

Statement of Solidarity with Greenpeace Campaign to Reform the Tuna Industry

Whereas, for far too long corporate interests, driven by short-term profits, have worked to divide labor and environmental movements, disingenuously painting our issues as a jobs versus the environment choice; and

We know that environmental and social justice issues are absolutely intertwined and increasingly solutions that protect workers are the same solutions that safeguard the environment and natural resources; and

Nearly 21 million men, women and children globally are trapped in forced labor, often deceived or coerced to work under horrific conditions against their will; and

The global seafood industry has been directly linked to some of the most egregious human rights abuses. On a global scale, fishermen — many of them migrant workers — are being sold, abducted, trafficked, or coerced onto fishing vessels where they are forced to work for little or no pay, and kept at sea under brutal conditions for up to three years at a time with no ability to contact land; and

As fish stocks decline from overfishing, expanded fleets must travel further out to sea to find fish, and the growing demand for cheap seafood has increasingly motivated companies to employ cheap or forced labor and to fish illegally; and

Labor abuse on fishing vessels often goes hand in hand with illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Because it happens out of sight and under minimal regulation, the resulting human misery and environmental destruction often stays hidden; and

Workers entrapped and forced to crew on fishing vessels have been subjected to deplorable treatment, including shifts of up to 22 hours a day, a lack of food and clean water, physical violence and beatings, and even murder; and

Similar stories are emerging from the tuna fishing industry where practices such as high seas fishing, lack of observers on longline vessels, and transshipment at sea — the transfer of catches, fuel, supplies and even crew to or from another cargo vessel, far from ports and authorities — are a staple of human rights abuse at sea; and

In March, the European Union issued Thailand a "yellow card" for failing to take significant steps to address IUU fishing, and in July the U.S. State Department released its 2015 Global Trafficking in Persons Report maintaining Thailand's Tier 3 designation for its failure to enact more substantial reforms to end labor trafficking; and

Investigations by the Guardian, New York Times, and the Associated Press have brought international attention to the pervasive human rights abuses and modern-day slavery taking place in Thailand and on Indonesian fleets, and to companies like Walmart that are selling seafood tainted with human trafficking in major U.S. markets; and

Thailand is the third-largest exporter of seafood in the world, and Chicken of the Sea is a subsidiary of Thai Union, the largest exporter of Thai seafood; and

Greenpeace is a global campaigning organization working to end overfishing, which has regularly bore witness to instances of appalling working conditions, breaches of internationally accepted standards for safety of crew, and in some cases human trafficking and forced labor on tuna fishing vessels; and

Greenpeace understands that sustainable seafood requires environmentally sound practices, and fair and ethical pay and treatment for workers; and

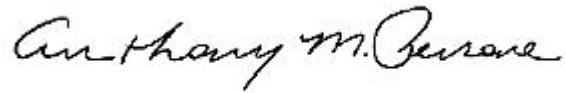
Greenpeace is campaigning to ensure that Thai Union and Chicken of the Sea eradicate human rights and environmental abuses throughout their supply chain; and

Human rights abuse, forced labor, IUU fishing and overfishing are interconnected issues which we must confront together; and

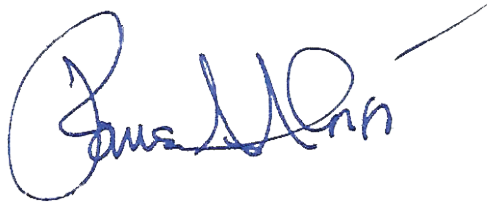
We, therefore, stand in solidarity with Greenpeace, and call on Thai Union and Chicken of the Sea to immediately reform their social and environmental practices.

To ensure the fair and ethical treatment of workers, and oceans that can provide a sustainable source of tuna protein, these companies must: clean up their supply chains, become fully transparent, ensure workers the freedom of association and the right to join unions, require improved fishing practices, and stop relying on overfishing and exploited labor to make short-term profits.

Signatories



Marc Perrone, International President, United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW)



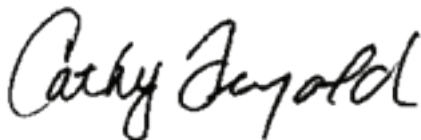
Rome Aloise, International Vice President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters



Mary Kay Henry, International President, Service Employees International Union (SEIU)



Ron Oswald, General Secretary, International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)



Cathy Feingold, Director of International Affairs, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)