



215 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE • Washington, D.C. 20003 • 202/546-4996 • www.citizen.org

For Immediate Release:
Aug. 23, 2013

Contact: Maggie Henderson (202) 454-5108

Ministerial Meeting Before 19th Round of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Negotiations in Brunei: Trade Ministers Push Deadline Back (Again), Noting Many Unresolved Issues

Posted Schedule of Brunei TPP Negotiations Reveals That Many Technical Issues Remain Unresolved, in Addition to Major Political Controversies

WASHINGTON, D.C. – United States Trade Representative (USTR) Michael Froman’s claims that the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations are in an “end game” is contradicted by both the [negotiating schedule](#) and a [joint statement](#) by the trade ministers of the 12 TPP countries. Given that these documents make clear that much technical work is still required on various chapters, the major outstanding controversies remain and real market access negotiations have hardly begun, TPP country heads of state meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit clearly will not be able to sign a “deal” even if their press releases suggest otherwise, Public Citizen said today.

The Ministerial statement downplayed the Oct. 7-8 Bali APEC heads of state meeting that had previously been identified by the TPP countries as the venue where a final TPP deal would be signed: “We have agreed to maintain our active engagement in the lead-up to the APEC Leaders meeting in Bali, Indonesia, on the margins of which TPP Leaders are expected to meet as they have in past years. This meeting will be an important milestone as the 12 countries work intensively to conclude this landmark agreement.”

“Today’s news from Brunei that the TPP will not be signed at the October APEC summit reflects the united opposition by other TPP countries to many core TPP proposals that the U.S. government is pushing on behalf of various corporate interests from Wall Street to Big Pharma that are also opposed by civil society,” said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch.

The contentious issues – from unwavering multi-year opposition to U.S. patent and copyright text proposals to the United States’ insistence that that the TPP forbid any signatory country from using capital controls, speculation or transaction taxes – indicate that the negotiations are far from over.

“The question is whether this spin about negotiations being nearly done when they’re clearly not will provide an excuse to no longer give notice about when negotiations occur and to stop doing related press and other briefings and proceed in even greater secrecy,” said Wallach. “It looks like a response to growing opposition against TPP: pretend it is a done deal and then go underground.”

###

Public Citizen is a national, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit www.citizen.org.