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## **Outside Trans-Pacific Partnership Negotiations in Washington, D.C., Hundreds Gather to Protest TPP, Toast the Demise of Fast Track Authority**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – An hour of loud chanting and noisemakers ensured that the chief negotiators from the 12 nations involved in Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) talks today were aware of growing U.S. public opposition to the TPP and the extremely dim prospects that President Barack Obama will ever obtain Fast Track trade authority, Public Citizen said. Hundreds of activists from labor, environmental, consumer, human rights, public health, Internet freedom, faith and family farm groups protested outside the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), where negotiators were meeting.

“U.S. public opposition is focused on TPP non-trade terms being pushed by U.S. officials on behalf of corporate interests that would raise medicine prices, undermine Internet freedom and provide foreign firms operating here special privileges relative to their domestic competitors,” said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch. “President Obama will not get Fast Track authority for the TPP because congressional Democrats and Republicans alike oppose such ‘diplomatic legislating’ and are irate about the actual trade terms, such as disciplines against currency manipulation, that the administration has refused to raise in TPP talks.”

“The voices of millions of working, middle-class Americans cannot be ignored,” said Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa. “They are tired of being the casualties of bad trade deals that send good-paying jobs overseas. The Teamsters Union will continue to fight against Fast Track authorization and the Trans-Pacific Partnership – American workers cannot pay the price of another bad trade deal.”

“We believe in trade,” said George Kohl, senior director of Communications Workers of America. “We are fighting against old trade policy that literally guarantees corporate profits at the expense of working families in all nations. In the weeks ahead, we will mobilize like never before against Fast Track authorizing legislation and the TPP, and for 21st century trade that gives workers’ rights, environmental issues and other concerns the same standing as corporate profits.”

“It’s time for all Americans – environmentalists, parents, workers – to come together and make some noise,” said Ilana Solomon, director of the Sierra Club’s Responsible Trade Program. “We can’t let negotiators secretly shape trade pacts behind closed doors that will open up the floodgates for fracking, make environmental safeguards vulnerable to polluter attacks and worsen climate disruption. We’re raising our voices to say ‘no’ to fast tracking a flawed Trans-Pacific Partnership, and ‘yes’ to protecting our families and communities.”

Added Arthur Stamoulis, executive director of Citizens Trade Campaign, “Trade negotiators need to wake up to the fact that Fast Track is dead and won’t be resurrected. Voters have had enough of backroom pacts that put corporate profits ahead of human needs, and Congress members increasingly understand that rubber-stamping the TPP would be a fast track out of office.”

For more information about the TPP, visit <http://www.exposethetpp.org/>.

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