Trade Justice Movement

Newsletter
November 2012

TJM Update

September marked the ten-year anniversary of the start of the EU's negotiations with 76 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). In September, TJM organised a joint action and letter to Vince Cable (signed by 18 member organisations). This week, we received a less-than-satisfactory response from Lord Stephen Green, who has taken over this portfolio from Norman Lamb following the recent cabinet reshuffle. His letter stated that not only does the UK support the signing of EPAs, they also support the January 2014 deadline for the ending of Market Access Regulation 1528, which would leave developing countries with the stark choice of signing EPAs (about which they have repeatedly raised concerns) or losing valuable access to EU markets. The European Parliament voted on the 13th September to postpone this deadline to January 2016 to give countries time to prepare and to attempt to deal with outstanding issues in the EPA negotiations. Negotiation will now happen between the Council, Commission and Parliament, with critical votes in the Parliament towards the end of November, please get in touch with Traidcraft if you can support their work to try and prevent the early ending of the regulation. TJM will be developing a strategy for the next 1-3 years regarding these changes, please get in touch if you are interested in getting involved.

Due to popular demand, TJM's newsletter will now feature a 'trade basics' section: a one-page introduction to a key issue for trade justice. This week: Economic Partnership Agreements (what else?). The next newsletter will provide an introduction to the WTO; please suggest other topics if there are issues that you wish you knew more about but don't have time to research.

On other EU news: the TUC has produced a useful and comprehensive briefing on the EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA). There is no evidence that contentious issues will be addressed any time soon, but the deal remains a priority for the EU and could set a precedent for future deals. The EU recently announced that it will begin negotiations with the US on an FTA that would cover one-third of all global trade. Debate continues regarding the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), with a 'good food' march to Brussels and an ongoing debate on the Financial Times blog. TJM will continue to monitor developments in these and other key deals.

Developments in the murky world of global investment continue apace. South Africa is dismantling its Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) in a bid to free up policy space so that it can continue to implement its Black Empowerment Act. Increasing numbers of countries are (threatening to) pull out of clauses that allow a company to sue a state. A Chinese insurer is suing Belgium over nationalisation of a bank in which it was an investor – this case could be important in shifting European state's complacent approach to BITs. Ecuador has been ordered to pay the equivalent of its education budget for a year to US oil giant Occidental and Churchill Mining is suing Indonesia for $2 billion. Meanwhile law firms continue to promote BITs as a way for companies to 'reign in' the 'unstable' behaviour of governments.

"But what news of the WTO?" I hear you cry… As ever, the main stories are of disputes between the most powerful nations: US-China over automobiles, China-US (retaliation) regarding retrospective anti-dumping duties, EU-China over solar panels. Unsurprisingly, there is no progress towards changing the global terms of trade for the better. TJM continues to monitor developments in the proposed 'plurilateral negotiations' on services that may soon be set in train. Our World Is Not For Sale (OWINFS) have been doing timely work on the WTO's role in preventing financial regulation.

There is significant concern regarding the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. Very little is known about the content of negotiations, however leaked documents suggest far-reaching provisions on investment, intellectual property and 'regulatory coherence'. TJM continues to track developments, some key critiques featured towards the end of the newsletter.

TJM has also been working with UK partners on a project to provide activists with resources to understand and start to address the financial crisis. One element of this is a reading group: a set of readings that take you through the various elements of the crisis and allow you to share comments online, check it out here: http://www.econowhat.org.uk/ . We also continue to work as part of the Alternative Trade Mandate with EU partners – catch up with them in Florence if you are there for the Social Forum. The draft text will be ready early next year and campaign planning for the 2014 European elections will start in earnest in March. I will be looking for your feedback, expect emails and phone calls over the coming months!

Trade basics

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)

Until the late 1990s, the European Union granted former European colonies in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) special access to EU markets to help farmers and local exporters. Because this was argued to put other developing countries at a disadvantage, it required periodic negotiation of a waiver to World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules that ban special preferences. The EU has always argued that the existing arrangements leave it open to challenge and sanctions via the WTO. In order to address this, it launched talks with 76 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries 10 years ago, stating that its aim was to help them 'trade their way out of poverty' and to give EU businesses access to nascent markets. An initial deadline of 2007 was set for completion of the negotiations, so far only 15 Caribbean nations have signed full agreements.

One of the key WTO requirements is for 'reciprocal' market liberalisation between countries; this doesn't have to mean 'identical' but there is no definition of precisely what it does mean. The EU has decided to interpret it as meaning liberalisation on 80% of ACP trade, with liberalisation on 100% of EU trade. This means significant change for ACP countries but none for the EU, and leaves countries with little scope to support their industries, protect agriculture from subsidised imports or develop value-added products. The EU also insists that 'full EPAs' must include issues that the WTO does not require: liberalisation of services (like banking and telecommunications), investment and government procurement; the introduction of competition rules and the reinforcement of intellectual property rights protection.

ACP countries believed that EPAs would come with a strong development package to build the competitiveness of their industries and diversify their economies, to allow them to compete with European companies and access European markets. However the EU considers that this will be achieved through market liberalisation alone, and has consistently refused to increase the level of development assistance it will offer ACP countries.

As the end of 2007 deadline for concluding the deals drew near, agreements were far from concluded and many countries called for more time. The EC was unwilling to grant this request and instead proposed that countries enter into 'interim' agreements (I-EPAs), in order to preserve their access to the EU market, while they continued to negotiate towards more comprehensive agreements. ACP developing countries unwilling to enter into i-EPAs by the deadline were told by the EC that they would be faced with punitive tariffs on their exports into the EU, many countries therefore initialed or signed these interim agreements.

