

Secret Draft of Canada-European Union Free Trade Agreement

Makes Demands of Canadian and European Governments

By [Global Research](#)

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Ottawa – As the third round of Canada-European Union free trade negotiations commence the newly formed Trade Justice Network today publicly released the draft text of the proposed Canada-European Union Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) – the most significant bilateral trade negotiation since the NAFTA. The network is raising serious concerns about the agreement’s potential impact on public and environmental policy, and public services in both Canada and Europe, among other issues, and has outlined a set of demands that must be met before negotiations are allowed to continue.

Controversial provisions in the draft text would open Canada’s telecommunications sector to full foreign ownership, stop municipal governments from implementing local or ethical procurement strategies, and require a burdensome necessity test for prudential financial measures designed to help governments mitigate or avoid banking and financial crises. The text also presents a direct attack on Ontario’s Green Energy Act, and it would virtually eliminate the rights of farmers to save, reuse and sell seed, providing biotech, pharmaceutical, pesticide, seed and grain companies powerful new tools to essentially decide who should farm and how.

Canadian negotiators have also included a controversial investor-state dispute mechanism like the one in NAFTA. The Chapter 11 dispute process has allowed and encouraged large multinationals to sue North American governments for compensation against public health and environmental policies that limit corporate profits.

The Trade Justice Network has outlined a list of 11 demands that its members feel must be met in any trade deal with Europe. These include: a comprehensive impact assessment of the deal on the economy, jobs, poverty, gender, human rights, farmers, culture and the environment; a fundamental protection for public services and expansion of social policy; a recognition of and protection for the right to use public procurement as an economic development tool, and of the right to regulate in the public interest based on the precautionary principle; a commitment to strengthen labour and environmental protections and make them as binding, if not more binding, than investor guarantees, and a recognition of the primacy of Indigenous Rights over corporate rights in Indigenous lands, territories and waters.

The Trade Justice Network will hold a series of public forums over the course of the week to further discuss the proposed trade deal while official negotiations are taking place in

Ottawa. Forums are scheduled to take place in Ottawa (April 19), Montreal (April 20) and Toronto (April 21).

For more information on the public forums (times and locations), or to learn more about the Trade Justice Network and read the civil society declaration on the CETA, visit: www.tradejustice.ca.

A full copy of the consolidated draft negotiating text has been posted on the Trade Justice Network website as well and is now available.

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