

Shining a light on trade deals?

As things stand, our elected representatives have virtually no say over trade deals. They can't set a mandate to guide governments negotiations, they have no right to see details of the negotiations, they can't amend deals and they can't stop them. In other words, *we have no real democratic control over these vitally important deals.*

We want to change that.

Many MPs don't even know how little power they have – or how far-reaching some trade deals can be. We are calling for a completely new process which puts democratic decision-making at the heart of trade policy.

We demand:

- that parliament sets and agrees binding guidelines for trade deals with risk assessments.
- that parliament has the power to scrutinise, amend and, if necessary, stop trade deals.
- negotiations are transparent to the public and parliament so we can see what's on the negotiating table.
- the right of parliament to review trade deals and withdraw from them if they are damaging.

From the Philippines to Saudi Arabia to the United States, UK government ministers are planning trade deals.

Though big business lobbyists may get access to these discussions, they take place in the dark, with no accountability to the public or parliament.

This should worry us because these deals aren't simply about selling more "stuff". Today trade deals affect the quality of food we eat, our healthcare, and our environment.

We can't let the government sign away our rights and protections behind closed doors. Join the campaign to shine a light on the UK's dangerous trade deals.

Isn't trade a good thing?

It can be. But nowadays trade deals are too often about giving huge new powers to big business, affecting every aspect of our society.

There are two deals on the table which demonstrate how trade can be bad for us – and the countries we are trading with.

1. A US-UK trade deal

The British government is already discussing, a deal with the US. But Donald Trump was elected on a platform of 'America First'. If negotiated in secret, we can expect the US-UK trade deal to:

- Further open the NHS up to US healthcare corporations.
- Include the hated 'corporate court' system which would allow tens of thousands of US corporations to sue our government for any decision or regulation which they think harms their profits.
- Undermine our farming standards. US agribusiness has already said it believes laws to limit GM foods and hormones in beef production are trade barriers which need to be swept away in a trade deal.

US corporations have already formed a US-UK Business Council to make sure any deal prioritises corporate profits. Meanwhile, our MPs would

have no opportunity to amend or permanently stop such a deal.

2. A UK-India trade deal

India is another priority country for a secret trade deal. May has said that the pharmaceutical industry is a "high priority" post-Brexit. This is important because India is known as 'the pharmacy of the world'. It replicates expensive branded medicines and sells them at affordable prices to a population which still has huge pockets of poverty.

For two decades, rich countries have been attempting to push new laws onto India to restrict this generics industry because it undercuts the monopoly which pharmaceutical giants can use to make money out of developing countries.

Any UK-India deal could:

- Enforce extremely tight intellectual property laws on India, making it too costly to make generic drugs.
- Push up the prices of medicines around the

world making them unaffordable for many who desperately need them.

Crippling India's production of generic medicines would push countries worldwide into buying the original drug at unjustifiable prices. From cancer to HIV/AIDS to tuberculosis and hepatitis C, patients worldwide would face the threat of having their treatment taken away.

These are just the tip of the iceberg. Ministers are searching for governments to sign trade deals with Britain post-Brexit. They include human rights abusers like Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the Philippines. All of these deals could harm both us and people in those countries.

In order to know what's in these trade deals, we need to pull them out of the dark.



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