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OF NURSES UNIONS  
LA FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE  
DES SYNDICATS D'INFIRMIÈRES  
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## JOINT CANADIAN TRADE UNION STATEMENT ON CETA

September 15, 2016

### Canada must not ratify 'fundamentally flawed' European trade pact

In solidarity with mass demonstrations taking place in Europe, the undersigned Canadian trade unions, wish to echo the recent message of the 3.3 million member-strong Canadian Labour Congress that there are many questionable aspects to the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. We are therefore calling on our Federal Liberal government not to ratify the CETA.

CETA is highly controversial, with more than three million Europeans signing a petition against the trade pact and its twin agreement the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the United States. And European opposition to CETA is growing, focused on the deal's investor rights rules as well as lack of protection for public services. Those concerns, which could stop the deal in its tracks in Europe, are shared across the Atlantic by Canadian unions, environmental and citizens' groups.

"We are calling on the Canadian government not to ratify CETA. This trade agreement threatens public services, our health care system and Canadian jobs" said Mark Hancock, National President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

"Canadian International Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland is pitching the Canada-EU trade deal as 'progressive,' but nothing could be further from the truth. CETA as written is fundamentally flawed, and favours corporate interests over those of Canadians" added Ken Neumann, National Director of the United Steelworkers union.

Among our key demands are:

#### **Remove all investor rights rules.**

- There is no need to bypass our public court system and use extra-judicial arbitration that favours corporations. CETA's proposed Investor Court System is not a real improvement on flawed investor-state dispute resolution systems in NAFTA and other trade deals.

#### **Protect public services from privatization.**

- CETA puts our public services at risk by making it harder to reverse failed privatizations or expand public services in the future.

### **Stop pharmaceutical patent extensions.**

- CETA's patent protection provisions could increase the annual cost of pharmaceuticals in our health care system by \$1 billion or more.

### **Protect procurement across services and sectors.**

- Currently, any government service or sector not explicitly excluded is swept into CETA. This limits the rights of provinces, municipalities, and other entities to get the most out of their procurement spending by favouring local goods and services.

### **Include a real mechanism for enforcing labour rights.**

- Currently, violations of labour rights are not subject to any meaningful sanction – a marked contrast from the provisions that address the rights of investors.

“Our analysis shows that CETA will cost Canada jobs across the manufacturing and processing sectors. The CETA also puts in place needless limitations that prevent governments from fully utilizing progressive local procurement policies that ensure the people of Canada benefit from important infrastructure spending”, said Jerry Dias, President of Unifor.

“CETA is a bad trade deal that would trade away the jobs of hard-working Canadians,” says Paul Meinema, National President of UFCW Canada. “We must not sign trade agreements like CETA that are unbalanced and only serve a multinational corporate agenda. Instead, we need balanced trade pacts that benefit all workers, and the sectors they work in.”

There have been suggestions that CETA could still be modified to address the many defects listed above. We do not believe this is realistic.

“These changes cannot be made before the scheduled ratification before the European Parliament on October 21<sup>st</sup> because the changes must be made in the body of the agreement, not in a non-binding side agreement, letter or statement” said Larry Brown, President of the National Union of Public and General Workers.

“Moreover, we do not believe that the agreement can be ratified and then amended later because large parts of CETA will likely be applied provisionally and thus will go into effect immediately. National ratification votes may take months or years. The current text is unacceptable, and this agreement must be defeated” said Stan Pickthall, General Vice President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

“We stand with European workers and members of civil society mobilizing in Germany, Austria, Belgium and elsewhere to resist CETA, which has many of the same dangerous provisions as TTIP. Overwhelming European opposition is blocking this trade deal with the U.S., and opponents recognize that CETA is simply TTIP through the back door,” added Linda Silas, President of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, who will be addressing no-to-CETA and TTIP rallies in Germany.

Signed:

Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU)  
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)  
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW)  
National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE)  
UNIFOR  
United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW)

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