

# Freedom Report: Peace and Democratic Rights

November 2017



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# Introduction

Peace, equality, democracy. In a fractured world, the values championed by trade unions remain the best pathway to prosperity and security. And our capacity to organise gives us the tools to fight for fairness everywhere.

Decent work and democratic rights are being weakened in almost all countries, while inequality continues to grow. Extremism and xenophobia are on the march as people's feelings of insecurity are manipulated by chauvinists of the extreme right. As the global economic model continues to fail working people, unemployment and desperation create the conditions for crime and fundamentalism to flourish. Fundamentalist terror groups can too easily attract young recruits who have no prospect of a decent job.

The international system built after the horror of the second world war and centred on the United Nations has never been perfect, but it has provided a vital means to reduce armed conflicts. That system is now in jeopardy.

War rages in at least 23 countries, and most governments are either directly or indirectly (through arms sales or peacekeeping missions) linked to conflict. Turkey's descent into autocracy and the persecution of the Rohingya people in Myanmar show the fragility of peace and democracy.

People are once more living in real fear of the use of nuclear weapons, amid irresponsible brinkmanship between North Korea and the United States. The arms trade must be curtailed, with an end to nuclear weapons and other tools of mass destruction an urgent priority. The award of the Nobel Prize to the International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons is symbolic of the hope the world needs.

**More than 150 indigenous leaders, environmental activists and wildlife rangers across three continents have been killed defending their communities, land and environment in 2017<sup>1</sup>**

Nor is this an easy moment for unions and civil society. Democratic space is shrinking and human and labour rights are in peril worldwide. The ITUC supports Sweden's Global Deal on improving dialogue between governments and unions as a beacon of light.

Governments' commitment to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement created hope. But those same governments have not shown the will to tackle corporate greed, nor to stamp out corruption and rampant tax avoidance.

Working people also need a Just Transition to a zero-carbon economy, acquiring the skills that will guarantee their livelihoods and a healthy future for our planet.

Massive change is required to achieve the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. This means re-writing the rules of the global economy, a transformation 85% of the world's people support, according to the ITUC Global Poll.

While economic security cannot resolve all conflict, it does help ensure that the prevailing conditions for trust in democracy can flourish. These conditions include shared prosperity through decent wages, universal social protection, freedom of association and collective bargaining. Equally, tax justice is essential to extending social protection and publicly funded health and education.

Some 84% of people say the minimum wage in their country is not enough to live on. It's clear our current historic level of inequality cannot be tackled without a wage rise.

G20 countries recognise the risk and agreed this year that workers' rights cannot be curtailed as countries compete for investment. The leaders of the world's largest economies underlined that this is companies' responsibility too.

**The number of countries experiencing physical violence and threats against workers has risen by 10 percent in just one year – ITUC Global Rights Index.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/11/2017-deadliest-on-record-for-land-defenders-mining-logging>

Unions have always been on the frontlines of the fight for peace, democracy and human rights. They campaign to stop violence against women, they work across ethnic communities and against racism and they support the rights of migrants and refugees.

Within our trade unions, we need older members to pass on their decades of experience to younger colleagues.

And we need to create space for young unionists to develop their skills for shaping a better world.

Together we can organise to shape the future people want.

**Sharan Burrow, General Secretary,  
International Trade Union Confederation**

## ITUC Global Poll 2017: Greatest anxiety by country

USA		People losing their job (61 percent)
Canada		Rising inequality between the 1% richest people and the rest of the population (73 percent)
United Kingdom		Rising inequality between the 1% richest people and the rest of the population (62 percent) Cyber-attacks on banks, governments or other services (62 percent)
France		Rising inequality between the 1% richest people and the rest of the population (78 percent)
Germany		Rising inequality between the 1% richest people and the rest of the population (79 percent)
Belgium		Rising inequality between the 1% richest people and the rest of the population (73 percent)
Brazil		People losing their jobs (93 percent)
Japan		Cyber-attacks on banks, government or other services (82 percent)
South Africa		People losing their jobs (91 percent)
China		Rising inequality between the 1% richest people and the rest of the population (65 percent)
India		Cyber-attacks on banks, government or other services (85 percent)
Russia		People losing their jobs (78 percent)
Argentina		People losing their jobs (86 percent)
Guatemala		People losing their jobs (92 percent)
Denmark		Climate Change (69 percent)
South Korea		Rising inequality between the 1% richest people and the rest of the population (87 percent)

**theguardian**

“Nato chief: world is at its most dangerous point in a generation”

## 2. Democracy and human rights are under attack

Democracy and fundamental rights are the foundation of freedom in a fair and just society. However, oppression and greed have fuelled unprecedented attacks on these core values.

The 2017 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery found that at least 89 million people experienced enslavement at some point over the last five years. These figures do not even take into account state-imposed conditions that induce modern slavery. If applied, this methodology would add 17 million workers in forced labour for the Arab<sup>2</sup> states alone. Meanwhile in Brazil, the government's removal of anti-forced labour measures exposes thousands of agricultural workers to slavery.

