

Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières > English > Asia > Malaysia > The Left (Malaysia) > The Left: PSM (Malaysia) > **Socialist Party Malaysia asks parliament for trade safeguard**

Socialist Party Malaysia asks parliament for trade safeguard

Thursday 1 March 2018, by [PSM \(Malaysia\)](#) (Date first published: 29 January 2018).

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 17 — Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) informally launched its People's Charter on International Trade Agreements that seeks for the federal government to adopt nine points to protect the country's interest when negotiating deals with other nations.

When presenting the document at the party's headquarters here, PSM secretary-general A. Sivarajan said the initiative was to get the government to prioritise the people over corporations in such agreements.

Citing the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), he said such safeguards were necessary to ensure that Malaysians do not suffer as a result of such deals.

"We are not against trade, but most of the agreements that were in discussion do not benefit the people and brings forth the corporate agenda carrying all these trade agreements.

"Instead of fighting individual trade agreements, we need to stand up and say we don't want these common points in the agreements and voice out what we want from these agreements," said Sivarajan, who said the proposal will be translated into different languages and presented at state level.

Among the key points of the charter was that trade deals should not restrict the government's power to improve the economic well-being of the bottom 60 per cent of the population, to provide affordable and quality health care, education and quality affordable amenities for the people, or to guarantee food security for the nation.

He said some of the existing terms in international trade agreements would hinder the government in such areas, which also include protecting the environment, developing technological and industrial capabilities, and protecting the financial stability of the economy.

Sivarajan added that some types of clauses should be rejected as it would encroach on the nation's sovereignty.

"These clauses that can be found in the agreements are discriminative to benefit the foreign investors and would tie the government's hands. Even so, the government continues to engage in other trade agreements that include these clauses," he said.

The charter also presses the government to embrace transparency when negotiating trade agreements, with copious public disclosures and consultations.

Sivarajan said these were necessary as the agreements would affect all walks of life in the country.

Also present, Sungai Siput MP Dr D. Michael Jeyakumar said trade is an important economic aspect, but alleged that international agreements were increasingly used by richer nations for their own agendas.

“When I brought this up in the Parliament, they thought I am crazy and being idealistic. But the people need to be enlightened to this concept at first before we can present it to the government.

“Our leaders, planners, and politicians from both sides have been brainwashed by the World Bank... these ideas may be going against time and is out of the ordinary, but this is what we have to do to strengthen an economy that would benefit the people,” he said.

PSM was a major opponent of the TPPA that fell apart after the US withdrew from negotiations.

The remaining member countries including Malaysia are still exploring ways to salvage the agreement.

Parti Sosialis Malaysia

P.S.

Parti Sosialis Malaysia

<https://partisosialis.org/en/node/3915>