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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION RIGHTS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

BY K D EWING AND TOM SIBLEY



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In 1996 the International Centre for Trade Union Rights embarked on a project to review international labour standards and to consider how these standards might be reformed and adapted to the new world order. The Millennium Project, as it became known, was launched to promote a new approach in response to the neo-liberal assault on workers' rights and the growing power of multinational corporations. The project has been undertaken in collaboration with the Institute of Employment Rights.

Drafts of this publication were widely circulated in early 2000, and the matter was the subject of detailed examination at the ICTUR Administrative Council at Geneva in April 2000. The meeting was attended by trade union representatives from all parts of the world, and wide ranging discussion of the issues took place, in the course of which a number of different views were expressed. These different concerns have been taken into account, and the draft has been amended accordingly.

As part of its contribution to the development of the project, the Institute of Employment Rights sponsored a meeting in Glasgow on 11 September 2000, in collaboration with ICTUR and War on Want. Some of the views expressed in these meetings and in written response to the earlier draft are indicated at various points throughout the pages which follow. It must not be assumed, however, that those who are quoted at particular points consequently endorse all the conclusions. Many do not.

This project has been generously supported by a number of organisations. It is appropriate at this stage to acknowledge the financial support of the Barry Amiel Trust without which the project would have been much more difficult to complete. It is appropriate also to acknowledge the support of those who by their written comments have helped the report to take the form in which it is now presented. And although it is invidious to name individuals, it is a great pleasure also to acknowledge the invaluable support provided by Daniel Blackburn and Claire Farmer.

K D Ewing
Tom Sibley
6 November 2000

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WHAT IS THE INSTITUTE?

The Institute of Employment Rights was launched in 1989. As a labour law "think tank", supported by the trade union movement its purpose is to provide research, ideas and detailed argument. In 1994 the Institute was granted charitable status.

The results of the work of the Institute are published in papers and booklets. It provides tools of analysis and debate for the trade union movement in the area of labour law.

The Institute does not assume that legal measures can offer ultimate solutions for political, economic and social problems. However, it recognises that law has a part to play in influencing the employment relationship, both individually and collectively.

WHAT IS ICTUR?

The International Centre for Trade Union Rights was established in 1987. The aims of the Centre are:

- to defend and extend the rights of trade unions and trade unionists around the world
- to collect information on and increase awareness of trade union rights and their violations
- to carry out its activities in the spirit of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organisation Conventions and Recommendations, and other appropriate international treaties
- to use its influence to extend and strengthen the rights of trade unions in line with the above declarations.

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