



The Africa Coalition on Public Services calls on the USA and EU to Support the 2023 UN Tax Resolution



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The future of global tax cooperation hangs in balance, and the fate of public services in Africa is at stake.

We the undersigned organizations, a network of civil society bodies campaigning to reclaim public services in Africa, urge the USA and its partner EU countries to refrain from obstructing the adoption of the 2023 UN Tax Resolution, proposed by the Africa Group within the Second Committee of the United Nations General Assembly.

The resolution, titled "Promotion of inclusive and effective international tax cooperation at the United Nations", is a follow-up to the previous one, adopted in 2022, in which it was decided to begin intergovernmental discussions at the UN Headquarters on ways to strengthen the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the international tax system, including the evaluation of additional options to achieve this.

The resolution emphasizes the need for a United Nations comprehensive convention on international tax cooperation to strengthen the existing global tax system. It demands that an open-ended ad hoc intergovernmental committee be formed to develop this comprehensive agreement, and that the ad hoc committee give a progress report to the General Assembly during its 79th session (next year), addressing the scope and basic mechanisms of the convention. Countries will cast their votes in November, marking a historic moment in the evolution of the global tax system.

As a coalition committed to securing increased funding for public services in Africa, we view this resolution as a historic step towards democratizing the rulemaking on global tax, which has been largely dominated by the OECD - a group of mostly high-income countries, for over 60 years. This resolution aligns with the vision of "The Africa We Want", as articulated in the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Public services in Africa are not mere conveniences but are essential for the realization of human rights, social justice, gender equality, environmental sustainability and economic development. However, these services are threatened by a broken tax system. The Tax Justice Network's State of Tax Justice Report 2023 estimates that African countries lose over \$6 billion USD annually to corporate tax abuse by large multinationals and wealthy individuals. This staggering figure underscores the urgency of reforming the global tax system. The current situation is unsustainable and contributes to the erosion of public services across the continent, exacerbating inequalities and limiting opportunities for development.

We express our concern that some developed countries, including the USA and EU, initially attempted to obstruct the first resolution in 2022. They argued that the resolution would undermine the existing tax cooperation framework led by the OECD. They also claimed that the resolution would create duplication and confusion in the global tax system and that the UN does not have the capacity to oversee such a complex issue. However, their opposition was rejected by other UN member countries, who supported the resolution as a way to democratize the rulemaking on global tax and to address the challenges faced by developing countries. The resolution was eventually adopted by consensus on November 23, 2022, after some amendments were made to accommodate some of the concerns raised by the opponents

Once again, these nations are making another attempt to undermine the process. Notably, the EU's current stance appears to lack the ambition required for meaningful change, as it [is open to considering only non-binding outcomes](#) at this stage. Furthermore, the EU is now arguing that the UN secretary general's recent report on options for making the international tax system more inclusive and effective failed to encompass all viable options. Consequently, it is requesting additional time to compile a more comprehensive report, which would only be discussed at the 80th general assembly, two years from now. This development raises concerns as it threatens to hinder the development of a fair and transparent international tax system that benefits all.

As negotiations progress in the 2nd Committee of the UN General Assembly, we appeal therefore to the USA and its partner EU countries to respect the will of the majority of UN member countries and to support the second resolution in 2023. We urge these countries to recognize that their interests are not incompatible with those of developing countries, but rather complementary.

A more inclusive and effective international tax cooperation at the UN would benefit all countries by creating a more transparent, fair and sustainable global tax system. This is something we haven't been able to accomplish with the current OECD arrangements, because not even the member nations appear to concur on the body's suggested two-pillar solution for taxing online cross-border services. Even further, developing countries frequently feel excluded from these conversations and that their perspectives are not given enough weight. All governments, including those in the OECD, must strive toward a more comprehensive, consensus-based strategy that takes developing countries' needs and viewpoints into account. This is not a zero-sum game; rather, it's a chance to build a system that serves everyone, ensures fairness, and enables the development and well-being of all nations.

We call on all UN member countries to vote in favor of the 2023 UN tax resolution during its adoption by the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly later this November. It's a pivotal moment in the history of global tax cooperation, and it is essential that we seize this opportunity to create a more equitable and sustainable future.

Signatories

1. South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network (SSHRDN)	South Sudan
2. Association For Promotion Sustainable Development	India
3. Misère Option Zéro	Togo
4. BLANTYRE	Malawi
5. Girl Rescue Foundation	Uganda
6. Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER)	Uganda
7. Mindset change front initiative Uganda	Uganda
8. Good Health Community Programmes	Kenya
9. Plan for Hope Initiative Uganda	Uganda
10. Action Group for Health Human Rights and HIV/AIDS (AGHA) Uganda	Uganda
11. KOTHOWAIN (vulnerable peoples dev. org)	Bangladesh
12. Global Policy Forum Europe	Germany
13. Success Capital Organization	Botswana
14. World Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED)	Germany
15. Nakawa home based care givers alliance	Uganda
16. Disability Peoples Forum Uganda	Uganda
17. Centre for Environment, Human Rights & Development Forum - CEHRDF	Bangladesh
18. Akina Mama wa Afrika	Uganda
19. The East African Centre for Human Rights	Kenya
20. Groupe du Développement de l'Afrique - GDA	Mali
21. African Mining Alliance - AMA	Mali
22. Bunyoro Choice Uganda Masindi	Uganda
23. Haryana	India
24. Justice Is A Right - Uganda	Uganda
25. Mumbwa district women association	Zambia
26. JayMallow Foundation	Uganda
27. Africa Freedom of Information Centre	Uganda
28. Jamaa Resource initiatives	Kenya
29. Global Learning for Sustainability	Uganda
30. Uganda Consortium on Corporate Accountability	Uganda

Individuals

31. Kirunga Joyce	Uganda
32. Sulaiman Abdul Rahman	Somalia
33. Rose Achayo Obol	Uganda
34. Janepher Baitwamasa	Uganda
35. Rossette Ainepurani	Uganda
36. Musinguzi Wilberfoece	Uganda
37. Dianah Ateenyi Ahumuza	Uganda
38. Okia John	Uganda

39.Labila Sumayah Musoke	Uganda
40.Ankunda Faridah	Uganda
41.Mirembe Atumanya	Uganda
42.Aliganyira Moses Sabiiti	Uganda
43.Eriya Nawenuwe	Uganda
44.Nantambi Esther	Uganda
45.Musinguzi Wilberfoece	Uganda
46.Nakiwala Pauline Ashley	Uganda
47.Susan Nassuna	Uganda
48.Ashina Mtsumi	Kenya
49.Pat Raolane	South Africa

About the Africa Coalition on Public Services

The Africa Coalition on Public Services is a network of civil society organizations campaigning to reclaim public services in Africa. The Coalition is hosted by the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER)

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