



## PRESS RELEASE

# Vote on EU-Canada deal disappoints health groups

*Environment Committee of the European Parliament votes against recommendations to protect chemical safety*

**Brussels, 12 January 2017** – Thirty-five organizations committed to maintaining effective chemical safety regulation in Europe are dismayed by today's vote on the controversial EU-Canada trade and investment deal. The groups are health, environmental and other civil society organisations.

The European Parliament's Environment Committee (ENVI) has chosen to support the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) against the recommendations outlined in an opinion paper (1).

The groups wrote to members of ENVI on Tuesday to highlight that CETA "would put the decision-making powers of the EU and its Member States in a straitjacket by prioritising trade interests over people's health and the environment" (2).

The groups are particularly concerned that CETA could undermine chemical safety regulation in the EU, such as the regulation of exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), which interfere with the hormones in our bodies.

The European Commission is already lowering EU standards of protection against these dangerous endocrine disrupting chemicals compared with what was required in legislation agreed in 2009. The Commission has expressly acknowledged that its decision-making on this issue has been influenced by mounting pressure from EU trade partners (3). For example, Canada has argued against the EU approach to EDCs at every meeting of the WTO's Technical Barriers to Trade Committee since March 2015.

"It is very disappointing that politicians are not waking up to people's real concerns about these trade and investment agreements, which open a path for industry to compromise the power of our governments through costly legal challenges. This includes the EU's power to legislate to protect citizens from exposure to harmful chemicals," says Génon K. Jensen, Executive Director at the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL).

"CETA threatens to halt, delay, or even reverse EU efforts to protect us from pesticides and chemicals that disrupt our hormone systems," says Layla Hughes, Senior Attorney at the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL). "To do so is contradicts the recommendations and requests of the European Parliament, independent scientific opinion, and the public," she adds.

The final vote on CETA in the European Parliament is expected to take place in February 2017.

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## Notes to journalists

1. The European Parliament's Environment Committee (ENVI) was voting on the [draft ENVI opinion on CETA](#) (December 2016)
2. [Open letter to ENVI by 35 NGOs](#) (January 2017)
3. European Commission (June 2016) "[Impact Assessment: Defining criteria for identifying endocrine disruptors in the context of the implementation of the plant protection products regulation and biocidal products regulation.](#)" p.190

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***The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) — HEAL is a leading European not-for-profit organisation addressing how the environment affects health in the European Union (EU). We demonstrate how policy changes can help protect health and enhance people's quality of life.***