Civil Society Statement

EU Trade and Investment Policy must be democratised

We, the undersigned civil society organisations call for a fundamental overhaul of the trade policy decision-making process for ongoing and future trade and investment agreements of the EU.

Modern trade agreements are increasing in scope, reduce policy space and formulate disciplines for democratic decision making in all fields of society. CETA and TTIP have shown that the way that EU trade and investment agreements are negotiated and ratified today privileges corporate interests and lacks a democratic process lasting from the beginning of negotiations until ratification. From the very start, business lobbyists were widely consulted, while public interest groups, Parliamentarians, municipalities and regional governments as well as citizens were largely left in the dark. Such processes, lacking broad democratic participation, and the secrecy surrounding the negotiations (draft TTIP chapters remain secret until today) have been key factors that led to the controversies around the CETA ratification process.

The experience of CETA and TTIP calls for fundamental change to the existing processes of how EU Trade and Investment agreements are negotiated. Only a democratic and transparent process from its inception, both at the European and Member States level, has the potential to ensure that trade and investment agreements will benefit all and hence gain broad endorsement.

Our goal is to democratise EU trade policy making by properly involving the European Parliament, Member States parliaments, civil society, and having a broad public debate ensured by a transparent process. This effort is part of a much broader European movement to democratise Europe.

These are not technical but political questions. Recent proposals by the European Commission to take investment from future trade agreements and thereby making them EU only cannot lead to less democracy and public debate. Throughout the whole process we need the involvement of parliaments and a public debate from the local to the European level. We cannot allow to rush the process at the expense of democratic involvement.

In our view the following guiding principles and steps are necessary to achieve democratic EU trade and investment policies and agreements:
Guiding principle

Trade is not an end in itself, it must be a means to achieve social, environmental and economic objectives. Trade and investment agreements must not put trade liberalisation and maximisation and reduction of costs for business as main priorities but contribute to public interest objectives such as tackling climate change, securing decent jobs, protecting citizens’ health, ensuring tax justice and financial stability. This means also that trade policy must support the fulfillment and achievement of human rights and other treaties and agreements such as the Paris Climate Treaty, ILO Standards, the Biodiversity convention, the Sustainable Development Goals.

Nine steps for a democratic process

1. **Open ended and transparent public consultation before mandates are formulated**
   The Commission should hold an open and transparent public consultation during the initial phase preceding the launch of the negotiations and before the negotiation mandate is drafted. The consultation must be open ended and not allow only for one predetermined outcome. The Commission should make the draft mandate publicly available as soon as it is ready to allow a full and meaningful debate in parliaments and with civil society. To ensure full transparency all contributions to the public consultation are to be made public.

2. **Ensure balanced stakeholder input from the formulation of the mandate to the ratification process**
   All stakeholders should have an equal opportunity to provide input to decision-makers before, during and after the negotiation of a trade and investment agreement. Governments and the Commission need to ensure that they achieve balance in their stakeholder interaction, both quantitatively and qualitatively. This includes actively seeking input from underrepresented groups as well as limiting interaction with groups that are overrepresented. Contacts with interest groups should be disclosed fully and proactively. Furthermore, the Commission should refrain from seeking direct input from interest groups non-transparently on a bilateral basis.

3. **European and Member State parliaments must approve the mandate**
   The mandates for trade and investment agreements must be discussed and approved not only by the Council, but also the European Parliament. The Member State governments must discuss mandates with their parliaments and obtain their approval.
4. **Directorate Generals (DGs) and ministries with a public interest objective must have a much more prominent role in the negotiations**

To ensure that social, environmental and economic objectives as well as public interest are prioritized over commercial interests other DG's/ministries must have a substantially more prominent role in trade policy formulation at all levels of the policy process.

5. **All mandates and negotiating documents must be public**

All mandates, negotiating proposals and consolidated negotiation texts as well as stakeholder input must be proactively published and fully publically accessible.

6. **Parliaments must be able to give directions during the negotiating process**

The European Parliament and the parliaments of the Member States must receive detailed up-to-date information and negotiation texts (e.g. using Germany's "Act on Cooperation between the Federal Government and the German Bundestag in Matters concerning the European Union" as a starting-point for improved access to information rights). They must be allowed to formulate guidelines and directions for ongoing negotiations. All those debates should be public and allow for contributions from all interested civil society organisations.

