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MEDIA RELEASE

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TPP not in the public interest, community groups tell Canberra cross-party forum

Fair trade groups, public health groups and unions will argue that the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal is not in the public interest, and that its implementing legislation should be blocked by the Senate, at a forum hosted by ALP MP Josh Wilson, Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young and Senator Nick Xenophon.

The forum is at 12-1:30 PM, in Senate Committee Room 2S3, Parliament house Canberra. Speakers include Dr Patricia Ranald, AFTINET Convener, Michael Moore, Public Health Association President and Ged Kearney, ACTU President.

Community organisations have succeeded in getting a Senate Inquiry into the TPP which has invited public submissions and will not report until February 7, 2017. None of the 12 TPP governments have yet passed the implementing legislation, and even the US, which drove the agenda, is unlikely to do so.

“The Senate Inquiry provides a real opportunity for critical scrutiny and independent studies of the TPP which the government has so far refused to conduct, relying only on a report from the department that negotiated the agreement,” **Dr Patricia Ranald, Convener of the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network** said today. “The TPP will undermine our rights by allowing global corporations to bypass national courts and sue governments in unfair international tribunals over health and environment laws.”

“The TPP will delay access to cheaper versions of costly biologic medicines used to treat cancer and other life-threatening diseases, which Australians can only access because they are subsidised by the PBS. This would cost the PBS hundreds of millions of dollars for each year of delay, and create pressures for higher prices at the chemist,” said **Michael Moore, President of the Public Health Association of Australia.**

“Despite promises, TPP will not deliver on claims of jobs and growth, or protect workers’ rights. It has only weak commitments to labour rights that are not enforceable, and does not even ban the products of child and slave labour. It would allow more temporary migrant workers who are vulnerable to exploitation, without testing whether local workers are available,” said **Ged Kearney, ACTU President.**

Speakers will be available for questions and interview after the forum.

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