

Trade Justice Network
Réseau pour le commerce juste



June 15, 2011

The Honourable Ed Fast
Minister of International Trade
Government of Canada
Ottawa, ON
ed.fast@parl.gc.ca / fax (613) 996-9795

Dear Minister Fast,

The Trade Justice Network and the Quebec Network on Continental Integration (RQIC) congratulate you on your recent re-election to the House of Commons and appointment to lead Canada's important international trade file. The networks, which represent labour, environmental, farmers, cultural, student, Indigenous and other public interest groups in Canada and Quebec, support greater engagement and trade with Europe as part of a fair and balanced Canadian trade agenda.

The Trade Justice Network came together in February 2010 because of concerns, shared by RQIC, that the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) could undermine important social, economic and environmental policy on both sides of the Atlantic. Since that time, we have advocated openness and public debate on CETA in our communications with local, provincial, and federal government representatives. We have met with Members of the European Parliament from all political parties on multiple trips to Brussels, and we continue to receive briefings from Canada's lead negotiator following each round of CETA talks.

Based on these meetings, and a careful reading of leaked copies of the CETA text, we know the proposed Canada-EU free trade agreement has the potential to transform the Canadian and Quebec economies in important ways. For example, the agreement will place new constraints on how the provinces, territories and Canadian municipalities make public policy. From culture to agriculture, telecommunications to procurement, the regulation of finance to the delivery of public services, copyright law to drug patent terms, CETA will affect many policy areas which are best decided by federal and provincial legislatures.

At the same time, serious questions have been raised about the projected gains from a comprehensive Canada-EU trade deal. For example, a Sustainability Impact Assessment conducted for the European Commission found GDP growth would be less than half what was estimated in a 2008 joint study the Canadian and EU governments used to justify commencing negotiations. Another Canadian study

estimates job losses of between 28,000 and 150,000, based on the natural effect of imports and exports on multiple sectors. We feel these studies present a strong case for slowing down the negotiations with the EU while a public debate can be held on the risks and benefits of CETA.

The Trade Justice Network and RQIC would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you at your convenience to go over our concerns in more detail. As two broad-based networks of Canadian and Quebec civil society organizations, we have expertise across many sectors which we hope can be of assistance to the federal government as it moves forward with its CETA negotiations.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

The Trade Justice Network

Email: TJN.RCJ@gmail.com / 416-979-0451

Trade Justice Network / Réseau pour un Commerce juste (TJN / RCJ) member organizations:

Alberta Federation of Labour, Alternatives, ATTAC-Québec, Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN), Canadian CED Network, Canadian Conference of the Arts, Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA), Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), Canadian Health Coalition, Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), CUPE Ontario, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP), Council of Canadians, The Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN), Manitoba Federation of Labour, National Farmers Union (NFU), National Union of Public and General Employees (NUGPE), New Brunswick Federation of Labour, Northern Territories Federation of Labour, Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, Ontario Federation of Labour, PEI Federation of Labour, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO), Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, Sierra Club Canada, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, United Steelworkers (USW), Yukon Federation of Labour.

Réseau québécois sur l'intégration continentale (RQIC)

Courriel: rqic@ciso.qc.ca / 514-383-2266

RQIC member organizations: Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS), Alternatives, Association canadienne des avocats du mouvement syndical, Association mondiale des radiodiffuseurs communautaires (AMARC), Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI), Attac-Québec, Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD), Centre international de solidarité ouvrière (CISO), Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), Conseil central de Montréal métropolitain (CCMM-CSN), Développement et Paix, Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ), Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ), Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec (FECQ), Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec (FEUQ), Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ), Groupe de recherche sur l'intégration continentale (GRIC-UQAM), Ligue des droits et libertés, Mouvement d'éducation populaire et d'action communautaire du Québec (MÉPACQ), Réseau québécois des groupes écologistes (RQGE), Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels du gouvernement du Québec (SPGQ).