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MEDIA RELEASE

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International Health Community Rejects TPP Revival in Open Letter to Trade Ministers meeting in Hanoi

Prominent public health, advocacy and professional organisations have called on trade ministers from eleven remaining Trans-Pacific Partnership countries not to attempt to resurrect the deal at their meeting in Hanoi tomorrow.

The open letter (*full text below*) is signed by the World Federation of Public Health Organisations and leading health organisations from most of the non-US participating countries - including from Australia, New Zealand and Japan, whose governments are leading moves to revive the agreement since the U.S. withdrawal.

The signatories reiterated concerns they and others had previously raised regarding the negative impacts of the Agreement on people's right to health, access to affordable medicines, and the ability of governments to regulate health-damaging activities of corporations.

Many of these provisions were included at the insistence of the U.S., which is no longer party, notably the unprecedented monopoly protections for biologic medicines.

To address their concerns many parts of the text signed on 4 February 2016 would have to be rewritten from first principles.

Quotes

"The provisions for biologic medicines included in the TPP at the behest of the U.S. pharmaceutical industry would reduce access to treatments for cancer and other serious health conditions in the Asia-Pacific Region" said **Dr Deborah Gleeson, spokesperson for the Public Health Association of Australia**. "Now that the U.S. has withdrawn, the opportunity to remove these harmful and unnecessary rules should not be missed."

New Zealand Public Health Association President Louise Delany urged the parties 'to ensure that health, social and environmental objectives are central to any new agreement, so that trade rules are consistent with and help give effect to the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals'.

'The TPPA was another life sentence hanging over people with HIV and AIDS. We thought that was lifted when the US pulled out. Now some of them they want to go ahead. Listen to us. Choose life over the TPPA said Edward Low, Director of Positive Malaysian Treatment Access & Advocacy Group (MTAAG+)'.

'We are shocked that the TPPA, which raised grave health and human rights concerns, remains on the agenda of 11 of the original negotiating countries, even after the US has pulled out of it. APN+ members are in 6 of these countries - Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Japan - and will be among the first to face the consequences of this disastrous trade agreement on their health and lives', said Shiba Phurailatpam of the Asia Pacific Network of People living with HIV and AIDS (APN+). 'We now know that the TPPA text gives stronger and greatly expanded intellectual property rights over medicines to the multinational pharmaceutical industry that will adversely impact the lives and health of millions of patients in the Asia-Pacific. It must be rejected - once and for all.'

Contact

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FULL TEXT

**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

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition Latin American and Caribbean ITPC-LATCA

Asia Pacific Network of people living with HIV and AIDS (APN+)

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

Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET)

ActionAid Australia

Australian Catholic Social Justice Council

Australian Services Union

NSW Nurses and Midwives Association

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA

Older Women's Network NSW Inc

Presentation Sisters Queensland

Canada

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network.

The Global Health Equity Group

Chile

Movimiento Salud Digna (Movement for Decent/Dignified Health)

Políticas Farmaceuticas 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)

Vietnam

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