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## **Media Release**

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### **Australia should resist US push to finish Trans-Pacific talks this week in Singapore with no Fast Track in US Congress**

“As TPP talks begin in Singapore this week the Abbott government should resist US demands for compromises on foreign investor rights to sue and stronger patents on medicines,” Dr Patricia Ranald, Convenor of the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network, said today.

**TPP negotiators are meeting in Singapore from tomorrow February 17- 21, followed by a meeting of TPP Trade Ministers on February 22-23, which the US is pushing to finish the deal.**

“Senior US Democrat and Republican [Congress members](#) are stating even more strongly that they will not grant Fast Track authority for trade agreements. Fast Track would give up Congress rights to amend trade agreements and allow only a yes or no vote. Without Fast Track, the Congress can unpick any deal reached in negotiations,” explained Dr Ranald.

“The Abbott Government would be crazy to agree to foreign investor rights to sue over Australian laws or to stronger patents which will increase the price of medicines in return for promised increases in access to US agricultural markets, which would not be delivered by the US Congress,” said Dr Ranald.

“Nor is the Japanese government likely to agree to open its agricultural markets to the US or Australia without Fast Track,” said Dr Ranald.

“In another blow to the credibility of the TPP, an independent New Zealand economic [study](#) has debunked the claimed projected economic benefits for Australia and New Zealand. The study shows that the US Peterson Institute modelling is based on unrealistic assumptions which are completely outside those of normal economic probability. If realistic assumptions are used, the projected gains are insignificant,” said Dr Ranald.

“The Australian and other Governments should not be bullied by the US into closing a deal which would be against the national and public interest. Australian policies on medicines and other public interest issues should be decided through democratic public and parliamentary debate, not by secret trade negotiations,” said Dr Ranald.

“[Senior Legislators](#) in TPP countries have called for the release of the TPP text and [surveys](#) show a majority of Australians support this demand. We call on governments to release the text before any deal is signed,” said Dr Ranald.

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