



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **PARLIAMENTARIAN SHARES VISION FOR A FAIR TAX SOCIETY**

**Andrew Mitchell MP, Vice Chair, All Party Parliamentary Group on Responsible Tax, joined Church Action on Tax Justice, in Birmingham to discuss and debate why a fair tax society would be a better society for everyone.**

The event was organised together with the Quaker Peace Committee, Christian Aid, Jubilee Debt Campaign (Birmingham), the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility and The Fair Tax Mark.

Speaking to a range of questions from the room, and from Revd David Haslam MBE, chair of Church Action for Tax Justice, Andrew Mitchell MP gave his views on recent news reports referencing the amount of corporation tax Amazon has paid in the UK.

He said: "It is not right that people can migrate profits to a different zone. As a society, we should say that you should not use these schemes to get around paying tax. Amazon gets all the advantages of a huge market, but doesn't pay the equivalent tax that others pay and that is wrong. And should there be country-by- country reporting? Yes, absolutely. I cannot understand why we don't have it."

Outlining his motivations for championing the issue of a global fair tax system, Andrew Mitchell described why he thinks further legislation in this area is needed, he said: "I am concerned about the vast amounts of money being stolen from Africans and Africa. One of the most badly organised, kleptocratic countries in the world is the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And it is a sad fact that some of the poorest people in the world are living on top of incredible resources. The money being stolen from these countries is far greater than the development resources going into them, and the financial investment going into them as well."

The event also discussed the impact of revelations such as the Panama Papers and Paradise Papers, which highlighted the need for public registers of company ownership. Earlier this year, Andrew Mitchell, along with Labour's Margaret Hodge MP, successfully tabled an amendment to the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Bill, which will see such registers made mandatory in all British Overseas Territories (OTs), like the Cayman and British Virgin Islands, by the end of 2020.

Speaking after the event, Revd David Haslam said: "It was excellent to have this exchange of views with Andrew Mitchell, who, along with Margaret Hodge MP, and the All Party

Parliamentary Group on Responsible Tax, has already done a lot to move towards a fairer tax society.

“Too often tax is referred to as a burden, when it should be thought of as a proud way to contribute to the services we all rely on as a society. There is still some way to go however, even to ensure that the OT’s, and the related Crown Dependencies like Jersey and Guernsey, do deliver on the public registers by 2020.”

Church Action on Tax Justice formally launched in April 2018 with a mission to raise awareness throughout the Churches and faith communities of the fundamental relationship between taxation, equality and public services, and the urgent need for Tax Justice at national and international level.

Paul Monaghan, Chief Executive of the Fair Tax Mark said: “It was great to hear Andrew Mitchell MP press the case for both the extension of public beneficial ownership registers to the likes of the Cayman Islands and the need to see public country-by-country reporting delivered by Amazon and others. These are core asks of the tax justice movement right across the world, and are gaining traction with politicians of all political persuasions thanks to the far-sighted leadership of Andrew and other MPs on the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Responsible Tax.”

David Haslam continued: “There are many ways that people of faith can get involved and support demands for a fair tax society. Worship resources are available from Church Action on Tax Justice, and we encourage anyone who wants to see a more equal and fair society to join us and help raise awareness of the urgent need for tax justice.”

#### **ENDS**

For further information please contact Gill Owen e: [press@fairtaxmark.net](mailto:press@fairtaxmark.net) or m: 07876246150

For more information about Church Action for Tax Justice <http://www.catj.org.uk>

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In the context of increasing global inequality and unprecedented environmental challenges, the tax system can play a vital role in building more just and sustainable societies and in fostering good relations between human beings.

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