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MEDIA RELEASE

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Trade in services leaks show fights on domestic regulation, data privacy protection, more temporary workers

Documents from the secret November 2016 round of Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) negotiations between the US, EU Australia and 20 other mostly industrialised countries were leaked yesterday at <http://www.bilaterals.org/?+-tisa-+>

The negotiations are taking place outside the WTO framework and exclude most developing countries. They aimed to finish in December 2016 but have been stalled by major disagreements on data privacy protections, restraints on domestic regulation of services, expansion of temporary migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation and the ability to regulate new services in the future.

“These leaks confirm that the TiSA negotiations are driven by the interests of global services companies that want to maximise profitable trade in services and minimise government regulation in the public interest. Many of these are similar to proposals in the now-dead Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP),” Dr Patricia Ranald, Convener of the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network of community groups (AFTINET) said today.

“Proposals to freeze regulations at current levels and prevent increases in future regulation in areas like [financial services](#) could prevent governments from responding to future financial crises, or from regulating risky new financial products like those which led to the 2008 Global Financial Crisis.

[Proposals](#) to maximise cross-border data flows without effective privacy protections could mean that Australians’ private data could be transferred to countries where Australian data privacy laws do not apply.

The [temporary worker proposals](#) could mean more contractual service suppliers without testing whether local workers were available. Numerous [studies](#) show that many of these workers are vulnerable to exploitation because they can be dismissed and deported if they complain about their conditions,” said Dr Ranald.

“These proposals affect the lives of all Australians and should be debated openly in democratic parliamentary processes, not traded away in secret negotiations. We call on the Australian and other governments to release the TiSA negotiating texts so that these proposals can be exposed to public and parliamentary scrutiny.”

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