In 2009 the European Parliament demanded that the Commission: adopt a more flexible approach and allow re-negotiation of contentious issues in I-EPAs; not pressure ACP countriesin to taking on further commitments in full EPAs; and provide alternatives for countries not in a position to sign. However the Commission continues to: insist on tariff elimination of 80% in fifteen years, despite the lack of a WTO rule that requires this; refuse to revise I-EPAs; and press for the inclusion of issues not required by the WTO.

There has been little progress since then and the Commission has had to find new ways to put pressure on ACP countries. The Commission is therefore setting a deadline for the ending of Market Access Regulation 1528 (originally set up to allow for trade preferences to continue whilst the EPA negotiations were ongoing). It proposes 1st January 2014, the Parliament recently voted for 1st January 2016, neither of these timeframes are realistic given the outstanding issues with EPAs.

State of play:

- A full EPA between the EU and the 15 Caribbean countries,
- Interim EPAs signed with: Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Fiji and Papua New Guinea.
- Interim EPAs initialled with Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Comoros, Zambia and Namibia.
- No EPA: 40 countries: most of the 76 ACP states involved in the negotiations have not initialled any form of EPA.

Interim EPAs are mostly confined to trade in goods – which is all that is necessary for WTO compatibility. So-called full EPAs would tie the parties into further commitments on services, investment, competition, procurement and intellectual property rights.

Europe

Economic Partnership Agreements

Stop EPA Day 27 September 2012

27th September was the ten-year anniversary of the launch of Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations between the EU and 76 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Campaigners marked the date with a seminar in Brussels and an action and letter to Vince Cable in London. Activists will be holding a events in Kenya on the 13th-16th November: the 13th will be a conference in Eldoret with farmers, the 15th-16th in Nairobi with NGOs and policy makers. Please contact Benjamin Luig for further information (benjamin.luig@misereor.de)

Clear evidence of the negative impact that EPAs are having on regional integration efforts is emerging across various regions. The East African Community (EAC) and West Africa are negotiating a regional goods agreement, however the four countries who have ratified their interim EPAs (Seychelles, Mauritious, Zimbabwe and Madagascar) will probably not participate, instead working on a broad EPA with several new issues in it. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) are negotiating a service agreement, but Namibia and South Africa will not join, and the Pacific will proceed with a goods-only agreement, although there are contentious issues relating to fish.

Even progress on those EPAs that are moving ahead is fraught. Ratification of the EPAs of the four countries mentioned above is due in the European Parliament in mid November. However Zimbabwe and Madagascar are subject to sanctions by the EU. Furthermore the EPA does not have a chapter on sustainable development, which the Parliament has demanded.

Europe holds out hope of Africa trade deals - Reuters

The European Union is hoping to wrap up free-trade agreements across most of sub-Saharan Africa next year but has yet to assuage African fears that their budding industries will not be able to cope with the new competition. The European Union launched talks with more than 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries 10 years ago - aiming to help them trade their way out of poverty and to give EU businesses access to nascent markets. But so far only 15 Caribbean nations have agreed accords.

Europeans risk losing influence at a time when the United States has stepped up its involvement in the region and Africa's bilateral trade with China has almost doubled over the past three years, to $166 billion in 2011 from $91 billion in 2009.

The talks present African countries with a dilemma. If they do not forge deals, all but the poorest - who will get special treatment - will face higher tariffs on exports to Europe, such as bananas and fish. That would reduce their access to the bloc's 500 million relatively wealthy consumers. If they do agree deals, Africans worry their industries will suffer the fate of the Kenyan shoe and South African textile industries, which have been unable to compete with Chinese imports after they opened up in return for investment over the past decade. Chinese imports have sparked anti-Chinese protests from Senegal to Malawi over the past year. In addition, African governments benefit from customs revenues that would fall once countries remove import tariffs, likely forcing difficult tax reforms to make up the difference.

“The EU is asking Africa to stop taxing imports and liberalise 80 percent of our goods,” said Obadiah Mailafia, a senior official in Brussels at the African, Caribbean, Pacific Secretariat, which is helping coordinate the trade talks. “But that would be a disaster in terms of lost revenues.”

Neo-Colonialism?

Europeans want to maintain influence in a region where they have traditionally been dominant - as colonists from the 19th century and aid-givers since the wave of African independence in the 1960s and 1970s. After years of stagnation, trade between Europe and Africa grew quickly from 2004 to a peak of 277 billion euros ($359 billion) in 2009, falling slightly after the global financial crisis.

But more Africans are becoming affluent enough to buy European consumer goods, and the continent is developing its mineral and natural gas resources. Africa's per capita economic growth was 13 percent a year between 2000 and 2008, compared to 4 percent in the European Union, according to EU data.

The European Commission, which negotiates trade issues on behalf of the 27 EU members, says trade rules with Africa are different from those with richer economies. For Africa, trade can be a development tool and reduce the amount of aid needed. But some Africans say the free-trade talks have become overloaded with issues such as intellectual property rights and liberalisation of services - things normally reserved for accords between developed nations. Some countries involved fear cuts in development aid if they conclude accords.

"This is just another form of colonialism because Europe is imposing conditions, not seeking home-grown solutions," said Rangarirai Machemedze, director of Zimbabwean non-governmental group Seatini, which has been involved in talks.

Until the late 1990s, the European Union granted former European colonies in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific special market access to help farmers and local exporters. But that put other developing countries at a disadvantage, and needed an exception to WTO rules banning special preferences.

After the special access expired in 2007, Caribbean nations agreed trade accords to avoid higher EU tariffs, while most African nations signed temporary deals to maintain access. The European Commission now wants those countries to finalise these temporary deals. To pressure larger African economies - including Cameroon and Ivory Coast, the Commission wants to set Jan. 1, 2014 as a deadline for the temporary agreements to expire. "The EU's interest is Africa's development and we are not here to coerce, but there is still time to establish a lasting partnership," said Commission trade negotiator Remco Vahl.
http://www.iol.co.za/business/international/europe-holds-out-hope-of-africa-trade-deals-1.1391543

Trade justice Movement Marks 10th Stop EPAs Day - Traidcraft
Representatives from Traidcraft, World Development Movement, Fairtrade Foundation, War on Want, Jubilee Debt Campaign, the GMB and CAFOD gathered outside the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to call on Vince Cable to stop unfair trade deals.

