



ITF House
49 - 60 Borough Road
London SE1 1DR

Telephone +44 (0)20 7403 2733
Fax +44 (0)20 7357 7871

国
際
運
輸
勞
連

International Transport Workers' Federation
Federación Internacional de los Trabajadores del Transporte
Fédération internationale des ouvriers du transport
Internationella Transportarbetarefederationen
Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation
Международная федерация транспортников
التنظيم عالمياً، النضال من أجل حقوقنا

UN WOMEN + UBER = A VISION FOR PRECARIOUS WORK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 12th 2015

NEW YORK On March 10th UN Women and UBER announced [a strategic partnership](#) with the goal of accelerating economic opportunity for women. As part of their commitment to this goal, Uber pledge to create 1,000,000 jobs for women as drivers on the Uber platform by 2020.

The global trade unions and civil society supporters of labour rights present at UNCSW59 are deeply concerned by the partnership announced between UN Women and Uber, an American International company that develops, markets and operates a mobile app-based transportation network. This concern is due to the fact that it is far from certain that Uber's promise to create 1 million jobs will actually promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

Women's economic empowerment is dependent on women's access to decent work – this means fair wages, job security, safety at work, social protection for families, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

Uber's own research revealed drivers' average annual earnings of USD 15,000 and a proliferation of part-time work, in what former Clinton Labour Secretary Robert Reich calls **the share-the-scrap economy**. By classifying drivers as 'independent contractors', Uber denies them basic protections, from minimum wage pay to health care and other benefits on the job. Women already make up a high proportion of the precarious workforce, and **increasing informal, piecemeal work contributes significantly to women's economic dis-empowerment and marginalization across the globe.**

The creation of one million precarious, informal jobs will not contribute to women's economic empowerment and represents exactly the type of structural inequality within the labour market that the women's movement has been fighting for decades. Uber's practices are defined by an aggressive informalisation of an industry that was already deregulated three decades ago.

We also note with alarm the proliferation of news stories and reports of passenger assaults by Uber drivers (according to research by [the International Transport Workers' Federation \(ITF\)](#), there were nine cases in the US alone last year); customer frustrations over surge prices; complaints of

union busting; and questions around breaches of privacy for users and drivers, as well as some journalists. Uber drivers are amateur drivers using their private vehicles who are unprotected in an industry where a worker is 20 times more likely to be killed at work than other jobs, according to the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) of the US Department of Labour (OSHA).

Corporate social responsibility must include respect for the laws and regulations that govern industry and employment standards, including workers' rights, job security, health and safety, and environment. Yet Uber clearly state that as a third-party taxi app provider, they do not accept any responsibility as a taxi operator. Uber claims to operate in 55 countries around the world. According to research by the ITF, almost 40% of national or local governments in these countries have said "no" to Uber in one way or another. Specific reasons vary from city to city and country to country, but are based on clear evidence of Uber not respecting laws and regulations that govern the taxi industry.

Global unions, including the ITF and unions that operate in the taxi sector are not against innovation. But we firmly believe that no-one is above the law if they want a share of the taxi business. No company can make serious commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment while simultaneously undermining those goals through their business and employment practices. Women deserve better than a shallow public relations exercise and part-time jobs in the shadow economy.

We urge UN Women to urgently reconsider this partnership with Uber.

#UNWomenDumpUber

SIGNED BY:

AFL-CIO

Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

Canadian Teachers' Federation

Center for Women's Global Leadership

CUPE

Education International (EI)

EPSU

FKTU, Korea

FTTUB, Bulgaria

IndustriAll

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)

JASS Just Associates

Korean Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (KPTU)

National Taxi Workers' Alliance

Public Services International (PSI)

The Solidarity Center

Unifor
United Steelworkers-Métallos
Water Employees Trade Union of Malawi (WETUM)
Women in Europe for a Common Future

Note: More detailed information on ITF research relating to government opposition to Uber and scandals involving the company is available from the ITF. The ITF and global employers' association, the IRU (International Road Transport Union) also made a joint statement in November 2014: "[Respecting the law, protecting customers](#)"

If your organisation would like to sign-up to this statement, please send an email to uber@itf.org.uk