

TNI launched their annual State of Power reports because they believe that the issue of power is central to the struggle for social justice. It has since become their most popular report, delving into who has power, how it's exercised and how we can realise their collective power to transform society.

In this year's seventh edition of State of Power, they decided to focus on counter-power, to examine what is needed to build up the power of social movements and how it can be best harnessed.

They are thrilled with the essays and analysis they brought together from leading activists and thinkers. They welcome your thoughts and comments so please get in touch via their social media channels or by emailing: [stateofpower@tni.org](mailto:stateofpower@tni.org)

## Introductory interview

### [Marching forward: Women, resistance and counter-power](#)

*An interview with Bertha Zúñiga Cáceres, Medha Patkar and Nonhle Mbuthuma*

As hundreds of thousands of women prepare to join more than 250 marches across the US and the world, three inspiring social movement leaders from Honduras, India and South Africa share their perspectives on how to build durable and effective popular movements.

## Essays

### ['Beneath the pavements, the beach' - or the whirlpool? Lessons of 1968](#)

*Hilary Wainwright*

The revolutions of 1968 have an ambivalent legacy - they both regenerated capitalism but also experimented with forms of participation and transformative power that can and are inspiring today's social movements.

### [Thinking Freedom: achieving the impossible collectively](#)

*Interview with Michael Neocosmos*

Real emancipation emerges out of the universalist thinking that emerges from collective struggle and must not be conflated with the politics of representation whether by parties or states.

### [From protest movements to transformative politics](#)

*Luciana Castellina*

Movements are not enough to build counter-power. There is a need for a new kind of political party to mediate organized and diverse peoples and to rebuild the connective tissue that binds society and politics.

### [Without translation, no hay revolución!](#)

*Alice Froidevaux and Eline Müller*

Language - and thus translation and interpretation - is about access, about participation, about power. How can we bring about language justice within transnational social movements?

### [Building feminist counter-power: In for the long haul](#)

*Nina Power*

There is a new feminist militancy on the streets, across the globe and in the air. Social movements should use this moment to overcome the socialization of girls and boys that has been so hard to shift in order to permanently end the bullying and harassment typified in the likes of Trump.

### [Flowing Movement: Building alternative water governance in Mexico](#)

*Gerardo Alatorre Frenk*

The Mexican government's decision to acknowledge access to water as a human right led to a massive civil society response including 99 public forums to define what good water governance looks like. What can we learn from the experience?

### [Madrid's Community Gardens: Where neighbourhood counter-power puts down roots](#)

*José Luis Fernández Casadevante Kois, Nerea Morán and Nuria del Viso*

What if, rather than the barricade, we were to think of counter-power in terms of a space such as a community garden?

## People in defence of life and territory: Counter-power and self-defence in Latin America

Raúl Zibechi

Against a backdrop of state and corporate violence that threatens the lives of the poorest, many communities in Latin America have created self-defence groups and community police forces. How do these counter-power structures differ from those of the state?

## Making counter-power out of madness

Laura Flanders

How can movements in the US build counter-power out of Trumpian madness? Against the odds, a new vision is emerging that seeks to bring together a systemic critique with an embodied practice based on shared decision-making, solidarity economics and community-based approaches to prosperity and security.

## Fighting for public health: How a Swedish rural community confronted neoliberal cutbacks

Desirée Enlund

The rural communities in the Västernorrland county of Northern Sweden are not used to being in the national spotlight, but in 2017 their struggle to stop cutbacks in maternity and emergency care made national news. What lessons can we learn on how to build counter-power in rural areas of the Global North?

# The treaty on transnational corporations and human rights enters “negotiation mode”.

Geneva: November 1, 2017 – The Global Campaign [\(1\)](#) welcomes the end of a successful week of intense work moving towards decisive negotiations on a binding treaty on transnational corporations (TNCs) and human rights, despite challenges from the EU with support from the US.

More than 100 states and over 200 representatives of social movements, trade unions and civil society organizations were at the UN in Geneva during the third session of the UN inter governmental working group [\(2\)](#), from October 23-27, 2017. Members of parliaments from more than 20 countries and the European Parliament [\(3\)](#), as well as more than 700 civil society organizations have indicated strong public support for the process.

The UN working group, tasked with elaborating a treaty on TNCs and human rights was due to finish its third session on October 27, when a representative for the United States – which has not participated in the three-year process after it voted against the resolution 26/9 in 2014, saying this “binding treaty will not be binding for those who voted against it” – unexpectedly joined a key meeting and suggested the working group would need a new mandate from the Human Rights Council to continue its work. However, the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council confirmed that the working group does not need a new resolution and that it will go forward with its work until a treaty is negotiated.

The closing Recommendations of the Chair-Rapporteur of the working group, Ambassador Guillaume Long, Permanent Representative of Ecuador in Geneva, committed to a road-map for the negotiation process for the fourth working group session in 2018 and to further annual sessions.

