Re: Trade in Services Agreement (TISA)

28 April 2014

Dear ***[insert name of government leader]***,

**No Trade In Public Services**

We write to express our deep concern about the involvement of our country in the negotiation of the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA). We call on our government to immediately suspend TISA negotiations until the full text is released publicly, guarantee that all public services will be excluded, and that citizens are given full consultation and a democratic say in any such agreement.

Recent research has confirmed our worst fears (please see the “TISA versus Public Services” report at [www.world-psi.org/TISA](http://www.world-psi.org/TISA)). The TISA is an extension of the controversial General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) that met strong global resistance when negotiated. The attempt to extend this agreement through the secret TISA negotiations, and without releasing the proposed content and text, is a provocative and undemocratic action.

We have serious concerns about the effect of the TISA on government’s ability to provide public services. The TISA’s negative list on national treatment, ratchet and standstill clauses will make it near impossible for a government to recover or establish new public services even after failed privatisations.

The domestic regulation provisions will restrict the government’s ability to regulate in the public interest in a wide range of areas such as licensing of health facilities and laboratories, power plants, waste disposal, school and university accreditation and broadcast licensing.

Workers are not commodities. The regulation of migrant workers’ rights and enforcement of labour standards should be done by the tripartite International Labour Organization (ILO) and not be covered by trade agreements. Furthermore, Mode 4 clauses in the TISA will limit the ability of governments to regulate the rights and conditions for migrant workers, and prohibit the use of labour market surveys to determine if there are local workers available to do the work.

We understand the TISA will also limit the ability of governments to regulate the finance industry – as if the lessons of the global financial crisis have not been learned.

We also understand that the United States government wants the TISA to cover the flow of personal and financial data because they consider data protections in many countries “overbroad.” We believe that the majority of people will be alarmed by such provisions.

We are not alone in our concerns. Recently, over 350 civil society organisations from more than 115 countries wrote to you to voice their shared concerns.

We call on you to release the full text and all documents related to the TISA so that the people of our country can have a full say in this regard.

We call on you to give a 100% guarantee that no public services will be affected by this agreement. If you have nothing to hide, then why keep the people of our country in the dark?

*Yours sincerely,*

***[name, title, organisation]***