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PACER-Plus Agreement fails Pacific economies

The refusal of Vanuatu, Fiji and Papua New Guinea to attend the signing of the PACER-Plus trade deal shows that this agreement will disadvantage Pacific island economies and leave them exposed to exploitation.

Serious concerns about the agreement - which includes Australia, New Zealand and 11 other Pacific Island nations - have been raised by the Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG) and supported in a petition circulated by the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) of which the ACTU is a signatory.

Please see full AFTNIET Petition attached.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

"We have serious concerns about the impact of the agreement on Pacific Island nations, including its impact on local industries and local cultures."

"The fact that three of the largest Pacific island economies have refused to sign today is a serious embarrassment for the Australian Government, who have long championed this deal."

"This is the latest entry on the list of Turnbull Government unfair trade negotiations which serve the interests of corporations rather than working people."

"We have seen in Australia that globalisation often works for a select few and can devastate communities if corporate power is allowed to run rampant."

"The ACTU supports fair trade and deals which prioritise the interests of working people, wherever they are."

"The kind of power imbalance between local workers and multi-national corporations which Australian unions are trying to rectify in Australia is exactly that this agreement would thrust onto our neighbours and we cannot stand by and watch that happen."

ENDS

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