Corporations also contribute to violations of human and labour rights. Some 94% of workers employed in global supply chains are deprived of effective legal protections and are forced to accept informal, insecure and precarious work<sup>3</sup>.

Workers want to respond by organising unions to stand up to this concerted exploitation by governments and big business. However, the lack of respect for democracy and freedom of association has resulted in enormous obstacles for workers claiming their rights.

Attacks often come under the guise of the security agenda prevalent in many countries due to terrorist threats. In other countries, austerity measures and the need to attract foreign investment have been used to justify repressive laws and policies that harm democratic participation.

At least 60% of countries exclude certain categories of workers, often those with the most precarious conditions, from protection under labour laws.

In 2017, the number of countries in which workers were killed for trade union activity rose from 10 the previous year, to 11. Workers were exposed to violence in 59 countries, up from 52. This included threats and kidnapping as well

as physical violence from state security forces and gangs working on behalf of companies.<sup>4</sup>

**Attacks on union members have been documented in 59 countries, ITUC Global Rights Index**

The 10 worst countries for workers in 2017 are Qatar, the UAE, Egypt, the Philippines, Colombia, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Guatemala, Turkey and Bangladesh.

### MENA

The Middle East and North Africa continues to be the world's worst region for workers. Despite migrants making up most of the workforce, the Gulf countries deny their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

#### 5 worst countries

- Egypt
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- UAE
- Algeria

### EUROPE

Years of austerity measures have reduced the scope of collective bargaining, with decentralisation of these negotiations to company level having a big impact.

#### 5 worst countries

- Belarus
- Greece
- Kazakhstan
- Turkey
- Ukraine

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/latest/2016/6/5763b65a4/global-forced-displacement-hits-record-high.html>

<sup>3</sup> ITUC Frontlines Report 2016: Scandal: Inside the global supply chains of 50 multinationals <https://www.ituc-csi.org/new-ituc-report-exposes-hidden>

<sup>4</sup> ITUC Global Rights Index 2017 <https://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-global-rights-index-2017>

## ASIA PACIFIC

Employees face challenges around the Asia Pacific as leaders and business communities continue the race to the bottom on workers' rights.

### 5 worst countries

- Bangladesh
- Cambodia
- South Korea
- The Philippines
- Pakistan

And while incomes in China are rising, denial of freedom of association and human rights abuses continue to silence and punish opposition voices.

## AMERICAS

The situation remains perilous and workers fear for their lives as they struggle to improve working conditions.

### 5 worst countries

- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Mexico

## AFRICA

The protection of fundamental rights is weak, particularly when it comes to the informal economy. Many countries face conflict and struggle to uphold the rule of law.

### 5 worst countries

- Benin
- Nigeria
- Swaziland
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

# ITUC GLOBAL RIGHTS INDEX 2017



## Violations of workers' rights



**60%**

of countries exclude workers from the right to establish or join a trade union



**83%**

of countries have violated the right to strike



**82%**

of countries have violated the right to collective bargaining

Countries which expose workers to physical violence



**59**  
in 2017

**52**  
in 2016

Countries which deny or constrain free speech and freedom of assembly

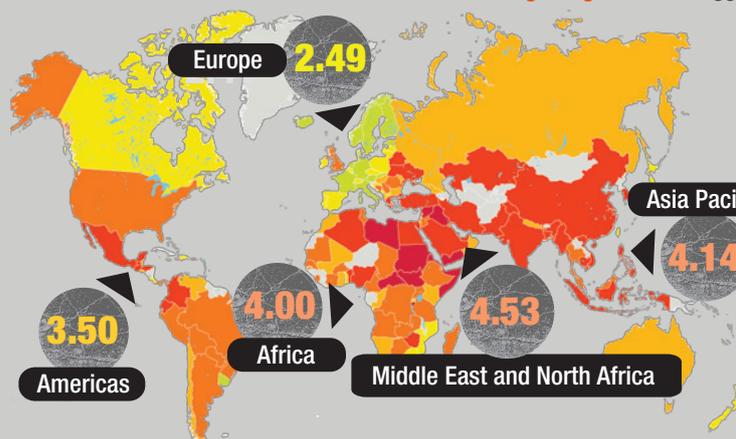


**50**  
in 2017

**50**  
in 2016

## Results by region

- **5+** No guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the rule of law
- **5** No guarantee of rights
- **4** Systematic violations of rights
- **3** Regular violations of rights
- **2** Repeated violations of rights
- **1** Irregular violations of rights
- No data



The 2017 ITUC Global Rights Index covers 139 countries, reporting takes place April 2016 – March 2017. The ITUC documents violations of internationally recognised collective labour rights by governments and employers, each country is analysed against a list of 97 indicators derived from ILO conventions and jurisprudence and represents violations of workers' rights in law and practice.

# 3. Inequality is growing

Inequality is on the rise, both within and between nations. Eight billionaires have amassed the same wealth as the poorest half of the world's population<sup>5</sup>, and 50 companies hold a combined wealth equivalent to 100 nations<sup>6</sup>.

