

Proposed motion for the IFSW General Meeting June 2016

Motion to create an International Trade Agreement Working Group

Proposed by: Aotearoa New Zealand IFSW Co-ordinating Body

This motion notes the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) are substantial free trade agreements intruding on all aspects of our lives. Lives of millions of the most marginalised of the world may be severely affected if these agreements are allowed to become law. The United Nations expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order said this year that 'it has been argued that Investor State Dispute Settlements (ISDS) tilts the playing field away from democratic accountability, favouring "big business" over the rights and interests of labourers and consumers' (United Nations, 2015, para. 11).

This motion believes that as members of the international Social Work community it is our obligation to advocate against systems (both locally and internationally) that work against the basic human rights of marginalised populations, who are often our clients. Only through this work can we highlight the injustices, educate our fellow citizens to the discrimination across sectors of the population, and continue to strive towards in a world where every human being is treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

This motion recommends the creation of an IFSW International Trade Agreement Working Group. This Working Group would draw membership of local Social Work activists from the countries negotiating the TPP and the TTIP.

The Working Group will:

- Heighten global awareness of the critical impact of these trade agreements on communities and individuals.
- Communicate together (electronically through various mediums) about shared actions, advocate for affected parties and advocate against the structural inequalities the TPP / TTIP (and other such trade agreements) brings to citizens of our respective countries.
- Develop and support a media strategy that will include a shared logo, use of social media and community actions.
- Develop a video statement sharing different practices across borders, share information on the web, through the press and journals.
- Develop a lobby strategy targeting organisations at a local, Pacific and global level. This may include meetings with politicians, ministers and parliaments.
- To facilitate these actions the group will appoint a co-ordinator, rotating through the associations on a yearly basis and be a point of contact for partners in this action plan.