

Open Letter From U.S. and UK Civil Society Groups Demanding Transparency in Any Potential U.S.-UK Trade Deal — As Printed in the *Financial Times* on July 25, 2017

Sir, British and US officials began discussing plans for a future US-UK trade deal this week, without bothering to consult the population of either country on the goals for such talks. As representatives of civil society movements on both sides of the Atlantic, we reject secretive trade talks that keep elected representatives and the public in the dark. UK and US officials have no business trying to precook a post-Brexit trade deal years before such negotiations would be legal.

It has become abundantly clear that trade deals crafted in secret will be hijacked by corporations to promote their narrow interests at the expense of public welfare. That was the lesson of the recent transatlantic and trans-Pacific trade agreements (TTIP and TPP) — both of which have been stopped thus far by movements of millions that spanned borders and sectors. Indeed, corporate lobbies are already seizing on the coming US-UK talks to push an agenda of financial deregulation, privatisation of public services, the undermining of workers' rights and expansion of unaccountable trade tribunals that allow corporate polluters to sue governments over environmental and health protections they don't like.

To prioritise the needs of people — not corporate profits — in both of our countries, any potential US-UK trade talks must be led by public input and take place in the light of day.

Signed,

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