

**Joint Statement of
the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
and the Singapore National Trade Unions Congress (SNTUC)
on a Singapore-U.S. Free Trade Agreement**

The SNTUC and the AFL-CIO welcome our governments' negotiations of a US-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, aimed at fostering deeper economic integration and closer relations between our two countries and peoples. In order to ensure that the benefits of economic integration are broadly shared, the USSFTA must safeguard workers' rights, preserve the environment, and allow for ongoing and meaningful participation by representative civil society organizations, including the SNTUC and the AFL-CIO, in the implementation of the agreement.

We therefore call on our governments to ensure that the USSFTA includes the following:

1. **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES** – We call on both parties to affirm and implement their commitment to creating greater and better employment opportunities, and improving the standard of living and quality of life for all workers.
2. **CORE WORKERS' RIGHTS** - Both parties must honour obligations and commitments to respect, promote and realise fundamental workers' rights under the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, as well as their commitment to effectively enforce domestic labor and environmental laws and all international treaty obligations undertaken in these areas. These provisions must be included in the core of the agreement and covered by effective enforcement mechanisms. These provisions shall not be used as a means for protectionism.
3. **TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY** - We call on both parties to agree to consult with their respective publics, including SNTUC and AFL-CIO, at timely intervals, prior to initiating dispute proceedings, to release relevant documents and open dispute panels to the public, and to accept friend-of-the-court submissions from interested parties.
4. **GOVERNMENT SCOPE** - No trade agreement should undermine the ability of governments to provide public services, to enact and enforce legitimate regulations in the public interest, or to use government procurement policies to achieve legitimate social goals. Investment rules must not create greater rights for foreign investors or take investor disputes with governments out of the public sphere.

The SNTUC and the AFL-CIO believe that freer trade should work in the fundamental interest of workers to create more and better paying jobs, and equitable, democratic, and sustainable development. We call on our governments to assume responsibility for all of the points mentioned here.