



128 Chalmers Street
Surry Hills, NSW, 2010
Phone: 02 9699 3686
Fax: 02 9699 3717
Email: campaign@aftinet.org.au
ACN 097 603 131
ABN 83 659 681 462
www.aftinet.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

November 30, 2016

RCEP must not be another TPP, say 316 regional civil society groups

The failed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) should not be used as a model for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)*, 316 civil society organisations from across the Asia Pacific have warned as the sixteenth round of negotiations begin this week in Indonesia.

In a [letter](#) to trade ministers and negotiators (below), the organisations wrote that attempts to “import TPP texts into the RCEP” should be rejected.

“It is clear that the TPP has been soundly rejected by the American people and there has also been widespread opposition to it in other TPP countries on both sides of the Pacific.

“We call upon the governments participating in the RCEP to recognize this critical moment and not to bring the toxic content of the TPP into the RCEP.”

AFTINET Convener Dr Patricia Ranald said leaked documents confirm that many of the worst TPP provisions have been proposed in various RCEP chapters.

“The RCEP includes rules that give more rights to corporations at the expense of people and the planet, and restrict governments from regulating in the public interest,” said Dr Ranald.

“For example, there is a push to include TPP-like [medicine monopolies](#) which will allow pharmaceutical companies to charge higher prices for longer, threatening access to lifesaving medicines across the Asia Pacific.

“There are also proposals to give [foreign investor rights to sue governments](#) (ISDS), despite overwhelming opposition to this unfair system. Cases against health, environment and other public interest legislation continue to increase and even the threat of an ISDS case has been enough for governments to abandon new policies.

“Ultimately these proposals were so unpopular with the public that the TPP fell over, despite many years of painstaking negotiations.

“Our leaders must not make the same mistake again: RCEP negotiations should be open and transparent and the deal should focus on creating fairer trade rules to benefit people and the planet.

“Trying to push through TPP provisions under a different name simply will not work.”

**The RCEP includes 10 ASEAN countries plus China, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand*

Contact Dr Patricia Ranald 0419 695 841

Civil Society Open letter to Governments in the 16 RCEP Countries

29 November 2016

Dear Trade Ministers & Negotiators from the RCEP countries,

Subject: TPP rules in RCEP must be rejected

This is an urgent call by 316 civil society organisations from across the Asian and Pacific countries negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which includes the 10 ASEAN Member States with China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

This letter comes at a very important political moment, when in the aftermath of the US elections it seems clear that the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) will not be ratified by the USA, in spite of its big push since February 2016 when the agreement was signed by the 12 countries.

It is clear that the TPP has been soundly rejected by the American people and there has also been widespread opposition to it in other TPP countries on both sides of the Pacific. According to the TPP text, if the US does not ratify it, the TPP cannot come into force.

The current negotiations in RCEP are complicated by the fact that there are 6 countries which are part of the TPP and there have been many attempts to import TPP texts into RCEP and sometimes even an attempt to go beyond the TPP. A few examples below bear testimony to how TPP wording is being proposed in RCEP.

- In the investment chapter, apart from a few safeguards, all the TPP's substantive and main investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) provisions have been proposed in the leaked RCEP investment chapter.
- In services, for example, all the substantive TPP telecommunications chapter rules have been proposed in RCEP according to the leaked RCEP text.
- In RCEP's leaked draft e-commerce terms of reference, all the TPP ecommerce chapter rules appear to be proposed and all the RCEP ecommerce ideas appear to come from the TPP, therefore proposing an exact match of the texts
- In the leaked RCEP intellectual property (IP) chapter, Japan, South Korea and some others are pushing many of the main substantive stronger IP provisions of the TPP

With the demise of the TPP, there is no justification for adhering to the TPP texts in RCEP because these have no mandate. This is even more irrational in the absence of the TPP as Asian countries (including least developed countries (LDCs)) would end up carrying the load that other rich countries in the TPP (US, Canada) will not have to bear any more.

