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Dear all,

Many thanks for your email concerning the ACTA agreement. Over the last few days, we received hundreds of emails expressing opposition to ACTA. This proves that there is a huge movement against ACTA and it is very positive that this opposition is so active. Unfortunately, due to the large amount of emails we have received, we are unable to respond to everybody individually. We would also like to apologise for not replying to everybody in the language they wrote to us in.

This week is a very important one for the ACTA agreement in the European Parliament as the Parliament's International Trade committee (INTA) will give its final opinion on the agreement tomorrow. Paul Murphy MEP and the Socialist Party feel very strongly about ACTA, have completely opposed the ACTA agreement from the start and have been actively campaigning against it in the European Parliament.

We share your concern that states should not have the power to censor or block access to the internet. This could be used in the future to limit basic democratic rights to freedom of expression and association. As well as infringing on the rights of internet users the ACTA agreement could also be used to block access to seeds which would cause hardship to the world's poorest farmers. Under the pretext of fighting digital privacy, it is clear that ACTA serves the interest of big business and runs counter to the interests of the world's poor and to democratic rights.

Paul Murphy MEP is a member of the International Trade committee (INTA) of the European Parliament. This committee is the main Parliamentary committee concerning the ACTA agreement. Tomorrow, INTA will give its final opinion on ACTA. Paul Murphy MEP will vote against it and oppose attempts by MEPs closest to big business to postpone taking the vote. Incredibly, in an attempt to avoid public scrutiny, there are also attempts by these MEPs to have a secret ballot on the vote.

Over the past months the movement against ACTA has built up significant pressure on the Parliament. This was illustrated by various MEPs and political groups changing positions and speaking out against ACTA in the past months. The proposals to postpone voting are an attempt to break the momentum of the movement and get away from the pressure. The movement must now keep up the pressure over the next 2 days and then until the plenary session in July to make sure that ACTA gets rejected. Its rejection would be a good example of what people power and pressure from below can achieve.

Paul Murphy MEP is also a member of the Petitions committee (PETI). The committee heard a petition lodged by 2.5m people against ACTA yesterday. Paul Murphy spoke in that meeting to support the petitioners. A short video of his intervention is available here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYEZj4-vrs8>

Paul Murphy MEP will of course continue to oppose ACTA and to express your concerns. Paul has published a number of articles on ACTA on his website (<http://www.paulmurphymep.eu/>), that you might find interesting. You may also be interested in visiting the website of the International organisation that the Irish Socialist Party is affiliated to, the Committee for a Workers' International (<http://www.socialistworld.net/>) which has reports of many of the ACTA protests all over the world. Also, feel free to contact us for additional information or if you have questions on ACTA or other issues.

If you have any comments or would like to discuss ACTA or other issues further please feel free to keep in touch.

Kind Regards,
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