A representative from BIS received a letter to Vince Cable that warned the Government's commitment to trade agreements such as EPAs would break the vow he made last year to ensure trade delivers the best results for developing countries.

As well as delivering this message to Vince Cable, activists entertained passers-by and encouraged them to join the call for trade justice. Accompanied by an impossible to ignore banner, we sang a song (to the tune of a well-known girl-band hit) about the need to end EPAs. You can enjoy the song yourself by watching the video (link below).

At the same time in Brussels, representatives from the developing countries involved in EPA negotiations shared a panel with European Commission officials and discussed the topic of 'EPA negotiations: 10 years is enough?'. NGOs from across the world then stayed to explore the issues coming out of the debate and future campaign plans.

All this came after an EPAs Campaign victory earlier this month: after hundreds of emails and letters were sent to MEPs by Traidcraft campaigners, the European Parliament voted against the Commission's latest EPA ultimatum and in favour of more time to negotiate fairer trade agreements.

Small victories like this are the reason why after ten years the vast majority of EPAs remain unsigned. And while ten years of EU bullying in trade negotiations is nothing to celebrate, stopping these unfair deals being pushed through is!
http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/get_involved/campaign/campaign_news/epas/tjm_stop_epas_day_2012
Stop EPA song http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4HQL9ErjqA
Vince Cable promise to make trade work for development
http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Feb/trade-and-investment-to-drive-growth

10 Years of EPA Negotiations. From Misconception and Mismanagement to Failure
Marc Maes in GREAT Insights
Even if the EU continues to insist that its concept of EPAs was and is the right one, and ACP countries continue to repeat their commitment to a development friendly outcome, after ten years, it can no longer be denied that the EPA negotiations are a big failure. Which is not necessarily a sad thing: were never a good idea anyway.

After the initialling of the CARIFORUM EPA (involving 15 Caribbean countries) at the end of 2007, no other complete comprehensive regional EPA has been agreed; and it seems that there will not be any other, although partial regional and sub-regional agreements remain possible. Besides the newest issues that the EU has come up with, like good governance in tax matters and the "Turkey clause", negotiators are still discussing basics like tariffs and aid for trade or contentious issues raised by the interim EPAs concluded by the end of 2007. In the meantime, the EU is welcoming the ratification of un-amended interim EPAs as "excellent news" and is preparing legal steps against ACP countries that fail to ratify or to implement EPAs.
http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Navigation.nsf/index2?readform&http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Content.nsf/0/C02EE45CBDD7DEFCC1257A5A007D194C?OpenDocument

Tenth Anniversary of EPA Negotiations: Not a Time for Celebration – Ronald Sanders
September 27, 2012 marked the tenth anniversary of the beginning of negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the European Union (EU) and the 79-member countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group. But, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) throughout Europe say it is not a time for celebration.

According to a joint statement issued by many of the NGOs, "10 years on, EPA negotiations continue to be fraught with concerns that, far from supporting development efforts and promoting regional integration, will do more harm than good".

This anniversary has prompted protests in Brussels, the location of the EU headquarters, and in other European capitals, notably London where demonstrations were held outside the ministry of UK Business Secretary Vince Cable, calling on him to keep his promise to make trade work for development and making specific demands regarding EPAs. A letter was delivered to Cable, signed by leaders of 18 powerful UK organisations including the Trade Justice Movement, the Trades Union Congress, the Fairtrade Foundation, the National Union of Teachers; and War On Want.

Apart from being the 10th anniversary of the beginning of the negotiations on the EPAs, the significance of the protests in Europe by European-based organisations on behalf of the ACP countries, is that the European Commission is proposing to withdraw duty-free and quota-free market access for key exports of those ACP countries which have not signed EPAs.

African countries have been strongest in resisting signing-up to EU's EPA approach which they don't believe works in the interest of their economic future. Hence the 'big-stick' tactic by the European Commission. The Commission is clearly bargaining that those countries that have so far held out from signing the EPA will do so now simply to safeguard their traditional exports.

The Commission has good reason for their thinking. Threats worked in the negotiations with the 15 Caribbean members of the ACP that signed a 'full EPA' in 2008. In the previous year, the Commission's negotiators threatened that if Caribbean countries did not sign-up to the EPA, the EU would raise its import tariffs on certain key Caribbean exports making them uncompetitive in the EU market. This would have led to unemployment as well as revenue losses that Caribbean governments could not face. Even the most reluctant governments signed.
Full article here: http://www.caribarena.com/antigua/opinions/opinion-pieces/sir-ronald-sanders/101764-tenth-anniversary-of-epa-negotiations-not-a-time-for-celebration.html#ixzz282JqUBwg

Unhappy Anniversary - TJM
This letter appeared in the Guardian on the 27th September
Today is the 10th anniversary of the start of trade negotiations between the EU and 76 of the world's poorest countries. And this morning senior figures in the Trade Justice Movement, representing over 7 million people, will hand in a letter to Vince Cable, warning the deals the EU is pushing these countries to agree would consign many more people to dire hardship.

In a white paper last year the business secretary pledged to ensure trade delivered the best results for development. Yet Europe's negotiations with developing countries continue to be fraught with contentious issues that the EU has failed to address. The deals proposed threaten the loss of significant income from tariff revenues and to undermine agriculture and industry in developing countries. Swaziland, for example, will see duties on its sugar exports rise from zero to €339 per tonne, crippling their sugar industry.

