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Covid 19: Shut down all non-essential call centres!

Statement also available in French and Castilian

Sunday 22 March 2020, by [International Labour Network of Solidarity and Struggles](#) (Date first published: 22 March 2020).

Our organisations belonging to the International Labour Network of Solidarity and Struggle, based on the information transmitted by the comrades working in call-centres, denounce the lack of protection that prevails in these places.

In several countries, our activists made proposals so as not to put the lives of the workers in call-centres at risk. In many cases, bosses refused to consider them and went as far as to require the help of the repressive force of the State to make us work!

The absolute need to keep at work and to make thousands of people in the world travel to work to do that type of activity remains an enigma. That is in complete reversal to the human interaction limitation recommended by World Health Organization and most governments. Some companies offer to telework, but that remains little developed in spite of the emergency. Important ordering customers, some with public capitals, refuse its introduction. Besides, teleworking cannot, unfortunately, be implemented in several areas of the world due to under-development and colonialism!

For several days, tens of thousands of workers have kept taking, or even making calls, to sell phone subscriptions, insurance or to maintain the customer service of trading multinationals! How, regarding the health emergency that we are going through, can our jobs be considered as essential? Everyday, workers from that field have to travel to work, with the risk of being sanctioned in various ways (dismissals, temporary lays off, fines, etc.). With the risk of ending up, by the hundreds, on production platforms where sometimes one is taking over their colleague's workstation without it having been cleaned with the right product and passing on headsets. Incidents keep building up as promiscuity and working conditions are an ultra fertile base to the spread of the virus. Call-centres come up with people infected everyday, sometimes dozens of them, and close down... to reopen, at the best, a few hours or days later.

We refuse to keep producing a meaningless service, without security. In places where the service is essential, like, for instance, the service linked to delivering information about the COVID 19, we demand security measures to be implemented:

- Hydro-alcoholic gel, soap, disinfectant wipes, continuously provided
- No more than 50 persons by platform
- One metre distance between workers
- Evacuation of the workplace until its disinfection, in known case of infection.

All together let's demand the halting of production!

We can do it and we have already done it in some companies.

The highly vulnerable, mainly female subcontractors in that field will not accept to become cannon fodder for the capitalist system. We are reasserting, now more than ever, that our lives are worth more than their profits! Let's defend ourselves against coronavirus but not only!

We demand the shut down of all the non-essential contact centres and the full payment of our salaries.

Multinational companies in that field cannot use the crises to save money in the countries where the laws are less protective. They clearly do it enough all year long. Today, during that crises they have to shoulder their responsibilities by turning to the large contracting firms.

We also demand the end of the sanctions for the right to withdraw, absences. And the end of dismissals. Eventually, we fight for the same actions to be taken for all non-essential jobs, beyond call-centres.

P.S.

<http://www.laboursolidarity.org/Shut-down-all-non-essential-call?lang=en>

French: Fermeture de tous les centres d'appels non-essentiels !

<http://www.laboursolidarity.org/Fermeture-de-tous-les-centres-d>

Castilian: ¡Cierre de todos los centros de llamadas no esenciales!

<http://www.laboursolidarity.org/Cierre-de-todos-los-centros-de?lang=es>