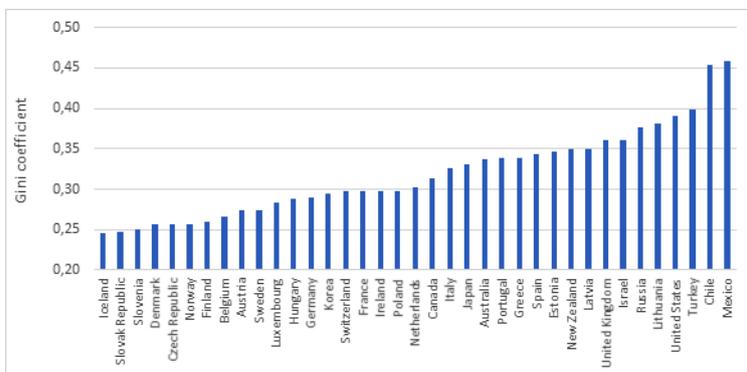
**The world is three times richer by GDP growth than 30 years ago, yet 80% of workers are living on the edge.**

Inequality is not only contributing to growing poverty and threatening social cohesion<sup>7</sup> -- it's undermining sustainable economic progress<sup>8</sup>.

The widening gap between rich and poor is driven by regressive taxation policies and widespread tax evasion, low wage growth, a persistent lack of living minimum wages and inadequate social protection systems. Low unionisation rates, as well as the decentralisation of collective bargaining in some countries, have also played an important role. According to one estimate, the level of collective bargaining coverage accounts for 50% of the variance in wage inequality<sup>9</sup>.

The dominance of multinationals often leads to outsourcing at the lowest possible cost – allowing large, undertaxed companies to compete and profit on the basis of low wages and dismal working conditions.

## Inequality (Gini Coefficient) among OECD countries (2015 or latest available year)



Source: OECD Income Distribution Database

5 Oxfam (2017) An Economy for the 99 Per Cent: <https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/research-publications/an-economy-for-the-99-percent/>

6 ITUC (2016) Scandal: Inside the global supply chains of 50 top companies: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/pdffrontlines\\_scandal\\_en-2.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/pdffrontlines_scandal_en-2.pdf)

7 d'Hombres, B., Weber, A., & Elia, L. (2012) Literature review on income inequality and the effects on social outcomes

8 Wilkinson, R. and Pickett, K. (2009) The Spirit Level, *Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*.

9 Visser (2015) Data Base on Institutional Characteristics of Trade Unions, Wage Setting, State Intervention and Social Pacts (ICTWSS)

## Wages

Wages have stagnated in many countries, even after the economic recovery, with pay-checks for the highly skilled often swelling more rapidly than those of middle and low-income earners. An increase in precarious labour contracts and part-time work creates more low-paid people in work, leading to a more polarised labour market. As the middle class comes under attack, the wage gap widens<sup>10</sup>.

**In the UK one in eight workers struggle to afford food.<sup>11</sup>**

Minimum wages have been shown to be an important tool in reducing wage inequality. They provide 'wage floors' for low-income earners and push up wages for the lowest-paid<sup>12</sup>. However, minimum wages do not cover the basic needs of workers and their families in most countries, and many countries have no minimum wage at all.

An increase to ensure a minimum wage on which people can live would represent a fraction of the profits made by major corporations, which can be as high as \$17,000 for every worker in their supply chain<sup>13</sup>.

**Globally, 108 million people faced food crises in 2016, compared to about 80 million in 2015 – an increase of 35%, according to the 2017 Global Report on Food Crises. Another 123 million people were 'stressed', contributing to around 230 million such food insecure people in 2016, of whom 72% were in Africa.**

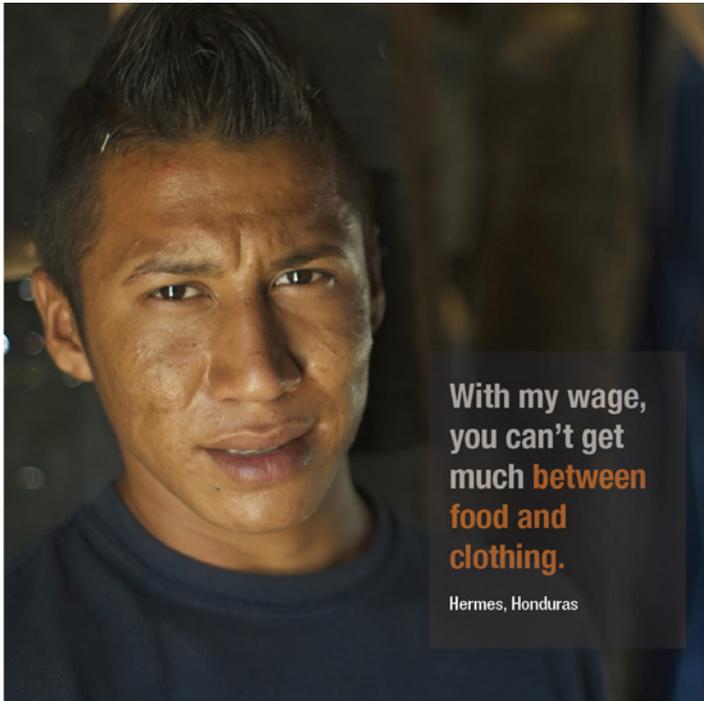
10 OECD (2015) In it together: why less inequality benefits all