Unfair trade rules prevent millions of poor people around the world from escaping poverty and lead to environmental destruction. It is time for new thinking from our political leaders on a better way to structure the global economy for the benefit of people and our planet.

Ruth Bergan *Trade Justice Movement,* **Paul Chandler** *Traidcraft,* **Deborah Doane** *World Development Movement,* **Michael Gidney** *Fairtrade Foundation,* **John Hilary** *War on Want*
http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2012/sep/26/unhappy-anniversary

West Africa: Don't Sign EPA Without ECOWAS - Chambas
The Secretary General of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states, Dr Mohammed Ibn Chambas, has asked Ghana to co-operate with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to finalise negotiations on the signing of the EPA with the EU.

Ghana has already indicated plans to sign the full EPA without ECOWAS if ongoing negotiations delay. Dr Chambas, however, said that breaking ranks with the regional group would adversely affect regional integration. The country and her western neighbour, Cote d'Ivoire, initialled an interim EPA in 2009.

But eminent economists, trade experts and civil society organisations such as the Coalition for Economic Justice, whose members include the Trade Union Congress, Third World Network and the Christian Council, have strongly kicked against the government signing the EPA which, they argued, would kill local industries and aggravate unemployment in the country. Former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo, stridently opposes the EPA.

So far, only 10 out of 47 sub-Saharan African countries have either signed or initialled an interim EPA as most trade ministers of ACP have rejected the agreements. "Despite all of these, and the reported public protests in 20 countries against the raw deal, it seems all but certain to be rammed through. In private whisperings, not many Africans or policymakers are happy with the deal but there is a certain sense of helplessness - Africa's nascent industrial sector and agriculture (which is the mainstay of the poor) would be damaged by the new import armada and dumping thereby exacerbating unemployment and poverty". Under the EPA, goods from signee countries will have 100 per cent tariff-free entry into the EU market while products from the EU will enjoy 80 per cent tariff-free entry into the ECOWAS market.

"I'm very convinced that in the long run, the regional approach would be beneficial to Ghana than undermining the integration. I mean West Africa may not be the huge market it should be in terms of purchasing power but there's a tremendous potential to it. In any case, remember Europe is negotiating as a region and they see the tremendous benefits in maintaining the regional integration," Dr Chambas noted. He added that negotiating with the EU as a block would be in the best interest of Ghana and other West African countries.
http://allafrica.com/stories/201209241450.html

St Kitts and Nevis seeking an extension on EPA deadlines
The St. Kitts-Nevis government remains concerned that it could come out worse off if it starts to implement duty free access for European goods coming into the federation and it is seeking an extension in implementing certain measures under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) that it and other Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) countries signed with Europe in 2008. St Kitts and Nevis is among the eight Caribbean countries that have not yet removed tariffs from goods coming into the country from the EU.
Read more: http://www.caribbean360.com/index.php/business/619417.html#ixzz282RLppsg

Ruth Bergan Speaks about the Stop EPA campaign on Russia Today
http://ruvr.co.uk/2012_09_27/89534220/

East Africa: European Pressure On EPA to Test Regional Markets Policies
http://allafrica.com/stories/201208070224.html
Pacific could be pushed into unwanted deals
http://www.fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=208550

MAR1528 State of Play – Marc Maes, 11 11 11
The Trade Policy Committee (TPC) of the European Council discussed the Commission's Market Access Regulation (MAR) 1528 proposal in July. The proposal is that MAR 1528 should end by 1st January 2014; no member state (MS) raised any objection at the time. The European Parliament voted on the 13th September to postpone the deadline until 1st January 2016. On the 5th October, the Trade Policy Committee decided to approve the Commission's proposal and forwarded its position to COREPER[1] with the request to put it on the agenda of the Council as an "A-item" (Adoption with debate).

Meanwhile, on 11th October the Parliament's trade committee (INTA) postponed a vote to "enter into negotiations with the aim of reaching an early second reading agreement", because the Council's position was not known. On the 22nd October, the Agriculture and Fisheries Council adopted the political decision to accept the Commission's MAR1528 proposal without amendment. The Commission's proposal is now being examined by the legal service of the Council. Once that is done, it will come back to the Council via COREPER for a formal decision concluding the Council's first reading of the proposal.

What happens from now is that the Council will communicate its decision to the Parliament (probably on the 19th November) which triggers the opening of the Parliament's 2nd which it has three months to complete. INTA will examine the Council's positions and make recommendations to the Parliament's Plenary. The Plenary can then do one of three things: a) agree with the Council, this will close the procedure; b) reject the Council's position, this will have to be done by at least 369 votes (50%+1) (on 13 September the outcome of the vote was 322 : 78 : 218 ; i.e. 47 votes short). However if the EP rejects the Council's position the proposal will fall and it will be completely off the table, with the result that the Commission will have to make a new proposal; c) adopt amendments to the Council's position (with an absolute majority). If the EP adopts amendments, the Council will start its second reading. It can adopt the amendments in which case the procedure is closed, or it can reject all or some amendments, which will lead to the launch of reconciliation negotiations. It is possible that a vote will happen at the end of November.

Conclusion: there is a possibility to get rid of the Commission's proposal if INTA rejects the Council's position and if 47 more MEPs (than the 322 of 13 September) support its rejection in Plenary. However, it will be difficult to get a majority for that in INTA. More likely is that there will be trialogue discussion before INTA, and that INTA will either decide to follow the Council, or adopt the trialogue compromise.