The RCEP texts which have leaked so far have many fundamental problems that will negatively impact all sectors of society in RCEP countries.¹

We call upon the governments participating in the RCEP, to recognize this critical moment and not to bring the toxic content of the TPP into the RCEP and instead to stop the RCEP negotiations.

We urge you to revisit the trade relations between the 16 countries. A new model must be based on cooperation and not competition, one that puts the development needs of the region above that of corporations, and puts people and the environment at its centre, that recognizes economic policy can work only if it is inclusive, not only in terms of the impact on different constituencies but also if it integrates the social and environmental concerns of the world.

Sincerely,

Signatory civil society organisations:

	Organisation	RCEP country
--	--------------	--------------

¹ See for example civil society's concerns re RCEP's: intellectual property chapter provisions that can threaten access to medicines <http://www.bilaterals.org/?an-open-letter-to-the-sixteen> and investment chapter <http://isds.bilaterals.org/?civil-society-groups-say-no-to>

	Organisation	RCEP country
1	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)	Global
2	GRAIN	Global
3	LDC Watch	Global
4	People Over Profit	Global
5	Adivasi Navjeevan Gathan Navjyoti Agua	Regional
6	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law & Development (APWLD)	Regional
7	Asia Pacific Network of People Living With HIV	Regional
8	Asia Pacific Research Network	Regional
9	Building and Wood Worker's International Asia-Pacific	Regional
10	Community Network for Empowerment	Regional
11	EU-ASEAN FTA Campaign Network	Regional
12	Focus on the Global South	Regional
13	Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific	Regional
14	International Treatment Preparedness Coalition-South Asia	Regional
15	NGO Forum on ADB	Regional
16	Public Services International Asia Pacific	Regional
17	ActionAid Australia	Australia
18	Australian Council of Trade Unions	Australia
19	Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network	Australia
20	Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes in NSW	Australia
21	Edmund Rice Centre for Justice	Australia
22	Electrical Trades Union of Australia	Australia
23	Friends of the Earth Australia	Australia
24	Greenpeace Australia Pacific	Australia
25	MADGE Australia Inc	Australia
26	National Tertiary Education Union	Australia
27	Sisters of St Joseph	Australia
28	Speaking 4 the Planet	Australia
29	Sutherland Shire Environment Centre	Australia
30	The Grail Women's Network for Global Justice	Australia
31	Cambodian Grassroots Cross-sector Network	Cambodia
32	Cambodian Labour Confederation	Cambodia
33	Farmer for Farmer Network	Cambodia
34	Independent Farmer Association for Community Development	Cambodia
35	Social Action for Change	Cambodia
36	The Messenger Band-MB	Cambodia
37	Women's Network for Unity	Cambodia
38	Worker's Information Center	Cambodia
39	SILAKA	Cambodia
40	Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture (ASHA)	India
41	Association for promotion sustainable development. Hisar. India	India

