**Fifth Session, UN Tax Convention Negotiations**
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## Article 15: PCbCR

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Article 15: Confidentiality

Thank you, Mr. Co-Lead. I am speaking on behalf of the Financial Transparency Coalition, its member EURODAD, and the civil society group coordinated by the Global Alliance for Tax Justice.

Article 15 outlines the much needed data access of a successful framework convention to fulfill the ambition established by the Terms of Reference.

In this context, I would like to highlight three reasons why it is important to provide public access to data.

First of all, investigative journalists, civil society, and academia have conducted cross-border investigations into beneficial owners in different registries, and linked to numerous cases brought forward by whistleblowers. They have also examined the tax payments of large multinational corporations and uncovered the vast wealth of high-net-worth individuals. Without access to public data, these debates would be conducted blindly—and, to a large extent, they still are.

Secondly, public access to data enables better policymaking by everyone, as it informs public debate. Aggregate revenue collection statistics are not sufficient to guide our policymaking; this transparency also facilitates monitoring illicit financial flows, including tax avoidance and tax evasion allowing estimates of IFFs by sector, country and trade partner.

Thirdly, publicly accessible data provides the most efficient pathway for governments and officials to access information. They can first consult public data before initiating information exchanges that require official protocols and data access from other jurisdictions. This approach also enables more targeted requests for non-public data, which is typically more extensive and comprehensive.

Privacy arguments should not be used to prevent access, and the right to protect private life doesn’t apply to corporations.

In the case of the beneficial owners of companies and assets, wide access has proven to improve governance, the integrity of markets, prevent environmental crime related illicit financial flows, and mobilise revenue. Let’s make it happen.

Thank you.