European Council Secretariat report on discussions re: MAR 1528
http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st13/st13638.en12.pdf)
David Martin Report on proposed changes to MAR 1528
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-483.670+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN
Trade Policy Committee discussion on MAR 1528
http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st14/st14646.en12.pdf
GSP reforms voted through
http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/pe00/pe00026.en12.pdf

[1] COREPER is the Committee of Permanent Representatives in the European Union, made up of the head or deputy head of mission from the EU member states in Brussels. Its defined role is to prepare the agenda for the ministerial Council of the European Union meetings; it may also take some procedural decisions. It oversees and coordinates the work of some 250 committees and working parties made up of civil servants from the member states who work on issues at the technical level to be discussed later by COREPER and the Council. It is chaired by the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

EU-India FTA

TUC briefing: EU-India Free Trade Agreement
Launched in 2007, the ongoing negotiations for an EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) have thrown up a range of worrying issues for workers. In 2011, the TUC Congress passed a motion opposing the trade deal given its likely negative impact. Key Indian trade unions have also spoken out against it. This briefing note explains these concerns in more detail.

Respect for labour standards
To ensure that our trading partners are not violating workers' rights to gain an unfair trade advantage, the TUC calls for trade agreements that include binding commitments to respect international labour standards. While the EU supports the inclusion of such standards in so-called sustainable development chapters, such commitments are not binding, and therefore easily ignored in practice.

The Indian government has strongly opposed the inclusion of labour standards in the deal. And it has yet to sign up to the International Labour Organisation's core labour standards on ending child labour and on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

The key interest for the Indian government in the negotiations is to secure better access for Indian workers to come to the UK and the rest of Europe to work for short periods of time. The TUC believes that such 'Mode 4' (a term taken from the WTO services treaty) liberalisation should not lead to the exploitation of Indian workers, nor to the undercutting or unemployment of those already in the resident labour market. Yet neither the EU nor the UK has conducted an assessment of the likely impact that Mode 4 will have on the quality and quantity of employment. Nor have they shared any information about what is being negotiated.

The TUC is calling for, among other things, assurances that those coming to the UK receive at least an equivalent reward package to those already undertaking the same work. The TUC is also calling for a safeguard mechanism that allows member states the right to close off entry to Mode 4 workers into a particular sector where pre-determined distortions, such as unemployment, occur in the local labour market.

Investment
The EU is seeking to negotiate an investment chapter in the agreement to protect EU business from expropriation and unfair treatment. Yet such protections are increasingly being used by multinationals to challenge legitimate government action in secretive international tribunals.

For example, French multinational Veolia has just taken the Egyptian government to the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes over, among other things, recent increases in the minimum wage. And earlier in June, Swedish company Vattenfall filed a case against the German government for restricting the use of nuclear power. In 2010, Philip Morris took similar action against Uruguay because it decided to require bigger tobacco warning labels on cigarette packaging.

Such loopholes are undermining the ability of governments to act in the public interest and need to be closed. Further, such investment chapters should place binding social and environmental responsibilities on foreign investors, drawing on instruments such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

As UNI Global Union argues, any opening up of India's retail market to foreign competitors should come with appropriate safeguards to prevent the so-called 'Walmart effect' - the erosion of the number and quality of jobs across the retail, logistics, agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Such safeguards should include requirements to recognise unions, a national tripartite wage board for the industry, and a statutory agency to enforce rules around local goods and services and fair sourcing terms for suppliers.

The poorest in India
Agriculture supports about 70 percent of Indians - many of them living in chronic hunger - and 75 percent of all women workers in the labour market. As the EU's own sustainability impact assessment concludes, many of these people will lose out under the FTA given that the likely removal of the comparatively high levels of tariff protection for agricultural goods.

Dairy provides for a third of gross income in rural households and nearly half of that for the landless. And about half of all small holders and landless farmers rely on poultry for between 10 to 20 percent of their income. Both sectors are set to lose their protection under the FTA hurting the incomes of people already on the margins of subsistence.

As the impact assessment concludes, workers losing jobs in agriculture will struggle to move into the sectors expected to benefit from the FTA, typically higher-skilled service industry jobs in cities - with the exception of textiles. Therefore it is critical that liberalisation only proceeds with the pace and flexibility to allow those workers to find decent work. And this in turn depends on strengthening India's fragile systems of social protection and labour market institutions to support them during that process.

Access to medicines
India has developed a generic drug industry that has enabled it to become the pharmacy of the developing world, supplying cheap medicines to combat serious diseases and illnesses. According to Oxfam, over 80 percent of HIV/AIDs medicines are manufactured by generic drug companies in India and that is a key reason why the annual price of treatment has fallen from US$10,000 per to less than $80.

Yet the EU is asking India to accept tougher rules on intellectual property protection in the agreement, which could undermine this industry and the cheap medicines it produces. The European Parliament passed a resolution on 6 April 2011 insisting that investment chapter 'provisions should avoid negatively impacting the production of generic medicines...'. Yet without access to the negotiating text, we have no idea if such concerns are being taken on board.

Secrecy and no proper impact assessment
It has been very difficult for EU and Indian civil society to get access to information about the negotiations. The main sources of information that trade unions have obtained have come from leaks. This only deepens the growing mistrust with how trade policy is made.

Further, although the European Commission did carry out an impact assessment for the agreement, this failed to cover a range of critical areas. That is why the European Economic and Social Committee has called for new studies covering, 'in particular Mode 4, SMEs, labour rights, women, consumer protection, the informal economy, agriculture poverty and the impact on the accessibility of basic products such as life-saving medicines'. The European Commission is yet to do any of this.

Briefing document (1,700 words) issued 1 Aug 2012
http://www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-21293-f0.cfm
TUC Briefing: The EU-India Free Trade Agreement
http://www.tuc.org.uk/tucfiles/356/EUIndiabriefing.pdf
Indian Trade Unionist Statement: Halt EU-India FTA
http://62.149.193.10/wide/download/HaltEUIndiaFTAStatement21Sep2008.pdf?id=752

EU-US Trade Deal

EU, U.S. to negotiate free-trade deal from spring 2013: officials
Europe and the United States are set to launch trade talks early next year to deepen the world's largest trading relationship, EU and U.S. officials say, potentially unleashing billions of euros of new transatlantic business.