	Organisation	RCEP country
42	Centre for Equity Studies	India
43	Centre for Research and Advocacy Manipur	India
44	Citizen News Service (CNS)	India
45	Delhi Network of Positive People (DNP+)	India
46	EMPOWER INDIA	India
47	Forum on FTAs	India
48	Indian Social Action Forum	India
49	Lawyers Collective	India
50	Low Cost Standard Therapeutics	India
51	Madhyam	India
52	New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI)	India
53	People's Action For Rural Awakening	India
54	Public Advocacy Initiatives for Rights and Values in India (PAIRVI)	India
55	Right to Food Campaign India	India
56	Sankalp Rehabilitation Trust	India
57	Save Our Rice Campaign	India
58	Socialist Party (India)	India
59	Thanal	India
60	Wada Na Toro Abhiyan (WNTA)	India
61	IT for Change	India
62	Samuel Hahnemann Associates And Research Centre	India
63	Federation Of Indonesian Labour Struggle (FPBI)	Indonesia
64	Koalisi Rakyat untuk Hak atas Air /people's coalition for the right to water	Indonesia
65	CREATA (Center for Reasearch of Environment, Appropriate Technology, and Advocacy)	Indonesia
66	Indonesia AIDS Coalition	Indonesia
67	People's Coalition for the Right to Water (KRuHA)	Indonesia
68	SatuDunia (One World Indonesia)	Indonesia
69	Serikat Perempuan Indonesia	Indonesia
70	Serikat Petani Indonesia	Indonesia
71	Solidaritas Perempuan (Women's Solidarity for Human Rights)	Indonesia
72	Institut Perempuan	Indonesia
73	Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia	Indonesia
74	Gabungan Serikat Buruh Indonesia /Federation of Indonesian Trade Union (GSBI)	Indonesia
75	Indonesia For Global Justice	Indonesia
76	Mamademo	Japan
77	Pacific Asia Resource Center (PARC)	Japan
78	People's Action against TPP	Japan
79	Association of Physicians for Humanism	Korea, Republic of
80	International trade committee in the Lawyers' Society for Democratic Society	Korea, Republic of
81	IPLeft	Korea, Republic of

	Organisation	RCEP country
82	Knowledge Commune	Korea, Republic of
83	Korean Federation of Medical Groups for Health Right (KFHR)	Korea, Republic of
84	Korean Progressive Network Jinbonet	Korea, Republic of
85	Open Net Korea	Korea, Republic of
86	People's Health Institute	Korea, Republic of
87	People's Health Movement Korea	Korea, Republic of
88	People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy	Korea, Republic of
89	Action Coalition Against the TPPA (BANTAH)	Malaysia
90	Consumers' Association of Penang	Malaysia
91	Malaysian AIDS Council	Malaysia
92	Malaysian Council for Tobacco Control (MCTC)	Malaysia
93	Network of Oppressed Peoples (JERIT)	Malaysia
94	Persatuan Pendidikan dan Kebajikan Jaringan Nelayan Pantai Malaysia (JARING)	Malaysia
95	Positive Malaysian Treatment Access & Advocacy Group (MTAAG+)	Malaysia
96	Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth Malaysia)	Malaysia
97	Cooperative Committee of Trade Unions	Myanmar
98	88 Generation (Moenyin-Kachin)	Myanmar
99	88 Generation (MyeikKyun Su, Tanintharyi)	Myanmar
100	Action Group for Farmer Affair- Magway	Myanmar
101	Action Group for Farmer Affair- Mandalay	Myanmar
102	Action Group for Farmer Affair- Rakhine	Myanmar
103	Action Group for Farmer Affair- Sagain	Myanmar
104	Action Group for Farmer Affair-Ayeyawady	Myanmar
105	Action Group for Farmer Affair-Bago	Myanmar
106	Action Group for Farmer Affair-Northern Shan	Myanmar
107	AD 2030 Vision (Sittwe)	Myanmar
108	Ah Linn Tager Library (Sittwe)	Myanmar
109	Ahlineain development organization	Myanmar
110	Airavati	Myanmar
111	Alin Saytaman Group	Myanmar
112	Alin Theinta Group	Myanmar
113	Alinn Bamaw Organization	Myanmar
114	All Arakan Civil Society Organizations Partnership (Arakan)	Myanmar
115	Andin Youth Organization	Myanmar
116	Arakan National Network (Lay Daung)	Myanmar
117	Arakan Women Network (Arakan)	Myanmar
118	Ayar West Development Organization	Myanmar
119	Ayeyawady West Development Organization	Myanmar
120	BadeiDhaMoe Civil Society Organization	Myanmar
121	Bago MATA Working Group	Myanmar