11 [https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/sep/07/one-in-eight-workers-struggle-to-afford-food-finds-tuc-survey?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/sep/07/one-in-eight-workers-struggle-to-afford-food-finds-tuc-survey?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

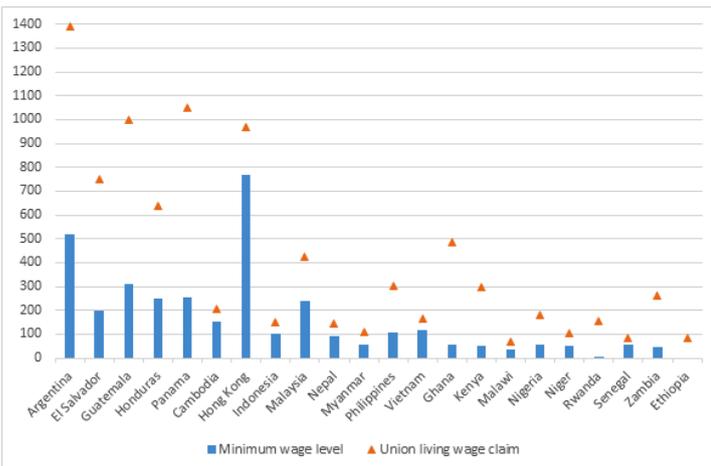
12 ILO (2017) Global Wage Report 2016/2017

13 ITUC (2016) Scandal: Inside the global supply chains of 50 top companies [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/pdffrontlines\\_scandal\\_en-2.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/pdffrontlines_scandal_en-2.pdf)

Non-compliance with minimum wage laws remains a problem. More than 60% of workers in Honduras and Guatemala, over one-third of wage earners in Ghana, over half of wage earners in Kenya, and a third of garment workers in Indonesia are all paid less than the legal minimum wage<sup>14</sup>.



**Chart: Minimum wage levels vs union claims for living minimum wages (USD), selected countries<sup>15</sup>**



Source: Minimum wage levels from ITUC questionnaires, national ministries and wage indicator database. Union wage claims identified in regional minimum wage forums.



## Social protection

Social protection is vital in combatting poverty, reducing inequality and promoting inclusive growth. Income support and services serve as important economic stabilizers to create and maintain sustainable market economies thanks to aggregate demand.

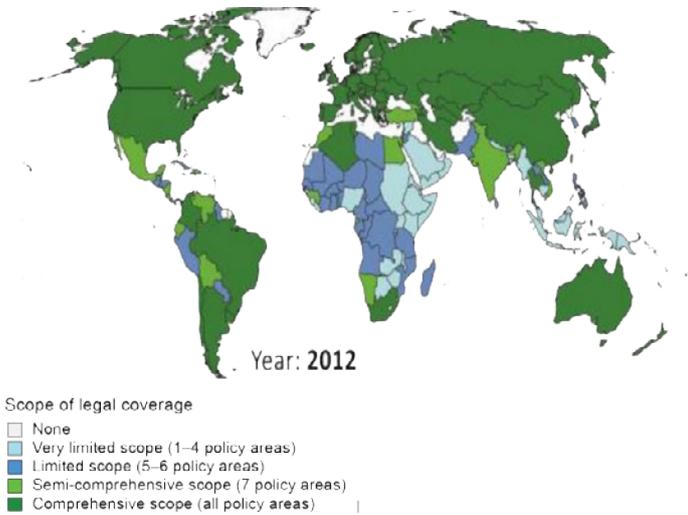
Nevertheless, the ILO estimates that only 28% of people enjoy a comprehensive level of social protection<sup>16</sup>. Such low coverage is in spite of ILO Convention 102 and Recommendation 202, which compel governments to ensure adequate social protection floors for all. Cuts to social benefits and services in many countries following the economic and financial crisis further widened the gap between rich and poor. Meanwhile, a shrinking revenue base in some places is jeopardising the adequacy and sustainability of social protection systems.

Governments and international institutions often cite the “unaffordability” of universal social protection schemes. However, ILO estimates show providing basic social security benefits would cost less than 2% of GDP, and a basic set of benefits for all those without access to social security would cost less than 6% of GDP<sup>17</sup>. When assessing budgetary implications, it is important to remember that social protection also supports employment and creates jobs, fosters skills development and contributes to economic growth.

14 ILO (2014) Incumplimiento con el salario mínimo en América Latina. El peso de los factores económicos e institucionales; Bhorat, Kanbur and Stanwix (2015) Minimum Wages in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Primer; ILO (2016) “Weak minimum wage compliance in Asia’s garment industry”; 15 Note: Where minimum wages vary per region or sector, the lowest value was selected.

