Important Agreements Negotiated in Secret: Help Roll back Corporate Power over EU Trade Policy

By Global Research News
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Corporate Europe Observatory

It is an affront to democracy that the European Union is negotiating international free trade treaties in secret.

While the public are kept in the dark, big corporations are being given privileged access to influence the negotiations in their own interests.

These trade agreements are threatening people's basic rights to safe food, affordable medicines, a healthy environment and decent work – no wonder the European Commission doesn't want you to know about them.

Corporate Europe Observatory needs your help to shine a light on these important agreements being negotiated in secret, with big business in the driving seat. Please help us create a more just and transparent EU trade policy.

We have just appealed a court ruling which could deepen the secrecy and corporate influence over the EU's trade negotiations, at the expense of the wider public interest. But we need your help to raise €5000 to cover our legal costs for the appeal.

We are sueing the European Commission in the EU's General Court in Luxembourg for withholding information over the ongoing EU-India free trade talks from the public, even though the same information had already been shared with corporate lobby groups. In a ruling delivered in June, the court concluded that the Commission neither violated EU transparency rules nor discriminated against us.

Why are corporate lobby groups allowed access to information that the general public are denied?

We need your donations, however big or small, to be able to successfully appeal this ruling and put an end to the corporate capture of EU trade policy. This is not just about the EU-India free trade talks but the democratic accountability of future EU trade deals in general.

Thank you in advance for your support!

The CEO team

Here's what others say about our legal action against the Commission

"The EU-India Free Trade Agreement could have adverse consequences for farmers, street vendors, fishers and others who have to survive on meagre income with no or little social security. The unabated power which free trade deals grant giant corporations over agriculture, industry and services needs to be reined in. CEO's legal action for democratizing the trade policy processes is a significant move in this direction."

Dharmendra Kumar, Director of India FDI Watch

"Free Trade Agreements like the proposed EU-US trade pact have a direct impact on the lives of millions of people. It is unacceptable that they are negotiated in the interest of big corporations and in secret. I support CEO's fight for more openness around EU trade negotiations and against big business being put in the driving seat."

José Bové, Member of the European Parliament

"The case brought to court by CEO challenges which documents can be kept away from the public according to EU access rules. It also highlights the power the EU institutions have to discriminate between different actors. This makes the case important not only for understanding ongoing trade talks, but for the fundamental question of democratic accountability as well."

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