



**DON'T
TRADE AWAY
OUR LIVES!**

10 March 2010

**Re: Indian government trading away our lives in secret negotiations
India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**

Dear Member of Parliament,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Delhi Network of Positive People (DNP+) to express our concerns regarding the final round of negotiations between India and the European Union (EU) for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) taking place **this month in Delhi and next month in Brussels in complete secrecy.**

DNP+ was founded in 1999 as a support group of People living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV). We actively work towards universal treatment access and provide support services to the PLHIV community. **We are alarmed that the Indian government is TRADING AWAY OUR LIVES and right to health, in the name of a free trade agreement to be signed before the end of 2010.**

Severe adverse impact on our access to medicines by increasing intellectual property rights: As patients relying on life long treatment, we are intimately familiar with provisions on intellectual property in such trade agreements and their impact on access to treatment. Our new HIV medicines have been patented in India and cannot be domestically produced because India signed the WTO TRIPS Agreement. As you know, the EU is trying hard in every forum to increase intellectual property standards that will benefit European pharmaceutical companies but will have a grave impact on the domestic production of medicines and ultimately our access to medicines. The Indian government will be trading away our lives by agreeing to the EU's demands on intellectual property and enforcement in FTA negotiations.

No public debate or consultation with those most affected: Since 2008, we have been asking the Indian government to be transparent in these negotiations. However, there has been no answer from the government. It is not only our lives that are at stake but those of millions around the developing world in Asia, Africa and Latin America that rely on India as a source of affordable generic medicines.

Parliament kept in the dark: Since 2005, the Indian Parliament has secured a space for access to affordable medicines by ensuring the right to health is predominant over multinational companies' profits. Yet the India-EU FTA is now undermining everything the Indian Parliament has done to ensure access to medicines in India. The FTA is a binding legal obligation that the government is signing without any discussions or permission from Parliament. While the European Parliament is heavily involved in these negotiations and are discussing them, our MPs have been bypassed by the government. There has been no consultation with peoples' representatives.

We also stand in solidarity with all other poor, vulnerable, marginalised groups including farmers, women, environmental groups, trade unions, bank employees, small scale industries, who will also be adversely impacted by these FTA negotiations. **We request you to immediately ask the Indian government:**

1. **To STOP all FTA negotiations** till there is public consultation.
2. **No FTAs to be signed without Parliament & State Legislatures' approval.**
3. **Immediate release of all information,** studies and negotiations on all FTAs by the government.

As our representatives, we ask that you raise our concerns in Parliament and seek an immediate answer from the government and remind them that they were elected by the people of India not by the pharmaceutical industry of Europe.

Sincerely,

Loon Gangte

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