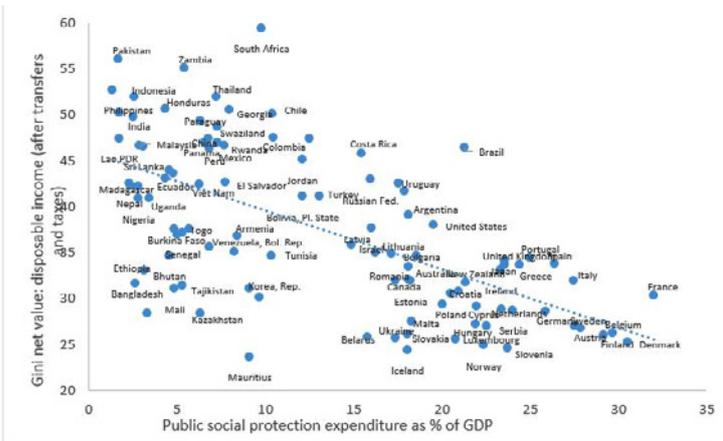
16 ILO (2014) World Social Protection Report 2014-2015  
17 Frontlines Report: 2014 (April): Social protection [http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc\\_frontlines\\_avril\\_2014\\_en\\_web.pdf](http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc_frontlines_avril_2014_en_web.pdf)

**Chart: Number of areas covered in social protection programmes anchored in national legislation**



Source: ILO Global Social Protection Report 2014-2015

**Chart: Public social protection expenditure (% of GDP) and income equality (Gini coefficient)**



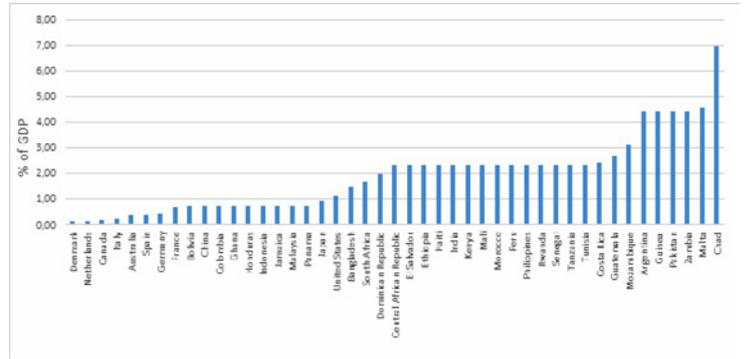
Source: ILO Global Social Protection Report 2014-2015

**Fair taxation**

Poor tax policies are allowing the largest companies and wealthiest individuals to avoid paying their fair share. Reforms in some countries to lower taxes on labour or investments, or to raise regressive forms of taxation such as value-added tax (VAT), have often advantaged the well-off and disproportionately affected low-income groups<sup>18</sup>. This is despite repeated calls from the ITUC, civil society, academics and others for governments to broaden their tax base, such as through a financial transactions tax (FTT)<sup>19</sup>. Tax evasion is widespread and has been inadequately addressed in many countries, as well as internationally. According to the OECD,

governments are losing between \$100 and \$240 billion each year in tax revenues as a result of base erosion and profit shifting by multinationals<sup>20</sup>.

**Chart: Estimated tax losses (as % of GDP)**



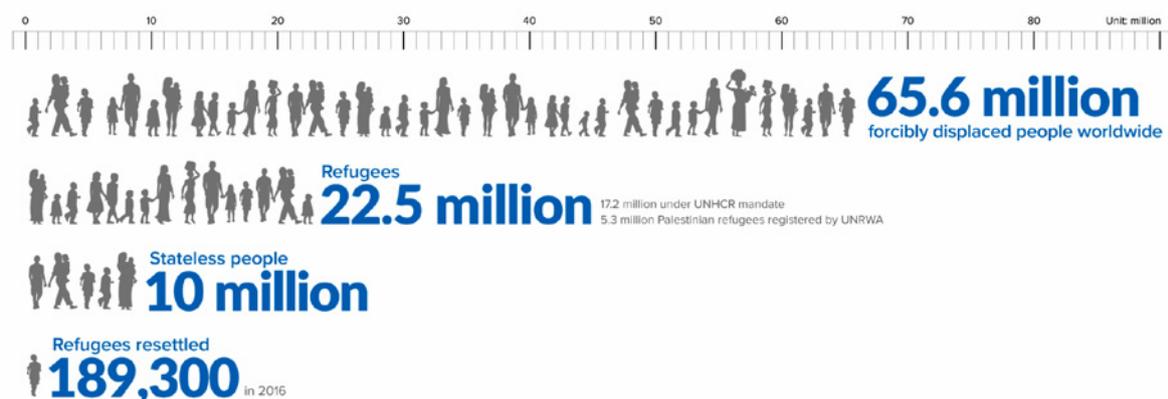
Source: Tax Justice Network (2017) based on data from the ICTD-WIDER Government Revenue Database



