



## **Under Threat: Democracy and Jobs Under the FTAA and GATS**

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Trade agreements once dealt primarily with trade in goods and agricultural commodities. The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) represent a new generation of trade agreements that go after services, including public services. These new agreements extend a "less government is better government" approach to global trade. Their mandate is to ensure "trade flows as smoothly, predictably, and freely as possible."

### **FTAA and GATS threaten jobs and democracy as we know it**

The scope of these new trade deals is breathtaking. Here are just a few likely effects:

- **Public employees.** The FTAA and GATS goal is to privatize public services and open them up to global competition and control. GATS specifically targets water and waste treatment services, public works, environmental services, and higher education. It also targets government sponsored monopolies, like the post office, for privatization.
- **Construction workers.** GATS will prohibit any measure more burdensome than necessary to ensure the quality of service or supplier's capability. This will likely prohibit prevailing wage laws and project labor agreements.
- **Environmental and human rights.** Both FTAA and GATS require that any government regulation be "necessary" and be the "least trade restrictive" alternative possible. This will likely prohibit many environmental protection regulations and human rights laws.
- **Democratic rights.** Both FTAA and GATS challenge the fundamental idea that democratic societies can regulate and govern how they choose within their own borders. Democratically made decisions can be challenged and effectively overturned by unelected trade tribunals that meet in secret.

### **We must mobilize and fight back.**

Both FTAA and GATS will likely be voted on by Congress in 2005. We can win this fight if we:

1. **Build awareness.** Educate yourself, co-workers and members of organizations you belong to. Write a letter to the editor or your newsletter.
2. **Write Congress.** Many congress members do not fully understand this issue and how it impacts you. Inform them.
3. **Make this a campaign issue.** Include a question in candidate screenings done by your organization. Vote for candidates who oppose the new deals.
4. **Get ready for Miami in November.** The FTAA starts its final round of talks in Miami in November 2003. Participate in mass rallies there or locally. **Please see other side for Miami details.**

## **Learn more. Educate. Pass it on.**

You can get four short (10-15 minutes each) powerpoint slide shows on how the new generation of trade deals will affect ♦ construction workers, ♦ public employees, ♦ US Postal Service employees, and ♦ our democracy on the web. Go to [www.citizenstrade.org](http://www.citizenstrade.org), click on "Activist Resource Center," then click on "Training and Presentation Materials," then click on any of the "Trade Deals and..." links.

You can show these slide shows at your local or e-board meetings or pass on the link to your members.

In addition, here are some key websites to find out more information:

- **AFL-CIO:** [www.aflcio.org/issuespolitics/globaleconomy/ftaamain.cfm](http://www.aflcio.org/issuespolitics/globaleconomy/ftaamain.cfm)
- **Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives:** [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca)
- **Citizens Trade Campaign:** [www.citizenstrade.org](http://www.citizenstrade.org)
- **Friends of the Earth:** [www.foe.org/camps/intl/greentrade](http://www.foe.org/camps/intl/greentrade)
- **GATSwatch:** [www.gatswatch.org](http://www.gatswatch.org)
- **Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch:** [www.citizen.org/trade](http://www.citizen.org/trade)
- **Sierra Club:** [www.sierraclub.org/trade](http://www.sierraclub.org/trade)
- **Witness for Peace:** [www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org)
- **World Trade Organization (WTO):** [www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org)