	Organisation	RCEP country
122	Bago Youth Network	Myanmar
123	Beautiful Beach Development Network (BBDN) (NgaYoke Kaung, Ayeyarwaddy)	Myanmar
124	Bedar Social Development Group	Myanmar
125	Bilin - Win Ka Village Ambulance association (Mon state)	Myanmar
126	Bilin CSO Network	Myanmar
127	Bo Bo Lwin	Myanmar
128	Bobowin Emergency Rescue Service	Myanmar
129	Bommazayya Social Development Association	Myanmar
130	Bommazayya Social Development Association (Kant Ba Lu, Sagaing Division)	Myanmar
131	Charity-oriented Myanmar	Myanmar
132	Chin Youth Network	Myanmar
133	Citizens' Rights Protection (Yangon)	Myanmar
134	Community Response Group	Myanmar
135	Community Sustainable Livelihood Development Committee	Myanmar
136	Danu Youth	Myanmar
137	Dawei Active Youth	Myanmar
138	Dawei Development Association	Myanmar
139	Dawei Farmer Union	Myanmar
140	Dawei Research Association	Myanmar
141	Dawei Watch Foundation	Myanmar
142	Dawei Youth Fellowship	Myanmar
143	Democratic Education Corner (DEC)	Myanmar
144	Developmental Justice Myanmar	Myanmar
145	East light	Myanmar
146	Eco Wave CBO (Tahnintharyi)	Myanmar
147	Environmental Protection Organization (Kyauktaw)	Myanmar
148	Environmental Protection Organization (Ponnagyun)	Myanmar
149	Environmental Protection Organization (Mrauk oo)	Myanmar
150	Equality Myanmar	Myanmar
151	Farmer Development and Environment Conservation Organization	Myanmar
152	Farmer Union (Kyaukse)	Myanmar
153	Farmers And Land Workers Union (SHAN)	Myanmar
154	Farmers Network (Meikhtilar District)	Myanmar
155	Freethinkers	Myanmar
156	Future Light Youth (Mon State)	Myanmar
157	Golden Heart Organization	Myanmar
158	Green Generation	Myanmar
159	Green Light Organization	Myanmar
160	Green Network (Kyun Su, Thanintaryi)	Myanmar
161	Green Trust (Pyin Oo Lwin)	Myanmar

	Organisation	RCEP country
162	Green Wave Environmental Conservation Networks (Ayarwaddy)	Myanmar
163	Hin Thar Dagon Group (Bago- Letpadan)	Myanmar
164	Human Rights Educators Network	Myanmar
165	Human Rights Watch (Dawei)	Myanmar
166	IFI Watch Kyun Su (Kyun Su, Tanintharyi)	Myanmar
167	IFI Watch Myanmar (Yangon)	Myanmar
168	Independent Volunteers	Myanmar
169	K' Cho Land Development Organization	Myanmar
170	Ka Mar Sai Social Support Organization (Mon state)	Myanmar
171	Kachin National Youth Network	Myanmar
172	Kachin Peace Network	Myanmar
173	Kachin State Youth Network	Myanmar
174	Kalyana Mitta Foundation (Yangon)	Myanmar
175	Kan Chay Arr Man Fishery Development Network (NgaYoke Kaung, Ayeyarwaddy)	Myanmar
176	Kan Let Youth Social Organization (Kin Mon Chaung Village, Kyeikhto, Mon state)	Myanmar
177	Kanbawza Youth Library Network	Myanmar
178	Kanpetlet Land Development Organization	Myanmar
179	Karen Environmental and Social Action Network	Myanmar
180	Karen Peace Support Network	Myanmar
181	Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation	Myanmar
182	Karenni State Women	Myanmar
183	Karuna Mission Social Solidarity	Myanmar
184	Kayan New Generation Youth	Myanmar
185	Khun Tan Nwe PaOh Youth Network Mon	Myanmar
186	Ko Than Hla Rakhine Youth Generation (RakhineState)	Myanmar
187	Kun Gyan Gone Network (Kun Gyan Gone, Yangon)	Myanmar
188	Kungyangon Network	Myanmar
189	Kyauk Phyu Social Network (Kyauk Phyu)	Myanmar
190	Kyaukkyi Development Watch	Myanmar
191	KYO Kachin Youth	Myanmar
192	LAIN Technical Support Group (Loikaw, Karenni)	Myanmar
193	Land In Our Hands	Myanmar
194	Law Home Law Firm (Loikaw, Kayah State)	Myanmar
195	Lighthouse Social Development Organization (Ayarwaddy)	Myanmar
196	Lighthouse social development organization (ThaBound)	Myanmar
197	Local Development Network (Mon)	Myanmar
198	Ma Yu Kam Development Association (Rathedaung)	Myanmar
199	Mandalay Community Center	Myanmar
200	Mar Ya Ja Organization (Myitkyina, Kachin State)	Myanmar