18 OECD (2011) Divided We Stand: Why Inequality Keeps Rising  
 19 See for instance ITUC (2012) Financial Transactions Tax brief for Rio + 20: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ftt\\_madesimple.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ftt_madesimple.pdf)

20 OECD (2015) Measuring and Monitoring BEPS, Action 11

## 4. Conflict is expanding and more people are on the move



UNHCR figures reveal the highest displacement of people on record<sup>21</sup>. While the United Nations is committed to a compact on migration, there must be a parallel commitment to shared resettlement of refugees with the right to work and equal treatment. Development challenges are bigger than ever and the world must share prosperity to ensure peace, democracy, co-existence and freedom from terror.

Our governance structures have so far proved unable to properly deal with the migration challenge. Millions of people are displaced and populism is fuelling a retreat into xenophobia and nationalism, authoritarianism and even dictatorship. The politics of fear is fracturing our democracies as people lose trust in today's institutions. This trust can only be restored through fair policies in the common interest.

Violence is never the solution, and dialogue is vital anywhere we see abuse of military or police power.

**Only 60% of Australians agree that democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. Over a third say that in some circumstances a non-democratic government can be preferable.<sup>22</sup>**

**A greater share of young people in democracies in Australia, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States claim that democracy is a bad way to run the country.<sup>23</sup>**

### Current or potential conflict zones:

Each one of the situations described below represents an existing or potential humanitarian crisis where injury and loss of life can be compounded by homelessness and starvation, leaving people without work, income security or even social protection. Schools and hospitals are not available to millions of people on the move who too often face rejection at borders, deportation from countries where refuge is sought, or decades in refugee camps.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/latest/2016/6/5763b65a4/global-forced-displacement-hits-record-high.html>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/20/world/australia/lowy-institute-poll-australia-united-states-china.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/20/world/australia/lowy-institute-poll-australia-united-states-china.html?_r=0)

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/12/08/yes-millennials-really-are-surprisingly-approving-of-dictators/?utm\\_term=.4c6a5261772e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/12/08/yes-millennials-really-are-surprisingly-approving-of-dictators/?utm_term=.4c6a5261772e)



**Syria** - Almost 500,000 killed in a state-led war over seven years with the involvement of mercenaries, terrorists and soldiers from over 100 countries.

**Mexico** - 86,000 slaughtered in a drug war in 10 years.

**Mali** - 4,000 killed in terrorist uprising since 2012.

**Afghanistan** - The Taliban are regaining power as coalition troops are deployed elsewhere to fight the Islamic State (IS) terror group.

**Yemen** - 7,000 killed in the last two years of conflict.

**East China Sea** - Territorial dispute over Senkaku/Diaoyu islands escalates tensions with Japan.

**South China Sea** - Disputed territory risks military conflict between China and South-East Asian nations.

**Pakistan** - More than 20 fatal terrorist attacks in 2017, mainly by Taliban.

**Iraq** - Part of the regional war against IS.

**Lebanon** - Syrian refugees now represent a quarter of population and sectarian division is increasing as IS battles with the Shia militant group Hezbollah.

**Libya** - At least 35,000 people have been killed since the Arab Spring uprising and the battle against Al Qaeda and IS is ongoing.

**Democratic Republic of Congo** - Up to 5 million killed since 1994 and more than 70 groups still fighting.

**Somalia** - Many attacks by Al Shabaab, with IS also trying to recruit these fighters

**India** - Threat of conflict in Kashmir despite ceasefire with Pakistan since 2003. A heightened terror threat from Pakistan-based militant groups.

**Palestine** - Israeli occupation continues and illegal settlements expanding with no sign of peace deal.

**South Sudan** - Over 50,000 people have been killed and more than 1.6 million displaced since war broke out in 2013.

**Egypt** - Democratic dividend from Arab Spring largely overturned and terrorist attacks at their highest since the 1990s with the risk of a permanent base for IS.

**Ukraine** - Tensions after the annexation of Crimea continue, with ceasefire violations and a recent spike in violence and civilian casualties raising concerns of further escalation.

**Nigeria** - Nearly 50,000 people have died in the war between regime forces and IS-affiliates Boko Haram since armed conflict broke out in 2011. At least 20,000 people have been killed and more than 2.6 million made homeless in the Lake Chad region, which includes Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, since the start of Boko Haram's armed campaign in 2009.

**Cameroon** - The conflict with Boko Haram also engulfs Cameroon, with some 200,000 people from the country's far north fleeing their homes in fear of violence. In 2018, President Paul Biya is expected to seek re-election after 35 years in power, creating the potential for further unrest.

**These countries are causing the most concern in 2017, due to deteriorating rights and freedoms:**

**Myanmar:** The international community has called for the government to take control and force the military to cease its persecution of the Rohingya people. Dialogue is necessary to ensure peaceful co-existence for this Muslim minority group within the country's borders.

