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## **ICIJ Releases “Offshore Leaks” Database Revealing Names Behind Secret Companies, Trusts**

**USERS CAN SEARCH THROUGH MORE THAN 100,000 SECRET ENTITIES ACROSS 10 OFFSHORE JURISDICTIONS**

**WASHINGTON, DC (June 14)** –[The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists \(ICIJ\)](#), a project of the [Center for Public Integrity](#), today released an interactive database that cracks open the historically impenetrable world of offshore tax havens.

The [ICIJ Offshore Leaks Database](#) allows users to search through more than 100,000 secret companies, trusts and funds created in offshore locales such as the British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cook Islands and Singapore. “Secrecy creates an environment where fraud, tax evasion, money laundering and other forms of corruption thrive. The Offshore Leaks Database helps remove this secrecy,” said ICIJ director Gerard Ryle. “Opening up the records serves the public interest by bringing accountability to an industry that has long operated in the shadows.”

Tax evasion is a central theme in the meetings British Prime Minister David Cameron will chair next week with the leaders of the G8 industrialized countries. Cameron says the time has come “to knock down the walls of company secrecy” that make the offshore system attractive to money launderers, fraudsters and other criminals. In the U.S., anticorruption advocates are [urging President Obama](#) to support proposals that would require owners of shell companies in the U.S. and other countries to publicly register their holdings.

The data are part of a cache of 2.5 million leaked files ICIJ analyzed with 112 journalists in 58 countries. Since April, stories based on the data — the largest stockpile of inside information about the offshore system ever obtained by a media organization — have been published by more than 40 media organizations worldwide, including *The Guardian* in the U.K., *Le Monde* in France, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* in Germany, *The Washington Post* and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

The Offshore Leaks web app was developed by [La Nación newspaper](#) in Costa Rica for ICIJ. It will go live at 10 pm EST Friday June 14 (4:00 CET on Saturday June 15.)

ICIJ's investigation — dubbed “Offshore Leaks” by the Twittersphere and the public —has [shaken political and financial institutions](#) from South Korea to Canada. The ICIJ team's news reports have:

- Triggered official investigations into tax dodging and other possible crimes in the Philippines, India, Greece and South Korea.
- Prompted high-profile resignations of political and business leaders, including the deputy speaker of the Mongolian parliament and Austria's most famed banker.
- Sparked a renewed sense of urgency among world leaders, transforming tax-haven politics in the European Union and amplifying political will to tackle offshore tax evasion.

The Offshore Leaks web app allows readers to explore the relationships between clients, offshore entities and the lawyers, accountants, banks and other intermediaries who help keep these arrangements secret. The web app displays graphic visualizations of offshore entities and the networks around them including, when possible, the company's true owners.

There are legitimate uses for offshore companies and trusts and ICIJ does not suggest or imply that the people and companies included in the database have broken the law or otherwise acted improperly. The Offshore Leaks Database also is not a “data dump.” Rather, it is a careful release of basic corporate information. ICIJ will not release personal data en masse, and has intentionally withheld records of bank accounts and financial transactions, emails and other correspondence, passports and telephone numbers.

After 17 months of reporting, ICIJ reporters and partners are still digging into this massive trove of financial information. The Offshore Leaks Database gives ICIJ an opportunity to reach journalists and regular citizens in every corner of the world, particularly in countries most affected by corruption and backroom deals. ICIJ believes many of the best stories may come from crowd sourcing, when readers explore the database.

As it fields tips from the public, ICIJ will continue to work on in-depth, cross-border investigations with its network of reporters and media partners. At the same time, ICIJ will continue to reject demands from governments that it turn over all its offshore files. ICIJ is an independent network of investigative reporters — not an arm of government.

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**About the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ)**

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists is an active global network of 160 reporters in more than 60 countries who collaborate on in-depth investigative stories. Founded in 1997, ICIJ was launched as a project of the Center for Public Integrity to extend the Center’s style of watchdog journalism, focusing on issues that do not stop at national frontiers: cross-border crime, corruption, and the accountability of power. Backed by the Center and its computer-assisted reporting specialists, public records experts, fact-checkers and lawyers, ICIJ reporters and editors provide real-time resources and state-of-the-art tools and techniques to journalists around the world.

**About the Center for Public Integrity**

Founded in 1989 by Charles Lewis, the Center for Public Integrity is one of the country's oldest and largest nonpartisan, nonprofit investigative news organizations. Our mission: to enhance democracy by revealing abuses of power, corruption and betrayal of trust by powerful public and private institutions, using the tools of investigative journalism.

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