The Draft Report and Conclusions were approved by consensus and will be submitted for final approval to the UNHRC in March 2018. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Elements paper towards a Treaty proposed by Ecuador in this third session remains open for further comment until the end of February and will then, together with the outcomes from the 2015 and 2016 sessions, form the basis for developing the zero draft treaty for the fourth working group session in 2018.

“This is a victory for supporters of the process towards a treaty. Political pressure from social movements, NGOs and communities affected by TNCs’ human rights violations, was essential to overcoming obstructive tactics used by several parties, especially the EU,” said Lynne Davis, La Via Campesina.

“Current measures to prevent human rights violations and abuses in the operations of TNCs are not sufficient. While TNCs benefit from a wide range of investor protection mechanisms and loopholes in international law, the people who lose their lives, livelihoods and territories because of TNCs’ activities are often repeatedly denied justice,” according to Gonzalo Berron, a researcher at the Transnational Institute.

“Corporate self-regulation is not enough. Human rights defenders confronting TNCs’ operations are being killed, such as Berta Caceres

from Honduras and many other cases raised at the UN this week. This process towards a legally-binding treaty is urgently needed. This is the message which communities affected by TNCs' operations are bringing to their governments and to the UN process," according to Apollin Koagne Zoupet from Cameroon, representing Friends of the Earth International (FOEI).

As demonstrated during the last three sessions, The Global Campaign is fully committed to contributing to this process with proposals based on the experiences of affected communities and social movements. Mary Ann Manahan, of the World March of Women-Philippines commented "The proposal for a Treaty on Transnational Corporations and their Supply Chains with Regard to Human Rights (4) presented by the Global Campaign is a very significant text to move forward negotiations between the States towards a draft Treaty during the coming year.

## NOTE TO EDITORS

(1) This Press release is from the Global Campaign to Reclaim Peoples Sovereignty, Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity (Global Campaign), a network of over 200 social movements and affected communities resisting land grabs, extractive mining, exploitative wages and environmental destruction, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Website: <https://www.stopcorporateimpunity.org/>

(2) The Open-ended intergovernmental working group (OEIGWG) on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights is a result of resolution 26/9 adopted by the Human Rights Council in June 2014 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/WGTransCorp/Pages/IGWGOnTNC.aspx>

(3) For the list of signatories of the Inter-Parliamentary initiative for a UN Binding Treaty on transnational corporations with respect to human rights see <http://bindingtreaty.org/>

(4) You can access the proposal here: [https://www.stopcorporateimpunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Treaty\\_draft-EN1.pdf](https://www.stopcorporateimpunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Treaty_draft-EN1.pdf)

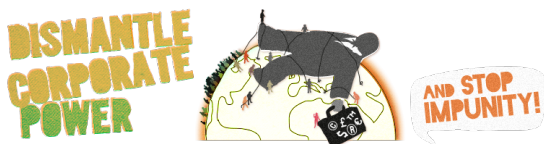
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## We need a treaty to protect human rights from Transnational Corporations' activities

Geneva, October 24 - The Global Campaign(1) is in Geneva for a Week of Peoples Mobilisation, from October 23 to 27, which coincides with the Third Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group with the mandate to develop a United Nations Treaty for Transnational Corporations and other business enterprises with respect to Human Rights(2).

Communities affected by the activities of transnational corporations, and organizations working to protect Human Rights, have come together to demand an international legally-binding treaty that allows states to fulfill their obligations to protect human and environmental rights against the harmful activities of transnational corporations (TNCs) and other business enterprises.

"Violence and threats from corporations towards environmental and human rights defenders means a binding treaty to end corporate impunity is an urgent historical responsibility, which has, until now, been carried by the people alone. States cannot continue protecting corporations with instruments like social responsibility, voluntary mechanisms, investment protection treaties or free trade agreements. A binding treaty is the only way to truly protect human rights," said Lucia Ortiz, Economic justice campaigner with Friends of the Earth International.

"We are here with concrete proposals about how to address the severe asymmetry between people and huge companies, and even between many states and TNCs. The Global Campaign has prepared a proposal for a treaty (3) that includes mechanisms to address the problem of access to justice, as the extraterritorial obligations, the creation of an international court and monitoring mechanisms, as well as clear ways to consult, and an active participatory process for people," said Gonzalo Berron, Researcher with the Transnational Institute

"Corporate influence has seen the strengthening of investor and business rights, through trade treaties, and shrinking space for people and communities to defend their collective rights and territories. Although states are the guarantors of human rights compliance, legislation is fragile both in impoverished countries and richer countries, it is time to have a binding treaty," said Josua Mata, General Secretary of the national labour centre Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (SENTRO) in the Philippines

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

For more information or to arrange interviews

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1. The Global Campaign to Reclaim Peoples Sovereignty, Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity is a network of over 200 social movements and affected communities resisting land grabs, extractive mining, exploitative wages and environmental destruction, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

2. This mandate is a result of resolution 26/9 adopted by the Human Rights Councils.

3. Treaty Proposal from the Global Campaign

[https://www.stopcorporateimpunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Treaty\\_draft-EN.pdf](https://www.stopcorporateimpunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Treaty_draft-EN.pdf)

[Zurück](#)