



Stop the EU's corporate trade agenda

Seattle to Brussels Network, part of Our World is Not For Sale <http://www.s2bnetwork.org>

Seattle to Brussels press release

on the Commission's Communication "*Trade, Growth and Development*"

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Make no mistake: the EU's trade policy is about the EU's offensive corporate interests

Today at 12:00, the European Commission (EC) released a Communication entitled "*Trade, growth and Development - Tailoring trade and investment policy for those countries most in need*"

The Seattle to Brussels Network finds this title grossly misleading:

1. This Communication does not define the EU's trade policy that has already been done in "Global Europe" (2006) and "Trade, Growth and World Affairs" (2010). And while these two Communications mainly target developing countries (only the latter also deals with developed countries like Canada, Japan and the US), they are not about development. **The EU's trade policy is all about serving the EU's offensive and defensive interests**, as defined by the EU business lobby.
2. This new Communication mainly deals with EU Aid for Trade which supports the strengthening of the trading capacities of developing countries. While this in itself is a laudable exercise, Aid for Trade is also and increasingly being deployed to further the EU's own trade policy objectives by easing developing countries' resistance towards accepting the EU's trade demands. In this sense **the EU's aid policy also becomes increasingly geared to serving EU self-interests instead of addressing developing country needs**.
3. The Communication, like its predecessors, **continues to fail to address the many adverse effects of the trade liberalisation policy** it advocates as a mainstay of its development policy. EU trade policy undermines policy space, food sovereignty, access to medicines and knowledge, employment and standards of living **and fails to address the causes and effects of the multiple crises** and corporate misconduct.
4. Recently and perversely, "tailoring to those countries most in need" has become the standard EC expression **for ending aid and trade benefits to a large group of vulnerable developing countries**, as the GSP reform and the reform of the EU's aid policy have shown. As such, Aid for Trade is poor compensation.
5. In addition, as the EPA negotiations as well as other EU FTA negotiations have demonstrated, the EC is not in the habit of fine-tuning its trade and investment policy to the real development needs of the developing countries; rather, it tries to make developing countries fit into the EU's own self-guided trade strategies. In tailoring Aid for Trade, the EC continuously proves itself to be an uncompromising and rigid negotiator.

For more information:

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