

Citizens Trade Campaign

P.O. Box 77077 Washington, D.C. 20013 (202) 778-3320 ph (202) 293-5308 fx
www.citizenstrade.org

WTO Talks Collapse as U.S. and E.U. try to Push Harmful Trade Policies on the People of the World

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Contact: U.S.: Dan Beeton (202) 778-3311
Cancun: Gretchen Gordon 044 998 844 6348

CANCUN, MEXICO – Trade negotiations collapsed today, as developing countries walked out of the World Trade Organization meeting, exposing irreconcilable differences between developing countries and the E.U., U.S., and Japan.

“The collapse of these negotiations confirms that the U.S. and E.U. can no longer continue pushing their anti-development, anti-worker, and anti-environment corporate trade regime on the people of the world,” said Gretchen Gordon, Director of Citizens Trade Campaign. **“This is a major victory for the social movements of the world, and a reality that the Bush Administration can’t ignore if it continues to pursue the same failed policies in other regional trade agreements.”**

“The collapse of the talks shows the fragility of the current global trading system,” said Mark Ritchie, President of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. **“We can’t continue a global trading system that primarily benefits the interests of multinational corporations and doesn’t address the serious concerns of farmers, workers, and people of the world.”**

The impasse occurred when the U.S., the E.U., and Japan ignored previously stated widespread opposition by developing countries to put forth an ultimatum that talks must include moving forward on the contentious so-called “new issues” of investment, procurement competition, and trade facilitation. **“No agreement is better than a bad agreement. Despite intense pressure by the business lobby and by the U.S. and E.U., developing countries stood their ground,”** said David Waskow, Trade Policy Coordinator at Friends of the Earth – US. **“This is a tremendous development for people and the protection of the environment.”**

Developing countries and civil society groups oppose the policies being pursued by the U.S. and E.U. because of the restrictions they would place on governments’ ability to act in the public interest and because of the power they would grant to multinational corporations. **“The policies being pursued and the undemocratic process that is inherent in the WTO, NAFTA, the proposed FTAA and other corporate-driven trade arrangements will no longer be stood for,”** said Jennifer Esposito, Legislative Representative of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. **“This is a victory for working people around the world.”**

The Citizens Trade Campaign (CTC) is a national coalition of environmental, labor, consumer, family farm, religious, and other civil society groups founded in 1992 during the fight over the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). CTC members include the National Family Farm Coalition; United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society; Public Citizen; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; UNITE!; Friends of the Earth; the United Steelworkers of America; United Students Against Sweatshops; Communications Workers of America; Western Organization of Resource Councils; American Lands Alliance; Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy; Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment; and Defenders of Wildlife, as well as regional, state, and city-based coalitions, organizations, and individual activists throughout the United States.

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