

TransPacific Partnership (TPP) Unity Statement

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North American Unity Statement Opposing NAFTA Expansion through the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)*

The nearly two decades of economic, environmental and cultural damage wrought by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), while by no means experienced equally, have been highly detrimental to the majority of people across the North American region.

As a direct result of NAFTA, there are fewer good jobs, more struggling family farms, less stable food systems, and everyday consumer safety measures are weaker and social inequality grows. The pact's intellectual property rules continue to undermine access to affordable medicine, while its financial service provisions have undermined banking regulations. NAFTA fueled even more the conditions that precipitated an economic emigration crisis and exacerbated a false drug war, leading to mass-scale human rights abuses where tens of thousands of citizens have been the victims. It has degraded the earth and its ecosystems in numerous ways, including from mining and other resource extraction projects, and has had pronounced effects on indigenous peoples' sovereignty. Subsequent trade agreements have similarly propelled a race to the bottom in wages, labor rights and environmental protection, as well as deregulation and privatization, contributing to the worldwide financial and climate crises.

Halting further damage should be a shared priority of our peoples. Instead, because NAFTA has simultaneously redirected wealth and power to elites in each of the countries involved, the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States, among others, are now seeking to expand NAFTA's trade and investment rules throughout the Pacific Rim in the form of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). In fact, leaked documents suggest that the TPP could very well go beyond NAFTA in the new powers and rights it hands to transnational corporations, including with an expansion of NAFTA's infamous investor-state dispute process, by which international investors can challenge public interest laws, regulations and even court decisions that could threaten their expectation of profits through unaccountable tribunals that circumvent and violate domestic judicial systems.

The world cannot afford this NAFTA expansion package. Instead, we need policies that help build a more just and sustainable global economy, including those that respect and promote fundamental labor rights, including equal rights for migrant workers; the creation of high-wage, high-benefit jobs; environmental protection; food sovereignty; financial market stability; food and product safety; access to quality healthcare; and local democracy.

Together, we call on our sisters and brothers throughout North America and beyond to educate their communities about the TPP and to engage on it now, lest we all have even greater harms forced upon us and the people of many other countries.

** The Trans-Pacific Partnership is currently under negotiation between Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam. It is being written as a "docking agreement" that would allow other countries to join over time, but without them able to make changes to existing text (a pre-condition that Canada and Mexico agreed to).*