

Towards NAFTA-EU Economic Integration? “Back-Door” Canada-EU Trade Agreement (CETA) Sets the Stage...

The TTIP is Alive?

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)
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The ratification of the CETA agreement is imminent, with far-reaching economic and social implications. France’s Prime Minister Manuel Valls is currently in Canada for meetings with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

CETA is the object of protests in both Canada and the EU. It was also the object of a legal procedure in Germany.

The logic of the agreement must be understood. It constitutes the first step towards the integration of NAFTA and the EU. This integration would create a North Atlantic political entity broadly coinciding with NATO.

NAFTA-EU integration would modify the political architecture of the European Union.

EU-NAFTA integration is a part of Washington’s neoliberal agenda.

Towards the formation of a North Atlantic Trade and Investment Area (NATIA), a trading block broadly coinciding (geographically) with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)?

The geopolitical implications are far-reaching with Washington overshadowing Brussels.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE RATIFICATION OF THIS AGREEMENT BE BLOCKED

Michel Chossudovsky, October 13, 2016

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In less than a month from now, an important and far-reaching “trade agreement” between Canada and the European Union is slated to be signed and ratified by the House of Commons in Ottawa and the European Parliament.

The Canada and European Union (EU) Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is described by the media as “a high quality agreement that reinforces Canada’s fundamental relationship with the European Union.”

But there more than meets the eye.

The CETA agreement –presented to public opinion as an innocuous “bilateral” EU-Canada trade deal– constitutes a TTIP in disguise.

It includes the entire neoliberal policy gamut: commodity trade, trade in services, investment, intellectual property, financial services provisions, all of which are contained in the US sponsored TTIP agreement. It is a de facto “carbon copy” of the controversial Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the European Union and the United States, which has been temporarily “blocked” by both the European Parliament and the US Congress.



Global Trade is part of an Imperial Agenda

In turn the TTIP, CETA, TISA and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) are the building blocks of a global “imperial” trading structure. The NAFTA-Asia Pacific Trading Block hinges upon the adoption of the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

“Regulatory convergence” is the talking point of global trade negotiations. It has nothing to do with free trade. Quite the opposite: it requires conformity and similarity in the formulation of national rules and provisions, on behalf of powerful multinational conglomerates: regulatory convergence implies “removal of impediments” to trade and investment coupled with homogenous and “friendly” provisions (e.g. austerity measures, curtailment of social programs, the toning down of labor laws, corporate friendly environmental clauses and consumer protection laws, “national treatment” for foreign investors, no subsidies to farmers, etc.)

Needless to say, national sovereignty is seen by Washington as an impediment to “regulatory convergence”.



CETA and the TTIP

While the devastating economic and social consequences of the Transatlantic US-EU trade deals (TTIP and TISA) including the loss of national sovereignty of EU member states have been the object of persistent public protest, the CETA agreement (which has similar neoliberal underpinnings) is going ahead largely unopposed, without debate, minimal protest, no firm opposition at the political level.

The [EU] ministers themselves are expected now to convene an extraordinary meeting on October 18, allowing the [CETA] deal to be signed during the visit of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to Brussels on October 27. It could enter force next year.

But as CETA came closer to approval, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Program (TTIP), a free-trade agreement with the US, suffered a new blow ahead of the meeting when Austrian Economy Minister Reinhold Mitterlehner urged his EU counterparts to end the talks.

.... “TTIP has become a metaphor for the exuberant dealings of big corporations. That has a negative connotation. We hope for a good deal, but it has to be approached differently,” he added.

Mitterlehner echoed comments by French Trade Minister Matthias Fekl last month that he would request a halt to TTIP negotiations after German Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel declared that talks were “de facto dead.”

Fekl said the United States had demanded too much and not compromised enough.

“A crazy machine is moving here, the negotiations are a failure, nobody believes that they will come to a successful conclusion,” he told the German business daily Handelsblatt.

TTIP would create the world’s biggest free trade area with a market of 850 million consumers stretching from Hawaii to Helsinki.

But the deal, under negotiation since 2013, has become a hot potato as key elections approach in the United States, France and Germany. Washington and Brussels are officially committed to sealing the free trade deal before President Barack Obama leaves office in January.

There are deep-seated fears in Europe that the deal would undercut the 28-nation bloc’s standards in key areas such as public health and welfare.

([Deutsche Welle](#), September 23, 2016)

The US-EU TTIP is viewed by the protest movement as a mechanism of appropriation of Europe’s economic landscape by corporate America.

