

# Bono isn't innocent of tax avoidance because what he do...

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There [was an almost amusing article in the Irish Times](#) this week on Bono, as seen through the eyes of the charity he founded - One.

As the article noted:

*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Jamie Drummond of the anti-poverty campaign, One, has defended U2 singer Bono's tax arrangements, saying they are "perfectly legal".*

*U2 faced severe criticism and charges of hypocrisy in 2006 when they moved part of their business arrangements to the Netherlands to avoid paying tax on royalties in Ireland following the cap which was put on the artists' exemption scheme in Ireland in late 2005.*

*The criticism has been particularly focused on Bono, who has been a vocal advocate for developed countries to increase their official development assistance to poorer countries.*

*In addition, Bob Geldof, another advocate for the One campaign, has been criticised for availing of non-domiciled tax status in the UK to avoid paying large sums on overseas earnings.*

*Mr Drummond said both men were "not engaged in tax avoidance as I understand it. They are engaged in perfectly legal matters."*

Jamie is very confused. Tax avoidance is by definition not illegal, even if its legality is sometimes hard to prove. And no one has ever suggested they've ever done anything illegal - which would be evasion, with which Jamie is (I hope) getting confused.

What we've questioned is their moral judgement in engaging in practices that use mechanisms such as tax havens that have been exploited to strip more than £100 billion a year from developing countries.

The charge is hypocrisy: failing to walk the talk even when the error was pointed out.

Jimmy Carr had the courage to say sorry. Now it's time for Bono and Geldof to do the same.