

Trade campaign update for Scottish activists

March 2017



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March action checklist

- [Book your \(free\) place at 'Trade that does good' event in Dundee on 25 March](#)
- [Help us spread the word about the event by sharing it on facebook](#) or [printing off some flyers](#)

CETA update

CETA vote in European parliament

As you probably know, CETA was ratified at the European parliament on 15 February, by 408 votes to 254. This was obviously very disappointing, but not unexpected. Of our Scottish MEPS, the two SNP MEPS Ian Hudghton and Alyn Smith voted against CETA. As we anticipated, the Labour MEPS David Martin and Catherine Stihler voted for CETA, as did Tory MEP Ian Duncan. UKIP MEP David Coburn did not turn up to vote. Across the UK as a whole, while the majority of UK MEPS voted for CETA, the majority of Labour MEPS, all the Green MEPS, SNP, Plaid Cymru and Sinn Fein MEPS voted against CETA – so our lobbying across the UK had a positive impact. Now CETA must go to national parliaments in the EU member states to be ratified, which will not be an easy process considering the level of opposition there is to the deal across Europe.

What next for CETA?

It looks likely that CETA will be provisionally applied as soon as the Canadian government has approved it, in the next month or so. Provisional application means that all parts of CETA that apply to European law will come into force, and the other parts (i.e. investor protection or the corporate courts system) will be on hold until all EU member states have ratified the deal individually.

In the UK, the government will lay CETA before parliament and if a negative resolution is not raised against it, the deal will be automatically ratified after 21 days. If a negative resolution is raised then the parliament would vote on that resolution and

if passed then the 21 days would begin again. So ratification could be delayed but not easily derailed under this system. Global Justice Now, on behalf of the Trade Justice Scotland coalition (which we're a member of), is speaking to the SNP to lobby them to put down a negative resolution, which would then need to be supported by all the opposition parties and some Tory rebels to succeed. It's a bit of a long shot but something that we feel we should try. We don't yet know when the UK government is likely to lay CETA before parliament.

Trade justice beyond CETA

The Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) is currently on hold pending a decision from Donald Trump's administration over whether they want to proceed with it.

Global Justice Now is turning its focus to other trade deals being negotiated by the UK. With Brexit looming, the UK government is developing a trade policy for a future outside of the EU. Post-Brexit, the UK government will have a large number of trade deals it wishes to negotiate quickly. There has already been an inquiry begun by the International Trade Committee at Westminster on a possible UK-US trade deal, and this week the UK government organised a conference with Commonwealth governments with a focus on UK trade with Commonwealth countries post-Brexit (see below).

As we know from campaigning on CETA and TTIP, the current Conservative government is a big fan of free trade deals that put the needs of corporations ahead of rights of citizens and the environment, and pushes a pro-privatisation agenda. We also know from campaigning against TTIP-style deals that our government is not a cheer leader for more transparent negotiations and that there is inadequate democratic scrutiny by our Westminster parliament, which is even more apparent when we compare the process to that of other countries in the EU, all of whom (with the exception of Malta)

must debate and vote on a trade deal in at least the national parliament (but in some places regional parliaments too) before ratification. So our campaign focus will move to tackling this lack of democracy, as well as the lack of vision for an alternative to business-as-usual free trade agreements with other countries. We'll argue for:

1. Democracy and transparency. Any hope for a more progressive trade agenda must open up and broaden involvement in the process which arrives at a trade agreement.

2. Our progressive alternative. We would like to be able to talk more about what our alternative to neoliberal trade deals look like. Although the [Alternative Trade Mandate](#) was developed a few years ago by European organisations working on trade, we want to flesh out some of those principles with a more concrete set of proposals and present something which is relevant in the context of Brexit.

Our first steps towards this in Scotland will be an event in Dundee on the 25 March called 'Trade that does good'. This will be a chance for us to begin developing some principles for trade deals that we can ask our politicians in Scotland to sign up to. [Click here](#), or see the activism section below for more information about the event.

EDM on parliamentary scrutiny of trade deals

[SNP MP Patrick Grady's EDM 642](#) calls for greater parliamentary scrutiny of trade deals, as well as the exclusion of any sort of corporate courts, and consideration of international protocols on human rights and the environment. Thanks to lobbying from campaigners across the UK including some sterling work from Stop TTIP and Global Justice Now groups in Scotland, most of Scotland's MPs have signed the EDM, and more than 100 MPs have signed in total.