Has the Atlantic TTIP Trade Deal Negotiated behind Closed Doors been Blocked?

In this regard, it would appear that EU politicians are playing a deceptive double game:

“Urged to end the talks”, they have reluctantly put the TTIP “on hold” in response to public pressure and the protest movement, while pushing ahead the CETA back-door deal with Canada, The adoption of CETA would in practice validate the eventual de facto implementation of the US sponsored TTIP (or its formal adoption at a later stage and/or under a different label, see below).

What analysts and politicians fail to acknowledge is that Canada is heavily integrated (politically and economically) into the US. The US-Canada corporate and financial establishment is also integrated. A trade agreement by a NAFTA member state, namely Canada with the European Union (EU) would inevitably lead to de facto integration of the EU into the trading structures of NAFTA which are controlled by Washington and Wall Street.

This US-Canada integration does not solely pertain to trade and investment under NAFTA, it also encompasses foreign policy, military affairs, law enforcement and Homeland Security, intelligence, oil and gas pipelines, road transportation, immigration and national borders, strategic waterways and maritime rights, etc.

CETA is Washington’s Backdoor Mechanism

The TTIP would be imposed *de facto* rather than *de jure* “via Canada”.

At the outset, instead of launching a single process of trade negotiations between NAFTA and the EU which would have been the object of widespread opposition, Canada and Mexico were called upon by Washington to launch parallel “bilateral” trade deals with the EU, which would eventually create conditions for the integration of NAFTA and the EU, constituting thereby the core of the US empire’s Atlantic Trading block.

Trade and militarization go hand in hand. The proposed Atlantic Trading Block would also coincide with the structures of NATO and the Atlantic alliance (which in practice are also controlled by the US).

CETA is a “copy and paste”: it was formulated during the Harper government, starting in 2009 in close consultation with Washington and Brussels. The Harper government was entrusted by Washington “to expedite resolution of the agreement [CETA] talks to avoid losing the European’s focus to the TTIP, and [to prevent delay due to increasing debate surrounding contentious elements.](#)”

While the US, Canada and Mexico are member states of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Washington’s ultimate endgame is to create an integrated North American Union: i.e. the United States and Provinces of North America. The latter is in many regards already functional.

The CETA agreement is a back-door initiative which was developed in close coordination with the TTIP. It’s adoption would trigger the de facto (rather than de jure) adoption of the broader TTIP agreement, leading to the eventual integration of the trading structures of the “North American Union” and the European Union. It would create a *fait accompli* which would contribute to furthering the TTIP negotiations most probably under a different label.

It is a corporate take-over, in both the EU and North America: it will serve to destroy and undermine the economy at the local level, destroy the family farm, precipitate small and medium sized enterprises into bankruptcy, undermine social programs, etc.

It is important that people in the US, Canada and the European Union, across the land firmly oppose the signing and ratification of The Canada and European Union (EU) Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

Come and Hear THE HONOURABLE PAUL HELLYER
(Former minister of national defense, and acting prime minister)

Explain how the Canadian prosperity train came off the rails, and exactly how to put it back on again.

Stop the Press!

Our government wants to sign CETA at a CANADA-EU summit on OCT. 27, 2016

That will be the kiss of death for any worthwhile banking reform that would make Canada prosperous again, and prevent us from using the Bank of Canada creatively as we did from 1939 to 1974 with such amazing success.

(CETA is both illegal and immoral because it unilaterally transfers power from parliament to international bankers and transnational corporations, and reverses a thousand years of progress in establishing government of by and for the people since the Magna Carta was signed).

In Canada, Hon Paul Hellyer, former defense minister and deputy prime minister during the Pierre Trudeau government is taking the lead in [the campaign against the signing of the CETA agreement by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.](#)

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Articles by: [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)

About the author:

Michel Chossudovsky is an award-winning author, Professor of Economics (emeritus) at the University of Ottawa, Founder and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal, Editor of Global Research. He has taught as visiting professor in Western Europe, Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. He has served as economic adviser to governments of developing countries and has acted as a consultant for several international organizations. He is the author of 13 books. He is a contributor to the Encyclopaedia Britannica. His writings have been published in more than twenty languages. In 2014, he was awarded the Gold Medal for Merit of the Republic of Serbia for his writings on NATO's war of aggression against Yugoslavia. He can be reached at crgeditor@yahoo.com

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