

The Secret Documents of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

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On 1 May the non-governmental organization “Greenpeace” in the Netherlands published 248 pages of certified copies* of the documents from the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the USA and the EU. The confidential documentation clearly shows pressure from the American side on Europe’s potential decisions. Washington threatens to block export concessions for the European automobile industry if the EU does not agree to significant **compromises in agricultural policy**. At the same time, the Americans are attacking the “precautionary principle” enshrined in European legislation, seeking to replace it with “risk management”.

A few days after the 13th round of TTIP negotiations in New York, the world was once again drawn into yet another global scandal. Dutch Greenpeace uploaded to its own website documents that shed light on the negotiations concerning the liberalization of trade, which will affect nearly 40% of the world economy. Of course, these are not the originals, but only certified copies. These 248 pages first arrived in the editorial offices of several popular German television stations and a newspaper also involved in the Panama affair with offshore business. The source is not disclosed for security reasons. The confidential documents represent more than two thirds of the total text of the agreement to date and cover 13 chapters devoted to a wide range of issues – telecommunications, regulatory cooperation, pesticides, food and agriculture, trade barriers, etc. Several points are highlighted as key in the statement of the Dutch environmentalists, based on the confidential documents:

- **The “precautionary principle”** will be violated on the Old Continent. In Europe, only products that have proven to be safe may enter the market (precautionary principle), while in the USA and Canada it is the opposite (risk management). The precautionary principle is enshrined in the Treaty on the EU, but is not mentioned in the negotiating documents.
- **Wide opening of the doors for corporate business.** The leaked documents suggest that both sides are considering granting corporations much broader access and participation in decision-making.
- **Environmental protection.** The received texts do not contain the objectives laid down in the Paris climate agreement, which was recently signed as an official document for the future of our planet. The rule on “General Exceptions”, enshrined in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), is also absent from the text. This nearly 70-year-old rule allows states to restrict trade in order “to protect human, animal or plant life or health”, or to “conserve exhaustible natural resources”.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, however, called for an acceleration of the trade negotiations with America. At her joint press conference with US President Barack Obama in Hanover, she expressed her deep optimism that the agreement could be finalized by the end of the year. “The final results are still not definitive. Germany has absolutely no intention of retreating from its European laws or disregarding its policies in the fields of environment, agriculture, as well as the precautionary principle,” the Chancellor stressed in her closing speech.

**The documents reveal for the first time the position of the USA and the deliberate attempts to change the democratic legislative process in the EU. They are available at www.ttip-leaks.org.*

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