	Organisation	RCEP country
201	Matupi Women Organization	Myanmar
202	Maw Gwun Thit Network	Myanmar
203	Mawlamyine Natural Disaster Prevention and Rescue Organization (Mon state)	Myanmar
204	Mawlamyine Youth Association	Myanmar
205	Mawlamyine Youth Network	Myanmar
206	May Yu Rin Thwe Social Association (Rathedaung)	Myanmar
207	Maymyo Farmer Development network	Myanmar
208	Merguie Archipelago (Kyun Su, Tanintharyi)	Myanmar
209	Metta Development Foundation	Myanmar
210	Metta Lat Kan (Myeik, Tanintharyi)	Myanmar
211	Min Hla Youth Network	Myanmar
212	Mizzima Hnalonethat (Loikaw, Kayah)	Myanmar
213	Mon State CSOs Network	Myanmar
214	Mon State Youth Network	Myanmar
215	Mong Pan Youth Association	Myanmar
216	Mwae Taung Area Development	Myanmar
217	Myanmar Alliance for Accountability and Transparency (Ayeyarwaddy)	Myanmar
218	Myanmar Alliance for Accountability and Transparency (Mon State)	Myanmar
219	Myanmar Alliance for Accountability and Transparency (Shan)	Myanmar
220	Myanmar Alliance for Transparency & Accountability (Mandalay)	Myanmar
221	Myanmar China Pipeline Watch	Myanmar
222	Myanmar Deaf Community Development Association	Myanmar
223	Myanmar People Alliance	Myanmar
224	Myanmar Youth Society Network	Myanmar
225	Myat Won Thit Knowledge Society	Myanmar
226	Myaung Mya Youth Network	Myanmar
227	Myitmakha Watch	Myanmar
228	Naga Students and Youth Federation (Yangon)	Myanmar
229	Nan Thet Thet Tun Nature Lover (Mandalay)	Myanmar
230	Nate Ban Shwe Pyi Youth Social association (KaTike Kye Village, Thahton, Mon State)	Myanmar
231	Natural Green Alliance	Myanmar
232	New Generation Youth Association (Buthedaung)	Myanmar
233	Open Data Myanmar	Myanmar
234	Our Lovely World (Taunggyi, Shan State)	Myanmar
235	Pa-O Youth Organization	Myanmar
236	Pace on Peaceful	Myanmar
237	Pann Tai Shin Regional Development Organization (Mawlamyinegyun, Ayeyarwaddy)	Myanmar
238	Paung Ku	Myanmar

