

## Economic Integration: Labour, Environment

### QUESTION

Why isn't the government fighting to have labour and environmental side-deals built into the FTAA, as we did with NAFTA and the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement?

### SUGGESTED REPLY

- It was well known that Canada was one of several countries that supported having study groups on labour and the environment included in the FTAA.
- While nations did not establish those study groups, we reached consensus on ensuring a broader focus and we have agreed to set up a committee of government representatives that will accept ideas/submissions/etc. from a broad cross-section of civil society -- individuals interested in business, labour, environment, human rights and other areas.
- Canada has also made it very clear that it considers the FTAA to be a grand project that will affect all the citizens of the region, so it is vital to hear from all sectors of our society on how they want to see the FTAA unfold.
- Canada is an active participant in other processes already underway in the hemisphere that advance the labour and environment agenda.
- For example, Canada played an active role in the December 1996 Bolivia Summit on Sustainable Development. Canadian principles and language are prominent throughout the Declaration and Plan of Action of Santa Cruz.
- Canada is actively promoting observance of core labour standards primarily through the ILO. We are also strong supporters of the NAFTA and Canada-Chile labour cooperation side agreements.