized social standards and environmental regulations could be traded away. The stakes could not be higher. Only a radical trade agenda that puts people and planet first will do.

Find out more: waronwant.org/trade-justice



Together we can stop CETA

● The EU-Canada deal CETA, TTIP's 'evil twin', remains a major threat despite the vote to leave the EU. But thanks to more than 13,000 War on Want supporters, we are winning. The European Commission, intent on denying national parliaments a vote on whether to accept the toxic trade deal, has been forced into a humiliating climbdown on the back of intense public pressure. CETA will now have to be approved by each of the European Union's 28 member states. This is a small victory for democracy in confronting the authoritarian European Commission that continues to put the interests of big business first. However, it is vital CETA is voted down at the European Parliament when the vote comes up at the end of this year.

More about CETA waronwant.org/ceta

Farewell John and thank you!

● After 12 years, John Hilary is leaving War on Want. John joined War on Want in 2004 as its Director of Campaigns and Policy, and was appointed Executive Director in 2008. John said: "It has been an honour and a privilege to be entrusted with the leadership of War on Want, and I am grateful to all those who have supported me during my time as Executive Director. The values and principles that War on Want upholds have never been more important than they are today, and I have no doubt that it will continue to make a real difference in the struggle for social justice across the world. I look forward to supporting War on Want in new ways over the coming years, as well as joining in its campaigns as an ordinary member. I will always be proud to have worked for such an inspiring cause."





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 the illegal occupation oppressing Palestinians



waronwant.org

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

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