7. **Broad parliamentary debate before signing and voting agreements**

The European Parliament and the parliaments of Member States must ensure a broad public debate of an agreement in the parliament after it is available in all languages. This includes allowing all relevant committees to assess the agreement involving different interest groups before voting on it or before Member State governments take a position in the Council. It also includes publishing a full assessment of the benefits and risks of the agreement to be undertaken. Parliaments must have the right to send the proposed text back to the negotiating table, also after the negotiations are concluded.

8. **Abolish provisional application for mixed trade agreements**

The practice of provisional application of international treaties was intended for situations of emergency and great urgency not for trade and investment agreements. Such agreements should only be applied when they have been fully ratified.
9. **Agreements must be concluded for a limited time period with the possibility of prolongation**

International agreements concluded by the EU are difficult to terminate. The Commission needs to propose to the Council to take such action by qualified majority or even unanimity and the European Parliament needs to consent to such a decision. This high hurdle prevents future governments from evaluating trade agreements that have been negotiated by previous governments. Therefore, every trade agreement negotiated by the EU should only be concluded for a limited period of time, with the possibility for both Parties to prolong the duration after that period. In addition, the European Parliament and Member State parliaments need to have the right to request a comprehensive review of trade and investment agreements based on a Human Rights and Sustainability Impact Assessment.

Some of the steps we outline can be achieved immediately, others will need a more fundamental reform of the involved institutions. Together these steps present a road to a trade and investment policy where public interest is in the driving seat.

