

WHAT IS THE FTAA?

The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is a trade agreement currently under negotiation to expand the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to every country in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, except Cuba.

WHAT WOULD THE FTAA DO?

- **EXPAND NAFTA'S ATTACKS ON WORKERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

The FTAA to a large extent mirrors NAFTA rules, except that it goes much further. NAFTA has proven a nightmare for working families and the environment. Under NAFTA, 766,000 U.S. jobs have been lost, approximately 28,000 small Mexican businesses have shut down, and union bargaining power in all three countries has been undermined.

- **INCREASE CORPORATE POWER**

The FTAA would expand the provision of NAFTA that grants corporations special rights to sue governments when public interest regulations constrain corporate profits, thereby eroding the ability of national and local governments to regulate in the public interest. Already cases have been brought against local environmental laws, Buy America laws, zoning laws, and even against judicial procedure.

- **ERODE ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES**

The FTAA would forge into new dangerous ground through its far-reaching rules on liberalization of essential services such as education, health care, energy and water utilities, environmental services, postal service, and many others. Under the FTAA's definition of "liberalization," government health, labor, and environmental regulations would be considered "barriers to trade" and open to challenges by multinational corporations. This would erode existing social services and have a chilling effect on any future attempts at regulation, speeding up the process of deregulation and privatization already underway throughout the hemisphere.

- **DESTROY FAMILY FARMS**

Family farmers in Mexico and the U.S. have been devastated by NAFTA provisions which favor huge agribusiness, keep commodity prices low, and flood local markets with cheap imported commodities. The FTAA would encourage additional concentration of and access for corporate megafarms, causing further harm to small farmers. In addition, the agribusiness lobby is trying to use the FTAA as a way to force all countries in the hemisphere to accept biotechnology and genetically modified foods, pushing farmers in the U.S. and developing world into dependency on transnational corporations and closer to the brink of economic collapse.

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE FTAA NEGOTIATIONS?

Negotiations on the FTAA are on-going and set to be complete in 2005. The next meeting of trade ministers on the FTAA will be in Miami on November 20th and 21st, 2003.

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