



TTIP – Dangerous for Africa

The proposed free trade agreement between the EU and the US, TTIP, not only endangers democratic rights, consumer protection and environmental and social standards in Europe. Negative impacts on developing nations are predictable.

HISTORY

The delicate negotiations in the so-called Doha Round of the World Trade Organization (WTO) took over ten years. In the end, the developing countries were able to successfully defend their interests against the industrial states. Subsequently, the industrialized countries initiated more and more bilateral free trade agreements with individual countries.

- **Secret negotiations**

Closed to the public, the European Commission began secret negotiations on free trade agreements with several countries: including CETA with Canada and TTIP, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, with the United States. But someone let the cat out of the bag and the content of the draft contracts became known and provoked a storm of protest.

- **Massive Protests**

In 2014, 330 organizations from civil society, churches and trade unions from all EU countries gathered 1.25 million signatures to protest against TTIP.

SHARP CRITICISM

What do the critics find so threatening about TTIP?

Degree of Transparency

TTIP directly affects the lives of all citizens World: privacy and consumer protection, environmental and social standards, employees' rights, municipal procurement and cultural policy. Negotiation papers, however, were secret until recently. The lack of openness makes the EU vulnerable. The promise of more growth, prosperity and jobs is questioned by experts.

Attack on Democracy and the Rule of Law

The agreements provide for arbitration running parallel to the national legal system offering companies the opportunity to sue states for damages if their laws reduce estimated profits. Businesses would also be formally involved in a "regulatory commission" in the drafting of laws. Both make governments and parliaments subject to blackmail and an undermining of state sovereignty.

Irreversible Privatisation

The target of agreements such as TTIP, CETA and especially TiSA (the Trade in Services Agreement) is to privatize public services-services such as water and energy supply, and later health and education, and thus subject them to the profit-oriented laws of the market. Once privatized, as return under public scrutiny is hardly possible.

DANGERS FOR AFRICA

If two of the most powerful economic blocs of the world unite, there are bound to be consequences for developing countries. The European network AEFJN sees several risks to the economic development of African countries:

Weakening of the World Trade Organisation

TTIP strengthens the EU and US influence in the WTO, making it difficult for developing countries to defend the interests of their populations. They remain on the sidelines.

Fewer Export Possibilities

African producers have to compete with cheaper products from the EU and US and so lose out on their market share. Experts expect a decline of 4% in African economic output because of TTIP.

No model of sustainable Development

TTIP aims at maximizing profits by companies without regard to environmental and social standards. The concentrated economic power in Europe and America do not allow African countries to have a model of development compatible with their objectives of poverty reduction, job creation and adaptation to climate change.

TTIP has a single focus of economic growth and undermines global efforts to develop and enforce binding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Only an improvement in sustainable management and a reduction in blatant inequality can guarantee a long-term peaceful future for mankind.

"TTIP is not about free trade, but a redistribution of power away from the parliaments and towards executives and unelected associates of influence."

Harald Schumann, Der Tagesspiegel