Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement symposium: what is at stake?

European Perspectives

9 July 2013

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The European context

- A trade deal promoted as a way out of the multi-fold crisis
  - Recession, austerity, deregulation
  - Growing public distrust
    - Challenges to austerity
    - Rise of the extremes
    - “ACTA syndrome”
    - NSA revelations

- A “new” transatlantic potential?
Whose partnership is this?

- Secrecy brings suspicions
  - Keeping civil society away in the current context raises questions as to who will benefit this agreement
  - Access to text relies on leaks, limited access for EU Parliament itself

- TTIP or TAFTA?
  - Experiences of FTAs have raised concerns in civil society
    - The spectrum of specific rights for investors and corporations (ISDS)
    - Recent experience in ‘developed’ countries (Australia, Canada)
    - Concerns about consequences for citizens’ rights and public budgets
Content: concerns about attacks on regulatory standards

- All aspects of citizens’ lives at stake, on both sides of the Atlantic
  - Food, environment, energy, chemicals...
  - Concerns around “regulatory convergence” and “mutual recognition”

- Shared worldwide challenges ahead of us: climate and environment crises
  - Challenge of protecting established rights
    - Precautionary principle, polluter-pays principle
  - Aim higher! Transition towards sustainable societies is now!
The need for a transatlantic civil society alliance

- Contexts might be different but challenges are similar
  - Open up the process
  - A “fair” trade agreement that promotes better rights and standards for citizens
  - An ambitious agreement that contributes to the transition needed to tackle the multiple crises, including by restructuring trade models

- Next steps: working together
  - Civil society will be watching
  - Readiness to work in solidarity across the Atlantic and across sectors