A US-UK trade deal?

A US-UK trade deal, as discussed by Donald Trump and Theresa May during her visit to the US in January, could be worse than anything we have campaigned on to date. Officially there is a rule against the UK negotiating a trade deal while still a member of the EU, however, it is hard to feel confident that Theresa May's government will abide by the rule. It would also be naïve to believe Liam Fox when he says a US/UK trade deal can be achieved in months without the UK granting huge concessions to US corporations.

The international trade committee at Westminster is currently carrying out an inquiry into UK-US trade relations and as part of their remit is considering the implications of a possible early deal with the US. Global Justice Now and other members of the Trade Justice Scotland coalition submitted evidence to the committee, and Global Justice Now Director Nick Dearden has been invited to give oral evidence as part of the inquiry. [Inquiry home page is here](#).

Empire 2.0: Liam Fox's plans to revisit a golden era of empire post-Brexit

At the beginning of March, international trade secretary Liam Fox invited trade ministers from across the Commonwealth for a meeting on trade policy. Dubbed 'Empire 2.0' internally by Whitehall officials, the purpose of the meeting was to discuss post-Brexit trade agreements with African nations in particular. [Read our blog post by Africa Kiiza who works for a Ugandan NGO on the dangers of these sort of negotiations](#).

[Read Liam Fox's speech opening the conference \(while you hum 'Land of Hope and Glory'\) here](#).

EU plans for a multilateral investment court

CETA included a reformed version of the 'corporate courts' currently included in many bilateral trade deals, that allows governments to be sued by foreign investors if they make decisions that impact on corporate profits. This reformed version required the creation of a permanent court within the EU where investor cases could be heard. Consequently, the EU Commission now has plans to establish such a court, in order to begin inserting the use of the reformed 'Investor Court System' (ICS) into all future trade agreements in place of the unreformed 'Investor State Dispute Settlement' (ISDS) clause. There was a public consultation on this between December and the middle of March, and presumably there will be a report on the consultation. [Read more about this 'project' here](#).

Activism

Name change: Trade Justice Scotland Coalition

In order to reflect the changing focus of the Scotland Against TTIP coalition (the coalition of trade unions, NGOs and activists in Scotland that first came together more than two years ago to against TTIP-style trade deals) has decided to change its name to the Trade Justice Scotland

Coalition. You'll notice we've changed our twitter, facebook and web pages to reflect this change – although the domain name for the website stays the same: www.scotlandagainstttip.org.uk

Trade That Does Good

City Chambers, Dundee

Saturday 25 March, 1.30 – 4.30pm

The change in focus of our campaigning has also prompted an event in Dundee where we are planning some blue sky thinking on the ins and outs of what an ideal trade deal might look like, and how we make the negotiating process more open to citizens' input, more democratic in its decision making and more transparent and easy to access. To this end, we've asked Trade Justice Scotland coalition members to bring along their five minute pitches talking about what they would prioritise in the negotiation of a 'good' trade deal. Please come along, and join the conversation. And if you would like to give a five minute pitch yourself, [please contact Kirsty](#).

The event is free, [but please book on eventbrite here](#).

We also have a facebook event: [please show your interest and share with others online](#).

If you would like to download some flyers for the event you can do that from [here](#).

Request flyers from the office [by contacting Jane](#)

Recently published Global Justice Now materials

[Dreaming of Empire: UK foreign policy post-Brexit](#)

[Controlling corporations: The case for a UN Treaty on Transnational Corporations and Human Rights](#)

[What is TISA and why we need to stop it](#)

Local trade justice groups across Scotland

There are local trade justice groups across Scotland fighting against predatory trade deals like TTIP and CETA. Here are links to the ones we know of. Please let us know if we've missed any!

[Just Trade Edinburgh \(formerly Stop TTIP Edinburgh\)](#)

[Global Justice Glasgow](#)

[Global Justice Ayrshire](#)

[Stop TTIP Aberdeen](#)

[Trade Justice Dundee \(formerly Stop TTIP Dundee\)](#)

[St. Andrews TTIP Action Group](#)

[Stop TTIP Highlands](#)

[Trade Justice Scotland Coalition](#)

Take action

To find out how you can help tackle corporate power and become part of a movement for real change visit www.globaljustice.org.uk or call 0131 2432730.



Global Justice Now campaigns for a world where resources are controlled by the many, not the few, and works in solidarity with social movements to fight injustice. We used to be the World Development Movement.

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