**Turkey:** Democratically elected president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has emerged as a dictator, silencing all opposition or perceived opposition and removing more than 100,000 state employees following a failed coup in July 2016<sup>24</sup>. The crackdown has also included the arrest of around 150 journalists<sup>25</sup>, reports of torture in Turkish jails<sup>26</sup>, the expulsion of diplomats and violent oppression of union or civil society protest.

**Brazil:** Just as the people of this fledgling democracy were throwing off the legacy of military rule, developing an egalitarian, rights-based nation with shared prosperity, the country now finds itself in the grip of a political coup. This stolen power is being used to attack labour rights, cut wages and social protection and even force agricultural workers into slavery.

**The Philippines:** A new president, this time elected, now encourages and sanctions the murder of groups of citizens that he and his unaccountable police force decide are linked to the drug trade. He has imposed martial law on the largely Muslim community of Mindanao over terrorism concerns, and trade union leaders and those in civil society are concerned for their safety.

**Cambodia:** Freedom of association is in danger in the lead up to the general election in July next year. In September, the opposition party leader was arrested for treason, followed by the closure of 15 radio stations and The Cambodia Daily newspaper. NGOs are being shutdown, while independent unions are decimated as part of the opposition and discriminated against. At least 70 independent unions are unable to maintain their registration or represent their members in labour disputes or collective bargaining under a new law. The upcoming Minimum Wage Law will even ban independent research on wages as well as protests on the minimum wage.

24 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/15/turkey-sacks-over-7000-civil-servants-for-alleged-links-to-terror-groups>

25 <https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-06-28/turkey-jails-more-journalists-any-other-nation-those-detention-are-all-terrorists>

26 <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2017/apr/05/briton-rosslee-charles-escapes-turkey-extradition-court-hears-prison-torture>

## Colombia: building peace

Colombia's trade union movement supports a negotiated solution to the internal armed conflict and fully backed the Peace Accord with the FARC. The agreement has now reached the crucial implementation stage and unions around the world need to be watchful so that the following key demands become reality:

- The Commission for Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition must ensure the effective inclusion of trade unions so that facts related to anti-union violence are also part of the process.
- A policy of “integral reparation” of the trade union movement is a fundamental condition for the construction of a lasting peace. This process must be based on the effective promotion of human and trade union rights, including legal reforms, rebuilding labour organizations that were dismantled, restoring collective bargaining agreements and ensuring the reparation of victims.
- Trade union organizations must be strengthened with measures restoring their political and material capacities as well as creating an environment conducive to their growth.

## An unprecedented challenge:

Nor must we forget the devastation of climate change. Extreme weather events this year saw hurricanes cause chaos throughout the Caribbean islands and southern United States, as well as floods and landslides in Sierra Leone and South Asia.

The present humanitarian system was created in the 1960s and 1970s to cope with a certain type of humanitarian crisis. Now, with conflict spreading and combined with more frequent natural disasters due to climate change, this system is unable to respond effectively.

We no longer face temporary effects on the supply of food, shelter and transport, but long-term interruption to education, health, water, housing and sanitation systems. Even where people are resettled, legal

frameworks can restrict opportunity and risk further social tension. In many countries, refugees have no access to jobs, markets and other activities. Regulatory frameworks, as well as support structures, need to change.

This requires reform of the UN and a new generosity from democratic nations in the interests of stranded people everywhere, as well as peace and democracy.



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# 5. Reclaiming peace, democracy and freedom

People are losing trust in democracy. Unions have to reclaim it. We have the public support to make it happen, as 75% of people believe that unions play an active role in society.

Social cohesion is built on trust, which in turn relies on security and the rule of law.

Governments, employers and unions recognised the importance of fundamental rights in avoiding conflict as well as reconstruction and reconciliation, with the adoption of ILO Recommendation 205 in June 2017. This guides us in how to advance our agenda.<sup>27</sup>

The fundamental conditions required to rebuild trust include:

the security of universal social protection with publicly funded health and education quality jobs

the guarantee of decent work with secure and safe employment, freedom of association, a minimum living wage, collective bargaining rights and the rule of law

ensuring migrants and refugees have the right to work and equal treatment

Finally, corporations must be held to account. There must be mandatory due diligence, grievance procedures and remedies to end violations of human and labour rights.

Dialogue and development through shared prosperity are the answer. People must trust that they will share in the dividends of democracy or they will lose hope.

## ITUC Peace and Freedom Conference

On December 11 and 12, the ITUC is organising an international conference on Peace and Democracy in Brussels. This conference aims to build on the work of experienced trade unionists while involving younger trade unionists in the peace and democracy agenda by incorporating their experiences. It will look at implementation of ILO Recommendation 205, and work on partnerships for unions in countries facing conflict or rebuilding.



<sup>27</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:R205](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:R205)

## Disasters 2017

Ongoing disasters monitored by ReliefWeb

Red markers indicate ongoing situations. Orange markers indicate disaster alerts



**Tropical Storm Nate – October 2017:** Early October 2017, saw flash floods and mudslides over parts of Central America from the Tropical Depression 16. In addition to damage to infrastructure and food supplies, dozens of deaths were reported in Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras and Panama.

