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Media Release

September 3, 2012

Tobacco fight continues at Trans-Pacific free trade negotiations 30 community groups condemn use of trade agreements to sue governments

“Thirty trade unions, church, environment, health and other community groups have written to the Trade Minister urging him to implement his policy of opposing the right of corporations to sue governments in international tribunals in the 14th round of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPPA) negotiations to be held this week in Leesburg, Virginia”, Dr Patricia Ranald, Convenor of the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network said today.

See the letter at www.aftinet.org.au

“The Philip Morris company is using an Investor-State Dispute provision in an obscure Hong Kong investment treaty to continue to sue the Australian Government for damages in an international tribunal even after the Australian Government’s High Court victory over Big Tobacco’s challenge to plain packaging legislation”, explained Dr Ranald.

“This shows how such clauses in trade agreements can be used to challenge democratically enacted legislation which has been validated by the highest court in Australia.

“But the US government, lobbied by tobacco companies and other business groups, is insisting that this same right of foreign corporations to sue governments be included in the TPPA,” added Dr Ranald.

“We urge the government to resist this pressure and implement its policy to oppose the right of foreign corporations to sue governments in the TPPA and all other trade agreements”, concluded Dr Ranald.

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