

## Joint letter on CETA from the European Trade Union Federations



Brussels, 22 December 2016

### **Joint letter on CETA from the European Trade Union Federations**

Dear member of the ENVI Committee,

On 12 January 2017 you will be asked to vote on the draft ENVI Opinion on the EU – Canada trade and investment agreement, CETA.

As European trade union federations representing workers in sectors across the economy we would like to express our support for the Opinion and to urge you to vote for its adoption.

In recent weeks there has been much debate about CETA but little of this has related to the actual text of the agreement itself. We welcome the draft ENVI Opinion as it identifies shortcomings of the CETA text as concerns environmental protection, public health and food safety and shows how these shortcomings contrast with the Committee's previous demands for the agreement.

The European Parliament (EP) has an important role to support evidence-based

evaluation of CETA and where shortcomings are identified, to insist that CETA is not adopted before they can be remedied. This was the approach also taken in the EP's Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL) when it recommended on 8 December that the EP should not approve CETA.

The European trade union federations have a number of joint concerns about CETA that we have expressed over many months (and years). Our view is that while the Interpretative Instrument and other Declarations agreed in September are important initiatives to address a number of CETA's shortcomings, only a reopening of CETA's provisions can solve the underlying problems. These problems can be summarised as follows:

- The inclusion of public services in CETA, whereas an explicit carve out from the scope of the agreement is required
- The 'negative list' approach for services commitments, and the inclusion of 'standstill' and 'ratchet' mechanisms, that lock in liberalisation
- Restrictions on universal service obligations in public utilities
- The Investor Court System (ICS) provisions that expand far-reaching investment protection rights
- Weak provisions for human rights, including workers' rights

With the introduction of the Lisbon Treaty the EP was given new powers and greater responsibilities for EU trade policy. We hope that the ENVI Committee on 12 January will vote in favour of the draft CETA Opinion.

Your sincerely,

Harald WIEDENHOFER - General Secretary European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT)

Ricardo GUTIERREZ - General Secretary European Federation of Journalists (EFJ/FEJ)

Eduardo CHAGAS - General Secretary European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)

Susan FLOCKEN - European Director European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE/CSEE)

Sam HÄGGLUND - General Secretary European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (FETBB/EFBWW)

Luc TRIANGLE - General Secretary European Federation for Industry and Manufacturing workers (IndustriAll)

Oliver ROETHIG - Regional Secretary European trade union federation for services

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Jan Willem GOUDRIAAN - General Secretary European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

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