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MEDIA RELEASE

February 27, 2017

Fair trade group says no to TPP-like proposals as RCEP talks continue in Japan

The Australian Government should oppose attempts to replicate the TPP in the Asian-based Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) as negotiations continue in Kobe, Japan this week, AFTINET Convener Dr Patricia Ranald said today.

“Trade Minister Ciobo [admitted last week](#) that China is not interested in attempts to resurrect the failed TPP following US withdrawal. This should be a signal to the government that other RCEP governments will oppose attempts to include TPP-like proposals on stronger medicine monopolies and foreign investor rights to sue governments in the RCEP,” said Dr Ranald.

The RCEP negotiations involve 16 countries (Australia, New Zealand, China, India, Japan, South Korea and the 10 ASEAN countries) and will continue throughout 2017. The negotiations are secret, with only limited consultations with community groups, which must rely on leaked documents for information.

“[Leaked documents](#) have revealed that the TPP text on stronger medicine monopolies and investor rights to sue governments has been tabled by Japan and Korea in the RCEP negotiations. These proposals have been strongly opposed by [public health](#) and other [community groups](#) from RCEP countries,” said Dr Ranald.

“The RCEP negotiations include some of the poorest ASEAN countries like Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos for which such proposals would make medicines completely unaffordable.

“ASEAN governments, along with other RCEP governments like India, have no interest in stronger medicine monopolies that would delay cheaper forms of medicines.

“They are also wary of giving global corporations the right to bypass national courts and sue governments in unfair international tribunals.

“If TPP-like proposals continue in the RCEP negotiations, they will deadlock the negotiations and generate the same community opposition as the TPP did.

“We call on the Australian and other RCEP governments to reject such proposals and release all negotiating texts for public scrutiny.

“This is the only way to ensure that the RCEP does not contain toxic TPP proposals.”

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