

Statement of support for the Pacific from New Zealand and Australian civil society on PACER-Plus trade negotiations, August 2010

In the lead up to the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting in Port Vila on 3-6 August 2010, civil society organisations from the Pacific Islands have released a statement on PACER-Plus which outlines the need for a moratorium on negotiations until a number of conditions have been met that will assist in the negotiation of an agreement that benefits the people of the region. As a coalition of Australian and New Zealand organisations committed to fair trade and sustainable development in the region, we support the statement issued by our Pacific civil society allies and partners.

We affirm that any trade negotiations should:

- Be for the benefit of the Pacific people;
- Promote decent work (a framework for promoting sustainable development outcomes committed to by Pacific Island governments in February 2010); and
- Positively contribute to meeting the needs of both women and men and their sustainable development opportunities.

Accordingly, we call on our governments to refrain from holding further negotiations on PACER-Plus until:

- National Consultations in Pacific countries are conducted
- Adequate funding and staffing of the Office of Chief Trade Advisor (OCTA) is available so that the Office can carry out its functions effectively
- The impacts of the global recession and financial crisis on Pacific countries have eased and an evaluation of the impacts of the global financial crisis is conducted
- A full investigation of potential alternative economic and trade agreements is undertaken
- A commitment is made to exclude services and investment chapters which reduce the range of policy options available to Pacific Island governments to support and encourage local development
- Trade negotiations are de-linked from temporary labour mobility schemes
- Adequate resources are provided for nationally-defined training and capacity building of trade officials and key stakeholders in the Pacific
- A human rights impact assessment and a gender analysis of PACER-Plus is undertaken
- Active involvement of civil society organisations, as previously agreed by Forum Trade Ministers, is committed to and planned for

Further details on these conditions are clearly articulated in the Pacific civil society statement (August 2010).

Signed:

Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network
Australian Education Union
Australian Nursing Federation (ANF)
AID/WATCH
Christian World Service
Community and Public Sector Union – State
Public Sector Federation (Australia)
Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union
(Australia)
Global Trade Watch
Island Child Charitable Trust NZ (ICCT)

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions
Pacific Institute of Resource Management
One Asia Trust
Pax Christi Aotearoa-New Zealand
People's Health Movement Australia
Public Health Association of Australia
Public Services International, Oceania
Quaker Peace and Service Aotearoa New Zealand
Search Foundation
The Grail Global Justice Network (Australia)
UnitingWorld