**Signatories**

11.11.11
Active Citizens of Larissa Belgium
Africa Europe Faith & Justice Network Greece
Africa Europe Faith & Justice Network Belgium
Africa Europe Faith & Justice Network Spain
Africa Europe Faith & Justice Network United Kingdom
Aegilopas, Biodiversity Network of Magnesia Greece
Afrika Kontakt Denmark
Allianz gerechter Handel Austria
Almyros Environmental Initiative 'In Action' Greece
Alternative Community of PELITI Greece
ANTIGONE - Information and Documentation Center on Racism, Ecology, Peace Greece
ArtSocialSpace Brunnenpassage Austria
Association Léo Lagrange pour la Défense des Consommateurs France
Association of Cheese Producers of Thessaly Greece
Association of Organic Farmers of Thessaly Greece
Association of Writers of Larissa Greece
Association of Young Farmers of Larissa Greece
ATTAC - HELLAS Greece
Attac Andalucia
Spain
Attac Austria
Austria
ATTAC España
Spain
Attac Ireland
Ireland
attac-vorarlberg
Austria
Attica France
France
Attica Ecological Response
Greece
Attica Environment S.O.S
Greece
BIOZO - Pan-Hellenic Consumers' Association
Greece
Both ENDS
Netherlands
Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz (BUND) / Friends of the Earth Germany
Germany
Carousel Theater
Austria
CFE-CGC France
France
CGT
France
ClientEarth
Belgium
CNCD-11.11.11
Belgium
COAG-Coordinadora de Organizaciones de Agricultores y Ganaderos
Spain
Collectif "Ma Commune Hors CETA"
Belgium
Collectif Roosevelt
France
Collectif Roosevelt .BE
Belgium
Comhlamh
Ireland
Commission Justice et Paix
Belgium
Common association of Trikala
Greece
Confederación de Autónomos del Taxi de la Comunidad Valenciana
Spain
Consumer protection org. sterea greece
Greece
Cooperative of Zagora, Pelion
Greece
COORDINADORA ESTATAL DE COMERCIO JUSTO
Spain
Corporate Europe Observatory
Belgium
Corporations-Zero Tolerance
Portugal
Declic
Romania
Društvo Ekologi brez meja
Slovenia
Ecological Cultural Association of Chaidari OIKO.POLIS.
Greece
Ecological Group of Rodopi
Greece
Ecological Initiative of Chania
Greece
Ecological Intervention of Heraklion
Greece
Ecological Movement of Drama
Greece
Ecological Movement of Thessaloniki
Greece
Ecological Network
Greece
Ecological Thessaly
Greece
Ecologistas en Acción
Spain
Ecologistas en Acción de Cádiz
Spain
Ecologistas en Acción de Sanlúcar
Economic Chamber of Larissa
Elasonna's Peruvian Network
Enginyeria sense Fronteres
Entrepueblos/Entrepobles/Entrepobos/Herrarte
Environmental Cultural Group PERPLO.O.
Environmental Initiative of Magnesia (CEE)
esquerrademenorca (EU)
Evangelische Pfarrgemeinde A.B. Hallein
Fair Trade Advocacy Office
Fairwatch
FEDERACIÓN ASOCIACIONES PARA LA DEFENSA DE LA SANIDAD PUBLICA
Federation of Livestock Farmers of Thessaly
FÍS NUA
Forum Fairer Handel
Foundation for Environment and Agriculture
Friends of Earth-Trikala
Friends of N. Poulandzas Institute of Larissa
Friends of the Earth Europe
Fundació Novessendes de la Comunitat Valenciana
General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE)
Gent CETA&TTIP-free zone
Gewerkschaft PROGE
Global Justice Now
Greek Friendship Network of Naturefriends Greece
Green Institute, Greece
Grüne Bildungswerkstatt NÖ
Grupo TTIP-CETA-TISA Tarragona
Human dignity
IDEAS S. COOP. AND.
ILESSION - ENVIRONMENT ORGANIZATION
INKOTA-netzwerk
Inštitut za trajnostni razvoj - Institute for Sustainable Development
Kalecki Foundation
Katholische Jungschar Austria
Kölner Bündnis für gerechten Welthandel
Kultur Ag
Kulturrat Austria
La Reverde
LA TENDA DE TOT EL MÓN
Landsbond van Liberale Mutualiteiten
Les Amis de la Terre France
Ljubljana Cyclists Network Slovenia
Lleida Social Spain
LobbyControl Germany
Local Urban Development European Network (LUDEN) Belgium
Marxa Mundial de Dones - Catalunya Spain
medicusmundi Spain
mehr demokratie! Austria
Milieudefensie Netherlands
Mouvement Ecologique Luxembourg
Movement of keratsini drapetsonas - antropros Greece
Mutualités chrétiennes Belgium
NDA Italy
Netzwerk Soziale Verantwortung (NeSoVe) Austria
NGO Volunteer Network of Thessaly Greece
No al TTIP Comarques de Castelló Spain
NOAH Friends of the Earth Denmark Denmark
Non-Governmental Organization network of Thessaly (40 organizations participate) Greece
ÖBV-Via Campesina Austria Austria
Oikoshere Karditsas Greece
Pan-Cretan Network of Environmental Organizations Greece
Pan-Hellenic Network of Ecological Organizations (PANDIKO) - (42 ecological organizations participate) Greece
Panhellenic Association of Young Farmers & Thessaly Greece
Place Identity Clusters Gr - Collaborative Formations on Locality Identity and Citizen Participation (AMKE) Greece
Plataforma Cantabria por lo Público y Contra los Recortes Spain
Plataforma Não ao Tratado Transatlântico Portugal
plataforma no al ttip granada Spain
Plataforma Serrana Descubriendo al TTIP Spain
Platform Aarde Boer Consument The Netherlands
Poulantzas Institute Greece
PowerShift e.V. Germany
Region of Epirus Greece
Réseau Foi & Justice Afrique Europe France
Save Our Seeds sq Germany
SAW-B Belgium
Seattle to Brussels Network Europe
Self-Governing Movement "Ecology - Solidarity" of Macedonia Greece
SETEM Hego Haizea Spain
Slow Food
Slow Food Deutschland e. V.
Social Justice Ireland
Sociedad Civil
Society for Human Rights and Supportive Action
SOLIDARIS
Solsoc NGO
STOP CETA TTIP TiSA Network of Stations and Citizens of Thessaly (24 bodies involved)
STOP TTIP CETA TiSA Greece for a democratic Europe with solidarity in a fair world trade
Südwind
Terpsithea Local Council
Thessalian Citizens of the World for Sustainable Development
Trade Justice Movement (UK)
transform!at
Transnational Institute (TNI)
Traversing Streets of Thessaly
TTIP-CETA-TISA campo de Tarragona
Umanotera
Union Nationale des Mutualités Neutres
Veblen Institute
Verein "Orchesterwelt"
Vineyard Professionals Association
War on Want
World Elassonites org.

Italy
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Spain
Slovenia
Belgium
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