

Where are the negotiations at after Melbourne?

The 11th round of TPPA negotiations was held in Melbourne from 1-9 March. Outside the venue Melbourne's Occupy activists made their presence felt by [hijacking TV news](#) (at @1.40). There are some great photos! Inside, pressure from the US to reach a deal in 2012 intensified, with the aim for trade ministers to discuss political trade-offs when they meet in Russia in June.

There are massive divisions over many areas – [intellectual property](#) (meds and copyright), investment, including investor rights to sue, state-owned enterprises, agriculture, food standards, labour, environment, and much more. Those divisions deepen as negotiators understand more about the implications of what is being proposed. But there is a risk that US pressure will sweep them aside in the quest to reach a deal. The next formal round is in Dallas in May. Partial rounds on intellectual property and maybe some other issues will be held before then. **It seems 90% certain that NZ will host a round in early July – but there are also rumours that the US wants to host all rounds so it can control the agenda!**

We need to strengthen the NZ campaign so it is politically untenable for National to commit us to this secret deal in June and show nation-wide opposition if the NZ round is in July.

Australia stands firm saying 'no' to investors right to sue in TPPA – why can't we?

Remember when PM John Key said the right of foreign investors to sue the NZ government in secret international tribunals when laws impact negatively on their investment seemed 'pretty far-fetched'? His story changed when he was briefed that NZ was not opposing those powers in a TPPA.

[Yet Australia reiterated in Melbourne](#) that it would not accept investor-state disputes in a TPPA. That is ALP policy affirmed by the Cabinet. It was reinforced by the challenge Philip Morris is bringing over Australia's plain packaging laws. Just last month Chevron got an investment tribunal to overturn an \$18billion award from Ecuador's courts to cleanup the Amazon overturned. There is a long list of examples that affect a wide range of policies on environment, health, public services, financial regulation, indigenous rights and much more.

Sector groups and individuals need to pressure National, Labour, all other parties, and local government to commit at the least to Australia's position of no investor powers in a TPPA.

US politicians attack TPPA secrecy – why can't we?

Sovereignty and democracy should be bottom lines for all NZ parliamentarians and local government politicians in challenging the secrecy of TPPA negotiations that will tie their hands. Yet few of them will know it's happening and none will see the deal until it's done. US politicians have been speaking out:

[Resolution from US state of Maine](#) opposing secrecy and protecting sovereignty of lawmakers to protect the public interest

US Senator [Weiden attacks erosion of sovereignty and secrecy](#) at Senate finance committee hearing with USTR Kirk on ACTA and TPPA – from around 8.30.

We are working on a campaign action for here. Meanwhile, talk to MPs and local councilors you think will be sympathetic so they can start asking questions.

Greens' Russel Norman speaks at Japan's Diet conference on "No to TPP"

Last week Green co-leader Russel Norman and Jane Kelsey, along with several US and South Korean speakers, were invited by Japanese politicians opposed to the TPPA to speak at a two day educational conference held at the Diet - which were attended by between 350 and 1300 people! At the rally a young Japanese woman who follows TPPWatch had a sign **Taking People's Power Away!** Listen to Radio NZ Checkpoint 13 March 2012: [Norman says Japanese conference worried about TPP](#). "The co-leader of the Green Party says an international conference in Japan is worried a proposed trans-Pacific trade deal will restrict the sovereign rights of individual countries ..."

Groser Defends the indefensible: Mike Moore & the Corporate Lobbying Bash

Trade Minister Tim [Groser rallied to the defence](#) of NZ ambassador Mike Moore for co-hosted a corporate lobby event in Washington sponsored by Philip Morris, Chevron, PhRMA and others, who see the TPPA as a way to restrict NZ regulation of their activities and products. Groser described the event organiser, the Washington International Trade Association, as a non-profit, non-partisan body – which is exactly how 'corporate US' fronts its lobbying operations. Moore's presence, with his full support, was a valuable opportunity to build political support in the US for the TPPA and did not mean he endorsed the sponsors. The government would preserve NZ's ability to regulate for public health and only commit to deals in NZ's best interest.

Write back to Groser saying

- "trust us" doesn't wash.
- Show us the text so we can make our own assessment.
- Allow parliamentary hearings on the TPPA.
- Stop running away from public debates with the critics.
- Make Mike Moore meet the same ethical standards as Australia's ambassador, who declined to attend.

Upcoming events

New Zealand Computer Society Mega-Breakfast – The Up[loads] and Down[loads] of Copyright Infringement, Tuesday 27 March at 7.30-9.00am , Wellesley Boutique Hotel, 2-8 Maginnity St, Wellington Register [here](#)

Fabian Society : Bill Rosenberg and Jane Kelsey will discuss issues on the TPPA in Wellington on 29 March at 5.30pm in Connolly Hall, Guildford Tce. Free. Register [here](#).

Maori Affairs Committee will be briefed by Prof Jane Kelsey on Tobacco and TPPA, **Parliament**, Wednesday **21 March 10am**

New resources

The American Prospect/Demos, [Pacific Illusions](#): Special report on the TPP, with articles by lots of US TPPA gurus.

Short paper on Alcohol and Tobacco in New Free Trade Deals, by Jane Kelsey, "[Addiction](#)"

Please update us on news and local activities

Please share TPP activities or good articles: contact Mary Ellen iconstance@gmail.com (the bulletin) and/or Hannah tppwatch@gmail.com (the website); Facebook page, [Stop Stealing New Zealand](#) and website www.tppwatch.org

Thanks! Mary-Ellen O'Connor and Jane Kelsey on behalf of TPPWatch