Together, the bloc and the United States account for about half the world's economic output and nearly a third of world trade. But a debt crisis in Europe and elusive American growth are pushing both sides to consider knocking down the final barriers to trade.

A deal could increase economic output by 122 billion euros ($158 billion) a year for Europe alone and add 0.52 percent to the EU's gross domestic product in the long term, according to European Commission estimates, benefiting industries ranging from chemicals to automakers.
http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/17/us-eu-usa-trade-idUSBRE89G0KT20121017

Common Agricultural Policy

Europe's agriculture policy is damaging developing nations - ODI
The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) damages developing countries as a group, and the proposed reforms will damage even those previously favoured. The purpose of the CAP is to "allow European Union farmers to compete globally". The budget for this remains about €50bn, and the CAP instruments, such as export subsidies and direct payments, are supplemented by still high tariffs.

While the exact impact of each of these measures can be debated, it is frankly inconceivable to suggest that the current €50bn spent on existing European farmers, without asking them to change their behaviour, and with some farmers deriving more than 50 per cent of their incomes from CAP, is, first, money well spent to achieve the valid objectives of the CAP and, second, not affecting trade and production patterns globally. EU agriculture policy directly affects growth and income distribution in and among developing countries.

Moreover, in the current context of increasingly volatile food prices, CAP instruments may exacerbate the negative effects for developing countries. If the CAP is successful in stabilising European markets, this can only mean price fluctuations are transferred to international markets.

Ms Soutar's argument that "export subsidies amounted to less than 0.5 per cent of the EU agricultural budget in 2010" does not incorporate the recent request by Poland to reconsider the reintroduction of export refunds to dairy products as fast as possible. The argument that "more than 90 per cent of domestic support is decoupled from production and therefore regarded as non-trade-distorting" is questioned by many research studies, which identify distortions from decoupled payments – for example, they lead to an excess of liquidity of farmers in the credit market.
http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8b790382-ec7d-11e1-81f4-00144feab49a.html#axzz24SWpZKG5
Inefficient and immoral subsidies
http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8b7f3860-ec7d-11e1-81f4-00144feab49a.html#axzz24SWpZKG5

Good Food activists call for humane new system
On 17th September anti-poverty protesters linked up in a Europe-wide day of action to call for a global food system which puts people before the greed of multinational corporations. The protests form part of the Good Food March, a campaign initiative around the continent to demand change as the EU's farming policy future is debated by both policy-makers in Brussels and European parliamentary members for the first time.

The British delegation of the Good Food March, including War on Want, handed in a large postcard and letter at the London office of the European Commission, pressing for fair alternatives to multibillion subsidies under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The charity claims that, over the past 50 years, Britons' taxes have been used to support industrialised farming which destroys the environment and biodiversity, as well as favouring private-sector control over food production.

War on Want is calling for a new CAP which links subsidies directly to social, environmental and animal welfare criteria and develops greener and more sustainable agriculture, promoting agro-ecological farming methods. The new policy must reject food speculation, end the export of agricultural products at prices below production costs and deliver fair prices for farmers and consumers, it said. It must also assume international responsibility and not prevent the global south protecting its own food system and small-scale farmers, and guarantee the cultivation of local protein feed crops rather than imported soy.

War on Want international programmes officer Haidee-Laure Giles said: "For more than a decade the CAP has focused on subsidising unsustainable, industrialised agriculture, to the detriment of both small-scale farmers in Europe and the global south, and the environment. It is time the new CAP allows for a fair trade system, which does not encourage European agribusinesses to export huge quantities of food worldwide that poor farmers cannot compete with on price."
http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/news/content/view/full/123988

Protesters call for greener, fairer EU farm policy
http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gpojQR2lXsi2m-F2Twz2M3Rx52Cg?docId=d38e1579fb524aed91fbf32831c72bba

EU Sugar Reform in 2015: Cost Competitiveness for Whose Benefit?
So who would actually benefit from this proposed change in policy? A clue is given in the positions adopted by industry actors. While beet producers in Europe and cane suppliers in the ACP and Least Developed Countries want the quotas extended to 2020, food and drink manufacturers like CocaCola, Kraft and Nestlé have lobbied for their abolition. While it might be assumed that this would in turn benefit consumers through lower prices for fizzy drinks or chocolate bars, it is worth noting that the European Court of Auditors has concluded that most of the cost savings associated with the last round of reform would simply be "added to the profit margin of industrial producers".
http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Navigation.nsf/index2?readform&http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Content.nsf/0/C02EE45CBDD7DEFCC1257A5A007D194C?OpenDocument

Investment

Dangerous Weapons: How International Investment Rules Undermine Social and Environmental Justice
Across the world, citizens and social movements are mounting strong and effective campaigns to fight the environmental and social abuses of transnational corporations. People have fought to defend control over their water, to block contaminating mining projects, to hold oil companies accountable for their environmental destruction, and more. These actions have often been successful in forcing governments to act in defence of their people.

In response, corporations and their political allies have assembled a powerful arsenal of legal weapons in their defence. Among the most dangerous is the growing global web of international investment agreements (IIAs) and the international tribunals empowered to enforce them. These agreements, tribunals and other legal tools form the architecture of impunity that allows transnational corporations to bypass local and national legal systems.

The following set of cases shows the system in action and how it is impacting the issues we care about. The final section highlights what needs to be done to change the system and how you can get involved.
http://justinvestment.org/2012/08/educational-brochure-dangerous-weapons-how-international-investment-rules-undermine-social-and-environmental-justice/

The Emerging Challenge to the Investor-State Regime - Network for Justice in Global Investment
As the evidence of the injustices of the current system accumulates and pressure by civil society grows, we are beginning to see changes in the policy positions of a number of governments regarding investment rules and investor-State dispute mechanisms. In recent months there have been a number of significant developments in this area as governments (especially in those Latin American countries worst affected) come to realize the threat that the current system represents to their ability to formulate responsible public policy and to regulate their economies.

