



Language

Resistance to multinationals quite often prompts transnational supporting action, for example at the headquarters of a corporation or at its shareholders' meetings, and may also (if local resistance is suppressed) invoke protests from human rights bodies. Opposition to multinationals and their activities may also take the form of consumer boycotts. Factories run by multinationals in the developing world take advantage of cheap and often non-unionized labour. But poor pay, long hours of work, dangerous working conditions and violations of workers' rights may be even more likely to result when smaller scale local companies are under pressure to reduce the prices of their goods by marketing companies and chain stores in the west. The garment industry has historically been subject to low pay and dangerous workplaces, and still is so today in parts of the world, as the deaths of over 1,000 Bangladeshi workers trapped in collapsing factory buildings in 2013 dramatically illustrated. Sweatshop conditions (including dangerous workplaces) can also exist in other forms of production, such as shoes (Nike was the target of a significant campaign in the USA in the 1990s) or toys. One result of these campaigns is that major companies in the west have become (at least temporarily) more concerned to monitor conditions under which the goods they buy are produced.

Ambruster-Sandoval, Ralph, [Globalization and Cross-Border Labor Solidarity in the Americas: The Anti-Sweatshop Movement and the Struggle for Social Justice](#) [1], New York, Routledge, 2005, pp. 224

Brooks, Ethel C., [Unraveling the Garment Industry: Transnational Organizing and Women's Work](#) [2], Minneapolis MN, University of Minneapolis Press, 2007, pp. 304

Contrasts the necessity of local resistance – e.g. the right to unionize – with the transnational emphasis on consumer boycotts that, she argues, can unintentionally reinforce the global forces they denounce.

Carty, Victoria, [Transnational Mobilizing in Two Mexican Maquiladoras: The Struggle for Democratic Globalization](#) [3], Mobilization: An International Quarterly, Vol. 9, issue 3 (Oct), 2004, pp. 295-310

Godrej, Dinyar, [For a Few Cents More': Interview with Anannya Bhattacharjee from the Asia Floor Wage Alliance campaigning for a living wage](#) [4], New Internationalist, 2020, pp. 32-33

The interview examines the role of Asian garment workers in a ruthlessly competitive garment industry influenced by 'fast fashion', which intensifies pressure on workers through forced overtime and 'inhuman productivity targets'. The Asia Floor Wage Alliance was created to unite unions across the borders of countries such as India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka competing for market share, to create a regional bloc able to negotiate with the global brands in the industry. The aim was to ensure there is a cross-border minimum wage which cannot be breached, though the aim is also to raise wages, which would only entail a small rise to consumers. There is now recognition of the principle of an Asia Floor Wage across the industry, supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO), but pressure on the brands is needed. AFWA works with other labour rights bodies and NGOs, and also has partners in Europe and the US, where the global brands have their headquarters.

See also:

<http://awajfoundation.org/> [5], <https://ngwfbd.com/> [6] and <https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/Areasofwork/workers-and-employers-organizations/lang-en/index.htm> [7] (ILO-Bangladesh).

Hale, Angela ; Shaw, Linda M., [Women Workers and the Promise of Ethical Trade in the Globalised Garment Industry: A Serious Beginning?](#) [8], In Waterman, Peter ; Wills, Jane , [Place, Space and the New Labour](#)



[Internationalism](#) [9] Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, , 2001, pp. 206-226

Discusses company codes of conduct introduced in response to ethical trade boycotts in west of products made with sweatshop labour, and analyzes the global economic conditions undercutting such codes and the right to union organization.

Hoskins, tansy, [Striking Back'. \(review of film Udita \(Arise\)\)](#) [10], Red Pepper, 2015

The film *Udita* (made by the Rainbow Collective) traces the struggle by women garment workers in Bangladesh to get better conditions and pay in the context of appalling and dangerous conditions. The film stresses the growing resistance by the women and interviews a woman organiser who describes the tactics used to make their boss pay them unpaid wages. It is still extremely relevant as the movement of Bangladeshi garment workers continues. *The Guardian Weekly* (18 January 2019, p. 7.) reported briefly on a strike by thousands of garment workers for better pay which had shut down 52 factories and was in its second week. The previous Sunday women had blockaded a road just outside Dhaka. The film is made available on YouTube at this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_tuvBHR6WU [11]

Johns, Rebecca ; Vural, Leyla, [Class, Geography and the Consumerist Turn: UNITE and the Stop Sweatshops Campaign](#) [12], *Economic Geography*, Vol. 74, 2000, pp. 252-271

Ross, Andrew, [No Sweat: Fashion, Free Trade and the Rights of Garment Workers](#) [13], New York, Verso, 1997, pp. 256

Taylor, Julie, [Leveraging the Global to Empower Local Struggles: Resistance and Efficacy in Transnational Feminist Networks](#) [14], *St Antony's International Review*, Vol. 1, issue 2 (Nov), 2005, pp. 102-117

Three case studies of networks based in Latin America and Caribbean supporting garment workers (the Maquilla network created 1996) and domestic workers in Trinidad and Tobago; and promoting women's health in rural and urban Brazil.

Young, Iris, [From Guilt to Solidarity: Sweatshops and Political Responsibility](#) [15], *Dissent*, issue Winter, 2003, pp. 39-44

On US movement.

See also:

Naomi Klein, [No Logo](#) [16], ([A.4 Resistance to Multinationals](#) [17]), pp. 325-77, covering sweatshop campaigns and especially opposition to Nike.

Source URL (retrieved on 19/04/2024 - 08:17):<https://civilresistance.info/section/campaigns-social-and-economic-justice/a5-transnational-solidarity-exploited-workers>

Links

[1] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2005/globalization-and-cross-border-labor-solidarity-americas-anti->



[sweatshop-movement](#) [2] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2007/unraveling-garment-industry-transnational-organizing-and-womens-work> [3] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2004/transnational-mobilizing-two-mexican-maquiladoras-struggle-democratic-globalization> [4] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2020/few-cents-more-interview-anannya-bhattacharjee-asia-floor-wage-alliance-campaigning> [5] <http://awajfoundation.org/> [6] <https://ngwfbd.com/> [7] <https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/Areasofwork/workers-and-employers-organizations/lang--en/index.htm> [8] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2001/women-workers-and-promise-ethical-trade-globalised-garment-industry-serious> [9] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2001/place-space-and-new-labour-internationalism> [10] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2015/striking-back-review-film-udita-arise> [11] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_tuvBHr6WU [12] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2000/class-geography-and-consumerist-turn-unite-and-stop-sweatshops-campaign> [13] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1997/no-sweat-fashion-free-trade-and-rights-garment-workers> [14] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2005/leveraging-global-empower-local-struggles-resistance-and-efficacy-transnational> [15] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2003/guilt-solidarity-sweatshops-and-political-responsibility> [16] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2000/no-logo> [17] <https://civilresistance.info/taxonomy/term/192>