

THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP FREE TRADE AGREEMENT UNIONS DEMAND FAIR TRADE NOW!

LABOR RIGHTS

For years, respect for worker rights has been a condition for expanded trade and investment in numerous preference programs and trade and investment agreements internationally. The intent of these provisions is clear. If the potential gains of international trade and investment are to be shared fairly with those workers producing these goods and services, the fundamental rights of workers must be fully respected in law and in practice.

EXISTING LABOR PROVISIONS ARE WEAK, AND HAVE INADEQUATE ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS

In every country, workers continue to face serious and frequent violations of their basic labor rights, further driving down wages and working conditions and increasing levels of income inequality. Existing labor provisions in preference programs and trade and investment agreements have provided some leverage for workers in some countries, but they are wholly inadequate.

LABOR RIGHTS RULES MUST BE AS STRONG AS THE COMMERCIAL RIGHTS AVAILABLE FOR CORPORATIONS

Any future trade agreement must include both a stronger and broader commitment on labor rights. Countries must comply not only with the core labor rights, as enshrined in the relevant International Labour Organization conventions, but also the rights and standards related to the broader concept of decent work. The agreement must also ensure that workers throughout supply chains are covered fully by these protections, and that they apply equally to migrant workers. And, goods produced by forced or compulsory labor must never enter international commerce.

The agreement's dispute settlement procedures must work quickly and result in targeted, deterrent sanctions if cooperative consultations and arbitration are exhausted and fail to bring about compliance with the agreement's labor obligations. A politically and economically independent labor secretariat, which would play an important role in research and oversight of the agreement's labor provisions, should also be established.

The complete text of the joint trade union labor chapter proposal is available online at:

<http://www.ituc-csi.org/the-trans-pacific-partnership.html>

THE GOVERNMENTS NEGOTIATING THE TPP FTA CAN AND MUST DO BETTER.

TRADE UNIONS DEMAND A SEAT AT THE TABLE AND AN AGREEMENT THAT FULLY PROTECTS THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS PRODUCING THE GOODS AND SERVICES TRADED IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY.