

Please endorse this letter by sending your organisation name and country to [manicandan@gmail.com](mailto:manicandan@gmail.com) and [Pauline.Chase@world-psi.org](mailto:Pauline.Chase@world-psi.org). Please use “We endorse the letter on Trade to members of the WTO” as the subject line of your email.

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Dear Members of the World Trade Organization,

We, the undersigned civil society organizations, representing hundreds of millions of members across the globe, urge you to abandon the negotiations towards a binding agreement on Trade Facilitation in advance of the upcoming 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Bali. Thus, binding rules on Trade Facilitation should not be promoted either inside the WTO through the proposed Trade Facilitation (TF) agreement, nor through other avenues such as bilateral or regional Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) or Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). Developing countries should have the policy space to adopt, at their discretion, higher levels or standards and customs-related procedures as and when capacity exists to do so, taking into account their development context.

**No empirical evidence of benefits to developing countries:** Proponents of the TF negotiations have argued that developing countries would benefit even more than developed countries from an agreement on Trade Facilitation. However, there is little empirical basis for this claim. Quite the contrary, the proposed binding agreement on Trade Facilitation is a key demand of the developed countries towards the Ministerial, because it will serve the interests of their corporations.

**Better call it an “import-facilitating agreement”:** A binding agreement on Trade Facilitation in the WTO would require developing countries to implement a set of rules reflective of the current trade facilitation practices of the developed countries. They would not address the urgent need to expand the productive and export capacities of the developing countries. Thus, while imports into developing countries would be facilitated by the new rules, it is difficult to imagine how exports from developing countries could be similarly facilitated. In fact, Trade Facilitation rules in the WTO should be more accurately called “import-facilitating rules” for developing countries. Hence, a TF agreement would likely result in the further worsening of the trade balance in many developing countries, leading to balance of payment problems that often further increase indebtedness.

**A corporate-driven model:** The proposed agreement on Trade Facilitation follows a model of corporate-driven globalization focused on increasing the volume of trade, rather than achieving globally-shared development goals through rules that facilitate countries’ use of trade policy for their own development needs, and in accordance with their levels of development. In fact, a Trade Facilitation agreement at the WTO would create new markets – in customs and shipment processing for multinational corporations. At the same time, it would likely lead to the further privatization of ports, customs operations, and shipment processing, which leaves little or no space for local operators, and which has already led to a loss of jobs, downward pressure on wages, and erosion of labor rights for public workers in these sectors. A TF agreement would increase trade, which is a significant source of carbon emissions that contribute to global climate change.

**Costs un-accounted for:** While developed countries promote the proposed agreement as a “win-win,” most of the costs of a TF agreement to developing countries are rarely included in projected impact assessments. For example, there are significant implementation, regulatory, human resources, and infrastructure costs associated with the proposed Trade Facilitation agreement, many of which are recurring, and would be siphoned from national budgets, diverting available resources from development needs.

**Loss of budget support for development priorities:** A potential Trade Facilitation deal is also expected to lead to irreplaceable loss of tariff revenue. Compared to developed countries, the share of customs revenue in the total tax collection is much higher in developing countries and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Foregone tariff revenue would have serious implications for national budgetary support for key development issues such as education, health, and poverty reduction. Reducing national budget support for addressing the Millennium Development Goals can in no way be referred to as a pro-development outcome.

**Encroaching upon national regulatory and policy space:** In addition, the provisions of the proposed Trade Facilitation agreement, as they are being negotiated, would undermine the regulatory capacities of developing countries. The proposed rules would expand the opportunities of multinational corporations to lobby in national and local legislative processes. Furthermore, the rules that would be enforced through a TF agreement would provide ample grounds for challenging regulations, laws, and procedures in member states.

**Eroding the rights of developing countries and LDCs:** Further eroding any claim to benefits for developing countries is the fact that there remain significant imbalances and incoherence within the text being negotiated. The new Trade Facilitation rules, being pushed by developed countries, have advanced significantly, and are set in binding language. Negotiations on Technical Assistance and Capacity Building, which are central to the original agreed Trade Facilitation negotiations mandate (2004), have been stalled by developed countries, and are currently framed in non-binding language.

The needs-assessment exercises of developing countries are likewise being utilized as a ‘compliance assessment’ tool in order to pressure developing countries into accepting the Trade Facilitation agreement rather than to encourage developed countries to increase their technical, and particularly financial assistance.

**A WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement differs from unilateral and voluntary processes:** Developing countries can benefit from more efficient and transparent trade procedures. But unilateral voluntary implementation of non-binding customs-related guidelines, and/or the Revised Kyoto Convention of the World Customs Organization, in accordance with national priorities and needs, is of a different nature and brings different implications compared to a binding TF agreement that could be enforced through the Dispute Settlement procedures of the WTO. Worse, the latter could lead to sectoral cross-retaliation among countries, the effects of which are expected to be more pernicious to the much smaller economies of developing countries and least developed countries.

**What we need to see being advanced:** Instead, any discussions at the WTO should focus on rectifying historical imbalances and asymmetries in the WTO, in order to provide more policy space for countries to implement solutions to the global economic crises. A starting point would

be agreeing to the important proposal of the “G33” group of 46 developing countries to allow developing countries to promote domestic Food Security, and delivering on the LDC package at the upcoming Ministerial. In addition, a real advancement on the Special and Differential Treatment (SDT) and Implementation Agenda issues, long advocated for by developing countries, is long overdue. The WTO Turnaround Agenda of the Our World Is Not For Sale (OWINFS) network also provides an outline of such needed policy changes, which are essential to start the process of transforming the global trade system into one that works for sustainable and inclusive development for all.

Sincerely,

	<b>International and Regional Networks</b>	
1	ACP Civil Society Forum	The Forum is a coalition of 80 not-for-profit organizations working on issues relating to ACP-EU development cooperation. It seeks to cater for the diverse range civil society development issues within the wide geographic coverage of the ACP group.
2	Africa Trade Network (ATN)	ATN was established in 1998 by TWN-Africa, and has over 25 members from 15 countries in Africa. The ATN has observer status with the African Union, and has provided a means of increased interaction between civil society groups and African governments, including the annual Conference of African Ministers of Trade.
3	ASIAN PEASANT COALITION (APC)	Represent more than 15 million rural members (e.g. landless peasants, peasant women, dalits, agricultural workers, fisherfolks, pastoralists, and rural youth) from 33 organizations from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, and Sri Lanka, struggling for genuine agrarian reform and people's food sovereignty.
4	Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN)	APRN is a network of leading research NGOs in the Asia-Pacific. It is active in promoting exchange, coordination and capacity building support in research.
5	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)	Dawn is a network of feminist scholars, researchers and activists from the economic South working for economic and gender justice and sustainable and democratic development.
6	IBON International	IBON initiates and implements international programs, develops and hosts international networks, initiates and participates in international advocacy campaigns, and establishes regional and country offices. IBON strengthens links between local campaigns and advocacies to international initiatives.

7	International Presentation Association (IPA)	The mission of IPA is to channel its resources to speak and act in partnership with others for global justice.
8	International Women's Alliance (IWA)	Global alliance of anti-imperialist grassroots-based women's organizations, institutions, alliances, networks and individuals committed to advancing national and social liberation.
9	LDC Watch	LDC Watch is a global alliance of national, regional and international civil society organisations (CSOs), networks and movements based in the LDCs.
10	Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo (PIDHDD), Americas	La PIDHDD es un actor político, conformado por Capítulos Nacionales que articulan organizaciones sociales e instituciones de la sociedad civil, que promueve la plena vigencia y realización de los derechos humanos; Actualmente, se cuenta con capítulos nacionales constituidos y en funcionamiento en 16 países del continente americano: Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Dominicana, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haití, Guatemala, México, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay y Venezuela.
11	Réseau des plates formes nationales des ONG des pays de l'Afrique Centrale (REPONGAC)	Sur les questions de développement et les processus d'intégration régionale ce réseau regroupe les plates-formes nationales des ONG des pays suivants: Angola, Burundi, Cameroun, République du Congo, Gabon, République Centrafricaine, la RDCONGO, RWANDA ET TCHAD.
12	South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)	An alliance to fight against poverty and injustice in South Asia comprising journalists, academics, trade unionists, human rights activists, NGOs and other civil society actors across the region.
13	Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)	An African initiative to strengthen Africa's capacity to take a more effective part in the emerging global trading system and to better manage the process of Globalization.

	<b>National Organizations</b>	<b>Country</b>
14	11.11.11, Belgium	Belgium
15	3rd ACP Civil Society Forum	Jamaica
16	Action for Change and Progress in Africa	Kenya
17	Agricultural Workers Union of TUC	Ghana
18	Alianza ONG	Dominican Republic
19	All Nepal Peasants Federation (ANPFa)	Nepal
20	Alliance Pour La Reconstruction Et Le Développement Post-Conflict (ARDPC)	COTE D'IVOIRE
21	All Lanka Peasant's Front	Sri Lanka

22	Argentine Federation Of Commerce And Services Workers- FAECyS	Argentina
23	Association Commerciale, Agricole, Industriel et du Service - (ACAISA)	CAPE VERDE
24	Asociación de Iniciativas Populares Ditsö	Costa Rica
25	Asociación Nacional de Empresas Comercializadoras de Productores del Campo (ANEC)	Mexico
26	Asociacion Nacional De Industriales De Transformacion, A.C. (ANIT)	Mexico
27	Barbados Association of Non Governmental Organizations	Barbados
28	Belize Enterprise for Sustainable Technology	Belize
29	Berne Declaration	Switzerland
30	Bharatiya Krishak Samaj (BKS)	India
31	Bia'lii, Consultancy and Research, AC (Mexico)	Mexico
32	Botswana Council of Non Governmental Organisations : BOCONGO	Botswana
33	Cacid-Reseau Enda Tiers Monde	Senegal
34	Campaign for a Life of Dignity for All (KAMP)	Philippines
35	Central America Women's Network	UK
36	Centro de Estudios Sociales y Culturales	Mexico
37	Centre for Alternative Research and Studies (CARES)	Mauritius
38	CILONG – TCHAD	République du Tchad
39	Civil Society Bahamas	Bahamas
40	Civil Society Forum of Tonga - CSFT	Tonga
41	Civil Society Movement of Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
42	Civil Society Organization Network for Development (RESOCIDE) - Cadre de concertation des OSC pour le suivi du CSLP (CdC/CSLP)	BURKINA FASO
43	Civil society Plat-form “Action Développement et Intégration Régionale” "ADIR"	BURUNDI
44	Comité 1968 por las Libertades democráticas	Mexico
45	Comité du Forum Social Lémanique, Geneva	Switzerland
46	Comisión Nacional de Enlace (CNE)	Costa Rica
47	Concertation Nationale Des Organisations paysannes et des Producteurs (CNOP)	Gabon
48	Confederation of Labor and Allied Social Services (CLASS)	Philippines
49	Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)	South Africa
50	Conseil de Concertation des ONGs de Développement (CCOD) du Congo Brazzaville	République du Congo Brazzaville
51	Conseil des ONG Agrees Du Cameroun (CONGAC)	Cameroun
52	Conseil Inter ONG En Centrafrique (CIONGCA)	Central Africa Rep.: Modeste GONDA
53	Conseil National des ONG de Développement (CNONGD)	RD Congo
54	Consumer education trust	Uganda
55	Consumers Protection Association(CPA)	Lesotho
56	Cook Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations – CIANGO	Cook Islands

57	Council for NGOs (CANGO)	Swaziland
58	Council of Canadians	Canada
59	Development Service Exchange – DSE	Solomon Islands
60	Diverse Women for Diversity	India
61	Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmer’s Forum (ESAFF)	Zambia
62	El Sindicato de trabajadores del Instituto Nacional para el Desarrollo de Capacidades del Sector Rural (STINCA)	Mexico
63	Equity BD - Equity and Justice Working Group	Bangladesh
64	Federation de Femmes Entrepreneurs et Affairs de la CEDEAO (FEFA)	GUINEA CONAKRY
65	Federación De Trabajadores Del Agua Potable Y Alcantarillado Del Perú - FENTAP	Peru
66	Federacion Sindical Obrero Campesina De Quintana Roo	Mexico
67	FOCO - Foro Ciudadano de Participación por la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos	Argentina
68	Fórum das Organizações Não Governamentais Angolanas – (FONGA) Forum of NGOs in Angola (FONGA)	Angola
69	Forum das Ong de São Tomé e príncipe (FONG-STP)	Sao Tomé & Principe
70	Forum des ONG pour le Développement Durable (FONGDD)	Eq. Guinea
71	Foundation for Research in Science Technology & Ecology	India
72	Foundation pour le Developpment au Sahel – FDS	Mali
73	Friends of the earth	Ghana
74	Fronteras Comunes A.C.	Mexico
75	FSM Alliance of NGOs - FANGO	Micronesia
76	Governance Links Tanzania	Tanzania
77	Grassroots Organisations of Trinidad & Tobago (GOTT)	Trinidad & Tobago
78	Groupe d'Action et de Reflexion sur l'Environnement et le Développement (GARED)	Togo
79	Groupe de Recherche et d'Action pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture et du Développement (GRAPAD)	BENIN REPUBLIC
80	Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services (IDEALS)	Philippines
81	Initiative for Health & Equity in Society	India
82	Instituto Justiça Fiscal	Brazil
83	Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa (INEI)	GUINEA BISAU
84	Inter Agency Group of Development Organizations (IAGDO)	Grenada
85	Iyanola (St.Lucia) Council for the Advancement of Rastafari Incorporated (I.C.A.R.)	St.Lucia
86	Kalingo Carib Council	Dominica
87	Kenya Debt Relief Network – KENDREN	Kenya
88	Kilusang Magbubukid Ng Pilipinas (KMP)	Indonesia
89	Kiribati Association of Non-Governmental Organisation - KANGO	Kiribati
90	Labour,Health and Human Rights DEvelopment Centre	Nigeria

