



PSI Steering Committee SC-19

ILO, Geneva, 17-18 November 2015

RESOLUTION

In response to the release of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement text

The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) text has confirmed many of our fears: the deal is weighted heavily in favour of corporations and will have a profound negative effect on vital public services.

Because the text remained secret throughout negotiations, unions and civil society have had to rely on leaked chapters and hearsay evidence in order to play any part in the deal. Meanwhile, through their huge lobbying power, corporations have been able to see some of their key areas of interest included in the deal. While the full 1,600 pages of legal text is still being analysed, preliminary analysis is worrying.

Among PSI's concerns are that the TPPA:

- Creates further inequalities across the world, at a time when more needs to be done to address rising inequality. TPPA represents a step in the wrong direction.
- Further shifts power to large multinational corporations and entrenches their rights over governments and people.
- Limits access to affordable medicines. Médecins Sans Frontières describes the deal as “the most harmful trade pact ever for access to medicines in developing countries”. The patent clause, extensively lobbied for by US pharmaceutical corporations, means that although drugs are available, they will only be *accessible* at a vast cost to taxpayers or individuals until years after they are first released.
- Undermines public health legislation. The TPPA requires governments to create a formal mechanism to give the tobacco industry input when the government attempts to change legislation. This stands in contrast to the WHO tobacco treaty, which urges governments to protect their legislation from corporate influence.
- Enables corporations to sue governments through its Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clause, if governments legislate in a way, which could impede profits. This undermines democracy and state sovereignty and will actively discourage governments from pursuing legitimate public policy and regulatory objectives.
- Ignores many labour rights issues. Although corporations are able to go to an international tribunal to sue governments, labour issues must still be dealt with at a state-to-state level. It appears that the agreement only enables labour violation complaints, which affect trade, and investment, which means that public sector workers are largely not covered. Governments may also be discouraged from enacting legislation, such as further minimum wage laws, because of the threat of prosecution from corporations, which may see this as a negative effect on their profits.

The TPPA represents a significant threat to governments' ability to provide Quality Public Services for the public good, to tackle inequality and protect democracy. PSI urges governments to recognize the negative effects this deal will have on people and to withdraw from the agreement.

PSI encourages affiliates in TPPA countries to mobilize in order to prevent the deal from being endorsed at national level and commits to assisting them to do so.