We include original pieces from colleagues in India, Bolivia and Argentina documenting experiences of investor-State disputes in their countries and the difficulties they face when they try to challenge the system. Taking a stand against the system country by country is a significant first step. However, untangling the web of legal obligations resulting from BIT's and FTA's signed by previous governments represents a much greater challenge for the future.

In this edition, we also feature an article on changes taking place in the European Union as the implications of the transfer of investment policy from the competence of member states to that of the EU institutions become apparent. The resulting policy debate will determine the content of investor protections in future EU FTA's and whether or not member states will be able to negotiate BIT's independently. What changes, if any, will be made to the investor-state dispute system and where liability will lie for future cases are also still to be defined.
http://justinvestment.org/2012/08/the-emerging-challenge-to-the-investor-state-regime-2/

China insurer Ping An files claim against Belgium
Chinese insurer Ping An is seeking compensation for losses on its investment in failed Belgo-Dutch bank Fortis through an international arbitration body sponsored by the World Bank. Ping An, the world's second-biggest life insurer by market value, lost about $3 billion when Fortis was nationalised and sold

off during the 2008 financial crisis, damping China's appetite for further European financial services deals.
http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/24/pingan-fortis-idUSL5E8KO9V520120924

South Africa: BITs in pieces
South Africa has terminated a bilateral investment treaty with Belgium and Luxembourg in the first of a series of planned shreddings of post apartheid-era agreements which are coming up for renewal.
The move is to ease the path of the Black Economic Empowerment programme, but western investors and trade officials are worried at the government's decision.
http://blogs.ft.com/beyond-brics/2012/10/19/south-africa-bits-in-pieces/#axzz2A1RXYFFX

Ecuador ordered to pay Occidental $1.77 billion in damages
The World Bank's arbitration centre (ICSID) has ordered Ecuador to pay nearly $1.77 billion in damages – the equivalent to Ecuador's entire education budget for a year - to US-based Occidental Petroleum for seizing the company's assets in 2006, but the Andean country said it would appeal the decision. It also ordered Ecuador to pay pre-award interest on the amount at the rate of 4.188 percent per annum, compounded annually from 16 May 2006 until the date of the award.
http://www.brecorder.com/money-a-banking/198/1245556/
Ecuador to appeal against $1.8 bn ruling in oil dispute
http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hnJakMa2WPEm1hZFuyAz4OBuiU5w?docId=CNG.35661fd553282fb57b8ed9efcd0b6d1a.2f1

Supreme Court denies Chevron $19bn Ecuador appeal
The US Supreme Court has declined to block a judgement from an Ecuadorean court that a US oil firm pay billions in damages for pollution in the Amazon. Chevron was fighting a ruling that it must pay $18.2bn (£11.4bn) in damages, a sum increased to $19bn in July. It is the latest move in a decades-long legal wrangle between Texaco, bought by Chevron in 2001, and the people of the Lago Agrio region of Ecuador. The decision could affect other oil firms accused of pollution.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-19892561

Churchill Mining files international arbitration against Indonesia
Churchill Mining said it has now filed for international arbitration in its dispute regarding the East Kutai coal project (EKCP) in Indonesia, 75 per cent owned by Churchill. It has filed a claim at the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Washington, DC, against the Republic of Indonesia for breaches of its obligations under the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with the UK.
http://justinvestment.org/2012/05/churchill-mining-files-international-arbitration-against-indonesia/

Last chance to save Kutai National Park from Churchill Mining's greasy mits!
There's a national park in East Kalimantan called Kutai. It's home to most of the remaining moreo orangutans in Indonesia (approx 4,825), 10 other primates, as well as other critically endangered mammals and birds. Underneath Kutai is about 38 mega tonnes of coal, which a British conglomerate called Churchill Mining claim to have the rights to. The only thing is, they acquired their license from ex-president Suharto's son-in-law, General Subianto. Subianto's famed for ordering the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre where over 250 East Timorese civilians and foreign jounalists were machine gunned to death.
http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/churchill-mining-stop-the-destruction-of-east-kutai-national-park-and-its-4-825-orangutans

Renegotiating India's Investment Agreements: A Policy Perspective
This briefing paper examines the broad substantive provisions of Indian IIAs and suggests how these broad provisions can be narrowed so as to allow India exercise its regulatory space freely. The paper calls for renegotiating some of the provisions and provide concrete policy suggestions regarding the content of these substantive treaty protections.
http://www.madhyam.org.in/admin/tender/Madhyam%20BP7.pdf

How the other side think: from a newsletter produced by American law firm Crowell and Moring.
How Companies Can Use International Investment Agreements to Open Markets and Protect Their Investments
Companies that operate internationally face an increasingly complex business environment, in large part because of uncertainty created by governments. Whether because of their political cultures and commitment to the rule of law, their international economic and foreign policies, or their use of state-

controlled companies, governments are affecting markets in more ways and to a greater extent than they have in the past. To deal with this uncertainty, global companies need to do more than overcome the traditional business challenges. They also need to address the regulatory, policy, and geopolitical risks that governments create for them.

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IIAs allow foreign companies to take governments to binding international arbitration for alleged breaches of the agreement. "Investor-State arbitration" is an extremely powerful tool for companies to enforce their IIA rights, for many reasons. First, it is **direct** – a company can take a government to arbitration without having to persuade its own government to espouse or otherwise support its claim. Second, it is **independent** – arbitrators are typically selected by both parties and hearings occur in a neutral international setting, both of which protect the company from the uncertainty of domestic court systems. Third, it is **flexible** – the company generally chooses the arbitration institution and rules, which gives it further influence over the process. Finally, it is **enforceable** – awards against host governments are generally enforceable in countries that have signed international agreements relating to the enforcement of foreign arbitration awards, such as the New York Convention.