91	Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN)	Lesotho
92	Lismore Presentation Sisters	Australia
93	Melanesian NGO Centre for Leadership – MNCL	Papua New Guinea
94	Malawi Economic Justice Network (National NGO platform)	Malawi
95	Marshall Islands Council of NGOs - MICNGOS	Marshall Islands
96	Mujeres para el Diálogo, AC	Mexico
97	Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)	Mauritius
98	Namibia Non-Governmental Organisations Forum Trust	Namibia
99	National Association Of Nigerian Traders- NANTS	Nigeria
100	National Association of NGOs (NANGO)	Zimbabwe
101	National Council of NGOs	Kenya
102	National du Réseau des Ong de Développement et Associations de Défense des Droits de l'Homme et de la Démocratie-RODADDHD-	Niger
103	National Fisheries Solidarity Movement	Sri Lanka
104	National Forum for Mozambiquan NGOs and CBOs (TEIA)	Mozambique
105	Nauru Island Association of NGOs – NIANGO	Nauru
106	Navdanya	India
107	Niue Island (Umbrella) Association of NGOs – (NIUANGO)	Niue
108	Norwegian Trade Campaign	Norway
109	Pacific Network on Globalisation	Fiji
110	PANE & Cotonou Task Force	Ethiopia
111	Plate-forme des acteurs non étatiques pour le suivi de l'Accord de Cotonou au Sénégal	Senegal
112	Plate-Forme Nationale des Organisations de la Societe Civile de Madagascar	Madagascar
113	Policy Analysis and Research Institute of Lesotho (PARIL)	Lesotho
114	Port Louis Maritime Employees Association (PLMEA)	Mauritius
115	Presentation Congregation Queensland	Australia
116	Programme de Plaidoyer Pour une Intégration Alternative (PPIA)	Haiti
117	Red De Accion Ciudadana Frente Allibre Comercio E Inversion	El Salvadore
118	Red Mexicana de Acción frente al Libre Comercio (RMALC)	Mexico
119	Red Nacional Género y Economía (REDGE)	Mexico
120	Resistance & Alternatives	Mauritius
121	Resistance and Alternatives to Globalization (RAG)	Indonesia
122	Roj Women's Association	UK
123	Roots for Equity	Pakistan
124	Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN)	Nepal
125	Rwanda Civil Society Platform	Rwanda
126	Samoa Umbrella for Non Governmental Organisation (SUNGO)	Samoa
127	Serikat Perempuan Indonesia - Indonesian Women Union	Indonesia
128	Seychelles Civil Society Organisations (Liaison Unit of the non-governmental organisations of Seychelles - LUNGOS)	Seychelles
129	SHIRKAT GAH	Pakistan
130	Siembra, AC	Mexico

131	Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País.(Economic society of friends of the country)	Cuba
132	SOLIDARITÉ	France
133	South African NGO Council (SANGOCO),	South Africa
134	Stichting Projekta	Suriname
135	Tanzania Association of NGOs	Tanzania
136	The Asia Foundation	Timor-Leste
137	The Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARDC)	Antigua and Barbuda
138	The Green Economics Initiative	Pakistan
139	Tuvalu Association of NGOs – TANGO	Tuvalu
140	Unidad Ecológica Salvadoreña- UNES	El Salvadore
141	Vanuatu Association of NGOs – VANGO	Vanuatu
142	Voice	Bangladesh
143	West African Women Association- WAWA	Liberia
144	Windward Islands Farmers’ Association (WINFA)	St. Vincent & the Grenadines
145	Women Across Differences (WAD)	GUYANA
146	Worldview	The Gambia
147	Zambia Council for Social Development	Zambia