

Trades Union Congress



Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP  
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Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
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date: 10 March 2014  
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Dear Vince

### **EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)**

As you are aware, whilst political agreement was reached on the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada last October, some areas remain under discussion, notably the 'negative list' system, investment provisions and labour and environmental rights. I would be grateful if you could raise these concerns with the Commission.

We continue to have considerable concerns regarding the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms due to the threats they pose to states' ability to regulate in the public interest. We welcome the fact the Commission has responded to these concerns with a public consultation on the investment chapter of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. We call on you to make sure that the ISDS mechanism due to be included in CETA is put on hold whilst the Commission completes its consultation.

We are also concerned about the 'negative list' approach taken in CETA. By only exempting certain stated areas from liberalisation commitments, parts of the public sector that become privatised will not be protected from further liberalisation that will drive down pay, standards and make the service less accountable to public scrutiny. We ask that you call for a 'positive list' approach instead in the agreement so only stated areas can be liberalised.

Labour and environmental standards must be upheld by both EU and Canada as part of CETA. We would like to see enforcement mechanisms in the sustainable development chapter, comparable to the dispute settlement provisions applying to other parts of the agreement.

I would be grateful if you could let me know whether you are able to raise these concerns with the Commission.

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Yours sincerely

**FRANCES O'GRADY**  
General Secretary