

Open letter to Ministers of Trade from Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement signatories meeting in Hanoi on 20-21 May 2017

Dear Ministers

As organisations representing health professionals and health advocates from countries that are signatories to the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), we write to convey our deep concerns about reports that some of the remaining TPP parties are considering resurrecting the TPP following the U.S. withdrawal, and to reiterate concerns raised with you previously regarding its negative impacts on people's right to health, access to affordable medicines, and the ability of governments to regulate health-damaging activities of corporations.

Concerns about the impacts of the agreement have been voiced at the highest international levels by United Nations Rapporteurs and other UN experts, the Director General of the World Health Organization Dr Margaret Chan, and representative international bodies such as the World Medical Association and the World Federation of Public Health Associations.

Many of the rules and obligations in the TPP were imposed by the U.S. and are only in the interest of multinational pharmaceutical corporations. These include a suite of intellectual property provisions that would reduce access to medicines, including the unprecedented U.S. imposed requirement that governments guarantee at least five years' exclusivity for biologic products. Now that the U.S. is no longer party to the agreement there is no rationale for keeping the TPP alive and retaining these harmful elements of the agreement.

We urge you to remove these harmful provisions, and to recognise that the concerns of the health community cannot be addressed by minor changes to the signed-on 4 February 2016 text. To address those concerns would require many parts of the text to be rewritten from first principles. Unless these damaging provisions can be removed and comprehensive public health safeguards can be included, we strongly believe the TPP should be rejected.

We call on the parties to the Agreement instead to enter into an open and forward-looking dialogue with the health policy community to find a new balance that recognises the legitimate trade interests of countries, while fully protecting the ability of sovereign governments to adopt policies and regulations for health.

Signed by

International and regional

World Federation of Public Health Associations

Médecins Sans Frontières/ Doctors without Borders (MSF)

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition Latin American and Caribbean ITPC-LATCA

Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS (APN+)

Alianza Latinoamérica y el Caribe - Global por el Acceso a Medicamentos

Australia

Public Health Association of Australia
Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
Centre for Health Equity Training, Research and Evaluation (CHETRE)
UNSW Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity, University of New South Wales
Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
NSW Nurses and Midwives Association
Older Women's Network NSW Inc
Presentation Sisters Queensland
ActionAid Australia
Australian Catholic Social Justice Council
Australian Services Union
Union Aid Abroad - APHEDA

Canada

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network.
The Global Health Equity Group

Chile

Movimiento Salud Digna (Movement for Decent/Dignified Health)
Políticas Farmaceuticas of Chile
Federación Nacional de Profesionales Universitarios de los Servicios de Salud (FENPRUSS)
(National Federation of University Health Professionals)
Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Colegio de Enfermeras de Chile (Human Rights Commission of the Nursing School of Chile)
Fundación Equidad Chile (Equity Foundation of Chile)

Japan

Japan Federation of Democratic Medical Institutions (MIN-IREN)"
Japanese Medical and Dental Practitioners for the Improvement of Medical Care (Hodanren)
Japan Federation of Medical Workers' Unions

Malaysia

Malaysian AIDS Council
Positive Malaysian Treatment Access & Advocacy Group (MTAAG+)
Monitoring Sustainability of Globalisation (MSN)
Pertubuhan Islah Movement

New Zealand

Public Health Association of New Zealand
Association of Salaried Medical Specialists
Doctors for Healthy Trade

National Addiction Centre, University of Otago, Christchurch
New Zealand Nurses Organisation
OraTaiao: The New Zealand Climate and Health Council

Peru

Acción Internacional Para la Salud – Perú (International Action for Health – Peru)
Asociación Latinoamericana de Medicina Social – Perú (Latin American Social Medicine Association – Peru)
Colectivo Dignidad en Salud (Dignity in Health Collective)
Grupo Impulsor de la Vigilancia de Antirretrovirales (GIVAR) (Antiretroviral Surveillance Group (GIVAR))
Justicia en Salud (Justice in Health)
Programa de soporte a la Autoayuda de Personas Seropositivas (PROSA) (Self-Help Support Program for Seropositive People (PROSA))
Red de Pacientes y Usuarios – Perú (Patients and Users Network – Peru)
Si da Vida (If you give life)
Salud Preventiva Andina (Andean Preventive Health)
Red Peruana por una Globalización con Equidad (RedGE) (Peruvian Network for Globalization with Equity)

Vietnam

Vietnam Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (VNP+)

May, 19 2017