

TTIP: Regulatory cooperation is the ultimate tool to prevent or weaken future public interest standards for citizens, workers, consumers, and the environment

Civil society groups denounce “regulatory cooperation” in the TTIP negotiations as a threat to democracy and an attempt to put the interests of big business before the protection of citizens, workers, and the environment.

February 2015 - Statement by civil society organisations on regulatory cooperation in TTIP

We, the undersigned organisations, hereby express our deep concern about and our firm opposition to the direction of the TTIP negotiations regarding the regulation of vital areas, such as chemicals, food standards, public services, occupational health and safety, and financial regulation.

EU negotiators have claimed on a number of occasions that TTIP is not a threat to the laws and standards that protect us and the environment. (1)

But the latest leaked European Commission position on the regulatory cooperation chapter of the TTIP negotiations (2) has further heightened our concerns. The Commission proposes a system that can only result in further barriers to developing public interest standards as these would need to be ‘trade and investment’ proof. It also gives unprecedented influence to business lobby groups to stop any new regulation that would impact on trade and investment. The proposal strongly prioritises trade and investment over the public interest. The system would give enormous power to a small group of unelected officials to stop and weaken regulations and standards even before democratically elected bodies, such as parliaments, would have a say over them, thus undermining our democratic system.

The Commission calls for more “compatibility” between laws on both sides of the Atlantic and a “pro-competitive regulatory environment”. Compatibility is going to lead to “downward harmonisation” (3), as demonstrated by a July 2014 report for the European Parliament.

The Commission text suggests that any new law would need to be justified by new facts or scientific evidence if requested by a company or government. The Commission proposal also reflects industry’s demand to create a Regulatory Cooperation Body to facilitate an early information system of consultations and influence over the development of new laws.

Furthermore, according to the Commission proposal, US and EU businesses would have a greater say on most laws in Brussels, in EU capitals, in Washington and in US states. The Commission seems to have largely conceded to the demand of business lobby groups to essentially co-write legislation (4).

The Commission proposals for regulatory cooperation carry the threat of lowering standards in the long and short term, on both sides of the Atlantic, at the state and member state/European levels. They constrain democratic decision-making by strengthening the influence of big business over regulation.

For instance, a January 2015 report by the Center for International Environmental Law shows that regulatory cooperation is likely to further delay and even stall stronger

protections from toxic chemicals and pesticides. (5)

Regulatory cooperation could also constitute a gradual attack on the precautionary principle, slowly but widely opening doors to GMOs, nanomaterials and endocrine disruptors (6).

For these reasons, we urge the negotiators to remove regulatory cooperation from the TTIP negotiations.

Signed by

ACEP - Associação para a Cooperação Entre os Povos (Portugal)

Action for Breast Cancer Foundation (Malta)

ActionAid

Afri (Action from Ireland)

Afrika Kontakt (Denmark)

AITEC (France)

Alliance D19 D20 (Belgium)

Alliance for Cancer Prevention (UK)

Alternatiba Eraikitzen

Alter Summit

Les Amis de la Confédération paysanne (France)

Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft (AbL) (Germany)

Associação de Combate à Precariedade - Precários Inflexíveis (Portugal)

ATTAC Austria

ATTAC Bizkaia (Basque Country)

ATTAC Denmark

ATTAC France

ATTAC Germany

ATTAC HELLAS

ATTAC Hungary

ATTAC Ireland

ATTAC Portugal

ATTAC Spain

ATU Romania - Federation of Transport, Transloc and Public Services from Romania

Biofuelwatch (UK/US)

Both ENDS

Breast Cancer UK

Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (BUND) (Germany)

Campaign for Real Farming (UK)

The Cancer Prevention & Education Society (UK)

CEE Bankwatch Network (Czech Republic)

CEIM (Centro de Estudios e Investigación sobre Mujeres) (Spain)

Center for Encounter and active Non-Violence (Austria)

Center for Environmental Information and Education (CEIE) (Bulgaria)

Center for Sustainable Development of the Mountain (Bulgaria)

Center for Transport and Energy (CDE) (Czech Republic)

CHEM Trust (UK)

CIEL

CIG - Confederación Intersindical Galega

Collectif anti-gaz de schiste de Clapiers (France)

Collectif citoyen IDF Non aux pétroles et gaz de schiste et de couche (France)

Collectif d'action contre l'accord général pour le commerce des services (Loupian-Bouzigues, France)

Collectif Roosevelt (France)

Comité pour l'annulation de la dette du tiers monde (CADTM)

Compassion in World Farming (EU)

Confederacion Intersindical (Spain)

Confédération Paysanne (France)

Corporate Europe Observatory

CNCD-11.11.11 (Centre National de Coopération au développement) (Belgium)

Danish Eco Council

Earth Open Source (UK)

Ecologistas en Acción (Spain)

Ecoforum for Sustainable Development Association (Bulgaria)

EcoNexus (UK)

Economistas sin Fronteras (Spain)

ECOS (EU)

Ecoworld Rhodopes (Bulgaria)

ELA (Basque Country)

ENSEMBLE! (France)

