

Coalition To Act Against The TPPA Malaysia

Badan Bertindak Bantah TPPA Malaysia

JOINT - STATEMENT

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As another round of talks for the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) begins yet again behind closed doors, we - Badan Bertindak Bantah TPPA - issue this joint statement expressing our position and the grave concerns that we have as Malaysians. These include:

National Sovereignty and Policy Space of TPPA Countries: Multiple chapters proposed for the TPPA restrict the policy space of governments, including the investment and regulatory coherence chapters. The investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) and State-to-state Dispute Settlement (SSDS) is only two of many ways that the TPPA strengthens trans-national 'corporate' justice –by providing ways for multinational corporations to trample over national legal systems by obtaining unlimited amounts of monetary compensation in international arbitration tribunals.

Access to Medicines: The US has proposed text, if accepted into the TPPA that would make it easier for Big Pharma to get medicine patents and obtain longer patents which would also render it more difficult or delay access to the more affordable generic medicines such as for cancer, HIV and other essential medicines.

Access to Knowledge: Just as the TPPA's intellectual property protection measures will make medical treatment more expensive for ordinary Malaysians, TPPA countries' educational and research activities could be harmed – and made more expensive – due to the more stringent copyright laws proposed, including for the 'digital commons' such as the Internet.

Environmental Protection: Demands are being made on TPPA countries to agree to pro-industry, 'self-regulated' environmental laws prevent or make the transfer of climate-friendly environmental technology more difficult and investment protection measures that would expose Malaysia to the same challenges that in other countries have seen corporate interests trump environmental policies.

Workers' rights: There are proposals to stop governments from requiring greater protection (such as over minimum wage, health or safety standards) to workers in Malaysia than they currently do and prohibiting the imposition of training or employment requirements on foreign companies.

Small-and-Medium-Sized Enterprises, Agriculture: The TPPA aims, among other things, at trade liberalisation and the lowering of tariffs which may cause drastic losses in jobs in all sectors (except perhaps one) identified for tariff removal. This will drive down workers' wages and result in increased income disparity gap.

Tariff reductions will adversely impact on agricultural products, particularly. There are more than 90% of Malaysian companies that are in the agriculture sector are SMEs that will face unfair competition from big agricultural exporters from TPPA countries such as US, Canada, and Japan (whose governments will not reduce in the TPPA their huge subsidies to their farmer).

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Malaysia's 300,000 farmers in the 'Northern States' that produce most of the nation's food yet are among the poorest of the poor in Malaysia face the spectre of suffering the same fate as farmers in Mexico who, following the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and the US, lost three million out of ten million jobs in that sector.

Conclusion

The TPPA is straddled unevenly between the hopes of a relatively small circle of multinational corporations whose commercial interests stand to benefit the most from the proposals, on the one hand, and the fears of peoples' organisations in all 12 TPPA countries involved that their welfare and future are under threat, on the other.

In fact, the TPPA is not about fair trade, nor even about free trade – since it seeks to lock in the monopoly of big corporations over their industries - but about ensuring the protection and prioritisation of corporate interests above those of public welfare and safety and the socio-economic interests of Malaysians. In order to achieve that, the language and substance of proposals for the TPPA aim at ensuring the greatest role for multinational corporations, while rolling back the space for governments to act in the interests of their citizens and the formulation of regulations and policies.

We, the Badan Bertindak Bantah TPPA, hereby demand that the Government of Malaysia suspends its involvement in the TPPA negotiations unless and until:

- An impartial and comprehensive cost-and-benefit-analysis and a comparative advantage study are carried out, disclosed and publicly debated by all stakeholders in Malaysia;
- The texts are examined, scrutinised and assessed by parliament to rectify the TPPA as negotiated is indeed in Malaysia's favour and interests;
- The concerns are seen to have been incorporated into Malaysia's positions and proposals for the TPPA; and
- A popular referendum is held to determine to what extent Malaysians are in support of their government signing and ratifying the TPPA.

The 18th round of negotiation is currently ongoing in Sabah, at No. 1 Sutera Harbor Boulevard, Kota Kinabalu. Representatives from 12 nations are negotiation with delegates from America and the negotiations will continue from 15th-25th of July.

We demand the government to adapt a transparency attitude in this and we want the voices of the people to be brought in this negotiation round or just call the negotiation off.

We, the Badan Bertindak Bantah TPPA (Bantah TPPA) calls for Malaysian to gather peacefully on the 19th of July 2013 in a show of proteset to TPPA at the Masjid Wilayah Persekutuan after Friday prayers at 2.15pm where we will together walk towards the Ministry of International Trade and Industry to submit the Memorandum of Objection.

Badan Bertindak Bantah TPPA

Spokesperson - Azlan Awang (019 2809529) azlanawang@gmail.com

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List of Badan Bertindak Bantah TPPA

- 1) Individuals in Barisan Nasional
- 2) Individuals in Pakatan Rakyat
- 3) Individuals in PSM
- 4) Majlis Perundingan Islam Malaysia (MAPIM) and its members
- 5) Majlis Perundingan Melayu (MPM) and its members
- 6) Persatuan Pengguna Islam Malaysia (PPIM)
- 7) Teras Pengupayaan Melayu (TERAS)
- 8) Consumer Association of Penang (CAP)
- 9) Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM)
- 10) BLINDSPOT
- 11) JIETU
- 12) ADJ
- 13) PUIM
- 14) MUAFAKAT
- 15) MTUC and its members
- 16) Third World network (TWN)
- 17) Malaysia AIDS Council (MAC) and its members
- 18) MTAAG+
- 19) MENGO and its members
- 20) JERIT
- 21) PEMBELA
- 22) ISMA
- 23) IKRAM
- 24) PEMBINA
- 25) SUARAM
- 26) Aliran Kesedaran Negara
- 27) Community Action Network (CAN)
- 28) Islamic Renaissance Front (IRF)
- 29) Japan Graduates Association, Malaysia (JGAM)
- 30) Lim Lian Geok Cultural Development Centre (LLG)
- 31) MiDAS @ Universities
- 32) National Indian Rights Action Team (NIAT)
- 33) Negeri Sembilan Chinese Assembly Hall (NSCAH)
- 34) Oriental Hearts and Mind Study Institute (OHMSI)
- 35) Persatuan Bekas Siswazah Universiti dan Kolej di China, Malaysia (LiuHua)
- 36) Persatuan Masyarakat Selangor dan Wilayah Persekutuan (PERMAS)
- 37) Pusat Komunikasi Masyarakat (KOMAS)
- 38) Saya Anak Bansa Malaysia (SABM)
- 39) Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM)
- 40) Tamil Foundation Malaysia (TF)
- 41) The KL & Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall (KLSCAH)
- 42) United Chinese School Alumni Associations of Malaysia (UCSAAM)
- 43) Solidariti Mahasiswa Malaysia (SMM)
- 44) Solidariti Anak Muda Malaysia (SAMM)
- 45) Pertubuhan Aktivis Pengupayaan Insan (API)
- 46) Pertubuhan Urusetia Menangani Gejala Sosial (UNGGAS)
- 47) Pusat Penyelidikan Dan Pembangunan Komuniti (KOMUNITI)
- 48) Pertubuhan Prihatin Kesihatan Dan Sosial Malaysia (PRIHATIN)
- 49) MTEM Cluster (representing 51 NGOs)

List is valid as of 15th July 2013