**Togo: Floods – September 2017:** As at 28 September, a total of 602 households or 3,612 people have been affected by the overflow of the Nangbéto dam.

**Vanuatu: Monaco Volcano – September 2017:** On 23 September 2017, the Vanuatu Meteorology & GeoHazards Department (VMGD) increased the activity level for Monaro volcano on Ambae island, Penama province to Level 4: a moderate eruption state.

**Indonesia: Mt Agung Volcano – September 2017:** The increasing unrest in the Agung Volcano in Bali, Indonesia, since 10 August 2017 has led the authorities to raise the alert to the highest level. Evacuations have taken place in an area of up to 12 km around the volcano.

**Mexico: Earthquake – September 2017:** The magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck central and southern Mexico [on 19 September], killing more than 200 people, according to the government.

**South Sudan: Floods – September 2017:** According to the State Ministry of Health, it is estimated that over 11,000 people have been affected by flooding caused by heavy rainfall in 11 payams of Aweil North and Aweil West of former Northern Bahr el Ghazal State.

**Hurricane Maria - September 2017:** At least 14 people have died in Dominica, with the number of fatalities expected to rise as large areas of the island remain inaccessible after category 5 Hurricane Maria decimated the island's east coast, according to initial reports from the ground. At least 80 per cent of the island's population has been affected and needs support with shelter and water. (September 21)

**Rwanda: Severe Local Storms - September 2017:** On 17th September 2017, at around 15:30 local time, the districts of Rusizi, Nyamasheke, Huye and Bugesera, Gicumbi, Ngoma, Kirehe, Rubavu and Nyabihu experienced heavy rainfall associated with heavy storms, which resulted in destruction of houses and community farm lands.

**Madagascar: Plague Outbreak - September 2017:** On 13 September 2017, the WHO was notified of an outbreak of pulmonary plague in Madagascar. The outbreak was detected on 11 September 2017. As of 14 September 2017, a total of 28 cases, including five deaths (case fatality rate 17.8%) had been reported.

**Mexico/Guatemala: Earthquake - September 2017:** Mexico According to the [BBC], an 8.1-magnitude earthquake on the Richter Scale struck off the Pacific Coast of Mexico--around 87km (54 miles) south-west of Pijijiapan--at 23:50 local time on Thursday, 7 September 2017 (04:50 [GMT] Friday).

**Hurricane Irma - September 2017:** Significant damage to homes as a result of Hurricane Irma have been reported in areas of Ciego de Ávila Province. In Chambas, 47.4% of homes were damaged; in Bolivia, 38.4%; in Moron, 29.3%; and in Júcaro, more than 50%.

**Pakistan: Dengue Outbreak - September 2017:** The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination in Pakistan has recently reported a high number of dengue fever cases in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). A total of 1,279 laboratory confirmed cases were reported during the months of July and August 2017.

**Ethiopia: Floods - August 2017:** Floods affected more than 53,000 people in Gambella and Oromia regions during the months of August and September. The Emergency Shelter/Non-Food Items (NFI) cluster reports a gap in NFIs to respond to the emergency.

**Central African Republic: Floods - August 2017:** The city of Kouango, located 415 km from Bangui (the capital of the CAR), has been flooded since the 23rd of August. These floods caused significant material and human damages. The provisional record shows 350 households, or 1,750 people affected by this tragedy.

**DR Congo: Landslide - August 2017:** At least 150 people are believed to have died and an estimated 70 houses were destroyed following a landslide that ravaged the fishing village of Tara, Ituri Province, during the night of 15-16 August.

**Chad: Cholera Outbreak - August 2017:** On 15 August 2017, the Ministry of Health of Chad notified WHO of a suspected cholera outbreak in Koukou District, Sila Region in the south-east of the country (bordering Sudan).

**Sierra Leone: Mudslides - August 2017:** Three days of heavy rains triggered flash floods and a massive landslide in and around the capital Freetown on 14 August. The most severe disaster occurred in Regent and Lumley districts with a massive 6 kilometres mudslide submerging and wiping out over 300 houses.

**Nigeria: Floods - August 2017:** Flooding in various localities in the north-east region has cut off roads and made helicopter landings impossible. Aid convoys by road to Rann, a remote location in Borno state which hosts some 43,000 displaced people, has become extremely difficult.

**Tropical Cyclone Franklin - August 2017:** Tropical Storm Franklin hit at 22:45 local time on Monday 7 August (03:45 GMT Tuesday) near the town of Pulticub, in the south-eastern Mexican state of Quintana Roo, on the Yucatan Peninsula, according to the National Weather Service of Mexico (SMN for its Spanish acronym).

**Cameroon: Flash Floods - August 2017:** Since 4 August 2017, the Menoua Division, in the West Region of Cameroon, has been experiencing heavy rainfalls, causing a significant rise of water levels and mudslides to settlements.