Entrepueblos/Entrepobles/Entrepobos/Herriarte (Spain)

Esperanto Radikala Asocio Onlus (Italy)

Estonian Seamen's Independent Union

EUrope NEWnited Serviceteam (EU)

European Federation of Building and Wood Workers (EFBWW)

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

European Information-Human Rights Center (EIHRC)

European Transport Workers' Federation

Fair Trade Hellas (Greece)

Fairwatch (Italy)

Federazione Organismi Cristiani Servizio Internazionale Volontario, FOCSIV (Italy)

Finance Watch

Finnish NGDO platform to the EU

Finnish TTIP Info Network

Finnwatch (Finland)

Forum Umwelt und Entwicklung (Germany)

Food & Water Europe

foodwatch

Foundation for Ecological Education and Training (Bulgaria)

Foundation for Environment and Agriculture (FEA) (Bulgaria)

Fracking Free Ireland

France Amérique Latine (FAL)

France Nature Environnement

Friends of the Earth Austria (GLOBAL 2000)

Friends of the Earth Bulgaria - For the Earth (Za Zemiata)

Friends of the Earth Czech Republic (Hnutí Duha)

Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Friends of the Earth Estonia - Estonian Green Movement (ERL)

Friends of the Earth Europe

Friends of the Earth France

Friends of the Earth Hungary (Magyar Természetvédők Szövetsége (MTVSZ)

Friends of the Earth – CEPA (Slovak Republic)

Future for Borino (Bulgaria)

GAIA - Grupo de Acção e Intervenção Ambiental (Portugal)

Gen-ethisches Netzwerk e.V. (GeN)

Global Justice Now (UK)

GMWatch (UK)

GRAIN

Green Action (Croatia)

Green Institute (Greece)

Greenpeace Belgium

HEAL (EU)

Highlands and islands against fracking (UK)

IBD Initiative Bürger für Demokratie (Germany)

Initiativ Liewensufank a.s.b.l. (Luxembourg)

Initiative K136 (Greece)

Inter-Environnement Wallonie (Belgium)

Iuridicum Remedium (IuRe) (Czech Republic)

Keep Ireland Fracking Free

Latvian Green Movement (Latvia)

Lithuanian Seamen's Union

LobbyControl (Germany)

May Day (Denmark)

Mehr demokratie! Deutschland

Mehr demokratie! Österreich

Mujeres de Negro contra la guerra (Spain)

Munich Environment Institute (Umweltinstitut München e.V.)

NABU e.V. (Germany)

National Justice & Peace Network (England & Wales)

Not For Shale Ireland

Observatory on Debt in Globalisation (Debtwatch) (Spain)

ÖBV-Via Campesina Austria

Oikos – Cooperação e Desenvolvimento (Portugal)

PAN Europe

Plataforma Não ao Tratado Transatlântico (Portugal)

Platform Aarde Boer Consument (The Netherlands)

Polish Green Network (Poland)

PowerShift e.V (Germany)

Pro Ethical Trade Finland

The Puntarji - movement for active citizenship (Slovenia)

Quaker Council for European Affairs

Quercus – National Association for Nature Conservation (Portugal)

Réseau Environnement Santé (France)

Seaports NSZZ Solidarność (Poland)

Seeds Action Network - SAN Germany

Šindikat žerjavistov p.d. - Luka Koper (Slovenia)

Social Europe Malta - Front Against TTIP

Solidarity and Cooperation CIPSI (Italy)

Solidary Bulgaria

Stichting Schaliegasvrij Nederland (Shale-gas free Netherlands)

StopTTIP UK

SumOfUs

Sussex Against TTIP

Terra Nuova (Italy)

Transform! Europe

Transnational Institute (Netherlands)

UK National Hazards Campaign

UNI Europa

Union syndicale Solidaires (France)

USO (Spain)

VHUE e.V. (Germany)

War on Want (UK)

WECF France

WECF Germany

WECF International

WECF The Netherlands

WEED – World Economy, Ecology & Development (Germany)

Werkstatt Ökonomie, Heidelberg (Germany)

WIDE+ (Europe)

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Netherlands (WILPF NL)

Xnet (Spain)

ŽALI.LT (Lithuania)

(1) <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1219>

(2) <http://corporateeurope.org/international-trade/2014/12/ttip-covert-attacks-democracy-and-regulation>

(3) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/514007/AGRI_IPOL_STU%282014%29514007_EN.pdf

(4) <http://corporateeurope.org/sites/default/files/businesseurope-uschamber-paper.pdf>

(5) http://ciel.org/Publications/LCD_TTIP_Jan2015.pdf

(6) <https://www.agra-net.net/agra/agra-europe/crops/ttip-must-prioritise-regulatory-cooperation-on-gmos---coceral--1.htm>

http://www.merid.org/en/Content/News_Services/Nanotechnology_and_Development_News/Articles/2013/Jun/25/canada_and_us.aspx

<http://www.croplifeamerica.org/sites/default/files/ECPA-CLA%20TTIP%20Position%20-%20Paper%2010-03-14.pdf>

<http://www.europeanpublicaffairs.eu/is-democracy-a-trade-barrier/>