	Organisation	RCEP country
239	Peace & Open Society (KyaukseTownship)	Myanmar
240	Peace and Justice (Kachin)	Myanmar
241	Phoenix Association	Myanmar
242	Promotion Of Indigenous and Nature Together	Myanmar
243	Public Legal Aid Network	Myanmar
244	Public Welfare Network (PWN)	Myanmar
245	Pyoe Khinn Thit Foundation (Maubin)	Myanmar
246	Rakhine Youth New Generation	Myanmar
247	Rammer Shwe Myae Parahita Association (Ram Bray)	Myanmar
248	Real Image Social Development Organization (Bogalay, Ayeyarwaddy)	Myanmar
249	Right and Peace Organization (Kalay)	Myanmar
250	Sein Lann Pyin Oo	Myanmar
251	Sein Yaung So	Myanmar
252	Shan State Peace Task Force	Myanmar
253	Shwe Bo Buddhist Youth (Shwe Bo, Sagaing)	Myanmar
254	Shwe Chan Myay Network (Kungyangone Township, Yangon)	Myanmar
255	Shwe Chinthae Social Service Group (Shwebo)	Myanmar
256	Shwe Hmaw Wun Kyauktan Region Development Organization (Kyauktan ,Yangon)	Myanmar
257	Shwe Kyin Chit Thu Group	Myanmar
258	Shwe Yeik Sit Environmental Group	Myanmar
259	Shwechinthae Farmers Network (Shwe Bo)	Myanmar
260	Sidoktayar Development Organization	Myanmar
261	Sittaung Melody Social Network	Myanmar
262	Sky Youth (Kyauk Phyu)	Myanmar
263	Snow Or Dew Buddhist Youth (SODBY)	Myanmar
264	Social Program Aid for Civic Education (Arakan)	Myanmar
265	Social Vision Services	Myanmar
266	Supporting Harmonious Actions and Nurturing for Advancing Hope	Myanmar
267	Ta'ang Student Youth	Myanmar
268	Ta'ang Youth Organization	Myanmar
269	Taungzalatt (Mindat, Chin State)	Myanmar
270	Tavoyan Youth	Myanmar
271	Tha Pyu Chaine Youth Parahita (Tha Pyu Chaine-Thandwe)	Myanmar
272	Tha Zin Ligeal Aid (Arakan)	Myanmar
273	The Gone Youth Network	Myanmar
274	Third Eye Network (Mindat, Chin State)	Myanmar
275	Tontay Youth	Myanmar
276	Uakthon Local Social Development Organization	Myanmar
277	Union of Karenni State Youth	Myanmar
278	United ACT	Myanmar

	Organisation	RCEP country
279	Wan Lark Development Foundation (Arakan)	Myanmar
280	We Are Tai (Peace and Local Development Group)	Myanmar
281	Witmutti Volunteer Group	Myanmar
282	Women For Women Foundation	Myanmar
283	Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN)	Myanmar
284	Ye Social Society	Myanmar
285	Yoma Chitthu Group	Myanmar
286	Youth for Social Change	Myanmar
287	YPHN	Myanmar
288	Zinlum Committee (Tan Phe Village, Kachin)	Myanmar
289	It's Our Future	New Zealand
290	Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM)	Philippines
291	Aniban ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura Pilipinas	Philippines
292	Campaign for a Life of Dignity (KAMP)	Philippines
293	Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC)	Philippines
294	IBON Foundation	Philippines
295	Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services	Philippines
296	KILUSAN para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KILUSAN)	Philippines
297	Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa	Philippines
298	Social Watch Philippines	Philippines
299	WomanHealth Philippines	Philippines
300	GABRIELA Alliance of Filipino Women	Philippines
301	Ecological Alert and Recovery - Thailand (EARTH)	Thailand
302	Thai AIDS Treatment Action Group	Thailand
303	AIDS Access Foundation	Thailand
304	Alternative Agriculture Network	Thailand
305	BioThai	Thailand
306	Drug Study Group	Thailand
307	Foundation for AIDS Rights	Thailand
308	Foundation for Consumers	Thailand
309	Friends of Kidney Failure Patients Group	Thailand
310	FTA Watch	Thailand
311	Rural Pharmacists Group	Thailand
312	Stop Drink Network	Thailand
313	Thai Holistic Health Foundation	Thailand
314	Thai NGO Coalition on AIDS	Thailand
315	Thai Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (TNP+)	Thailand
316	Vietnam Network of People living with HIV (VNP+)	Vietnam