In addition, companies may be able to use one or more IIAs to seek relief. In particular, some IIAs allow companies to pursue investor-State claims against a host government even if the company invests indirectly into a country through a third country (provided the company owns or controls both the third country subsidiary and the host country subsidiary that has been harmed by the government). Similarly, in some cases a parent company can initiate an investor-State claim through a subsidiary in another country that itself has an IIA with the host country (provided the third country subsidiary owns or controls the host country subsidiary).

In an increasingly uncertain global business environment, IIAs can help companies ensure that they are treated fairly, enjoy a level playing field, and can enforce their rights in difficult foreign markets. IIAs should be an important element of a company's business strategy throughout its investment activities, from its initial evaluation of the legal and political risks of investing in a market, to its decisions about how to structure its operations, to how it navigates local regulatory and policy hurdles, and, finally, to its efforts to constructively and effectively resolve disputes with the government that do arise.
http://www.crowell.com/

WTO

Ensuring the World Trade Organization Doesn't Hinder Needed Financial Regulation
The deregulation and liberalization rules of the WTO in the financial services sector helped set the stage for the debacle of the global financial crisis. Yet, while the G20, most governments and even the IMF have recognized the need for financial re-regulation in the wake of the financial crisis, the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) rules can actually hinder financial regulation efforts.

Our World is Not for Sale Network has called for changes and/or clarifications to current GATS rules regarding financial services, and for no further deregulation or liberalization of financial services to be undertaken within the WTO.

In June 2012, World Trade Organization (WTO) member state Ecuador tabled a modest, but important first-step proposal whose goal is to provide all governments with greater certainty that the WTO rules governing financial services provide sufficient policy space for needed financial reregulation and as well as to improve coherence between the WTO and other international bodies promoting financial reregulation. Ecuador specifically proposed that WTO members undertake a discussion at the WTO's Committee on Trade in Financial Services about current thinking at the international level on macro-prudential regulation and its relationship to the GATS rules. The proposal will be discussed at the next quarterly meeting of the Committee on Trade in Financial Services (CTFS) which will take place the first week of October 2012.

This proposal provides a concrete follow-up to an initiative prior to the WTO's 8th Ministerial Conference in December 2011, when Ecuador proposed that Trade Ministers make a simple statement, acknowledging the need to review the WTO rules on financial services in light of the financial crisis and the efforts internationally and domestically to strengthen regulation. A majority of countries – including

Brazil, India, China, South Africa, and Argentina - supported that initiative in the Committee in October 2011. But, unfortunately, the United States, European Union and Canada blocked the proposal from being raised at the Ministerial Conference. Members did agree that the Committee on Trade in Financial Services was an appropriate venue to continue consideration of a discussion, and the Chair of the Committee provided space on the agenda in 2012. Now, however, the U.S. and EU are signaling that they will block even a discussion of these issues in the appropriate committee!

OWINFS are urging organizations worldwide to take action on this issue, contact jboehner@citizen.org for further information.

The LDC services waiver: Making it work - ICTSD
The Least Developed Country (LDC) services waiver emerged as one of the few deliverables of the 8th WTO Ministerial in December 2011. After years of negotiation, a last-minute compromise was found which allowed Trade Ministers to harvest what could be presented as an ostensibly pro-development result. While weaknesses remain, the glass is arguably half full: Members are now authorised to grant preferences to services and service providers of LDCs – not only WTO Members, but all LDCs.
http://ictsd.org/i/news/bridges-africa-review/140321/

Services Trade Talks Begin as WTO Seeks Way out of Stalemate
Countries representing 70 percent of the global economy are set to negotiate lower barriers to trade in services after agreeing the structure of a deal, Australian Trade Minister Craig Emerson said in an interview. The push for a deal on trade in services is one of several attempts to steer the World Trade Organization (WTO) towards achievable goals for trade reform, a contrast with the ambitions of the Doha Round of talks that collapsed last year.
http://www.insurancejournal.com/news/international/2012/10/09/265908.htm

Obama takes on China with formal trade complaint over auto subsidies
Fears of a trade war between the United States and China have intensified after Barack Obama launched action at the World Trade Organisation to stop Chinese auto industry aid from threatening jobs in the key electoral battleground state of Ohio. With growth and jobs seen as vital in the race for the White House, the administration said it had begun a case at the WTO in Geneva against what the White House said were illegal export subsidies for cars and car parts. The ratcheting up of the trade tension between the world's biggest and second biggest economies prompted immediate tit-for-tat retaliation from Beijing, which announced its own WTO case against the US.
http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/sep/17/obama-china-trade-war-wto

Other News

The Trans-Pacific Partnership – incompatible with public policy
The 14th round of negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) will take place in Leesburg, Virginia on September 6th – 15th. We include a series of articles from the previous round in San Diego, California in June in which negotiations were again kept from public scrutiny. The TPP includes an Investment Chapter that was leaked and publicized by the Citizens Trade Campaign in the United States, and that together with other chapters like Intellectual Property Rights and “Regulatory Coherence”, make it incompatible with public policies responsible with environmental and human rights.
http://justinvestment.org/2012/08/the-trans-pacific-partnership/

Trans Pacific Partnership, Be wary of pacts with rich states: Supachai
Thailand should think twice about rushing into the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership, which could be a bid to get around World Trade Organisation rules that currently protect developing nations, warns Supachai Panitchpakdi, secretary-general of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad). The TPP will include many requirements and standards imposed by the United States, such as labour rights, that developing countries including Thailand and Vietnam would find difficult to commit to. The US could also force governments to privatise state-owned companies in exchange for market access.
http://www.nationmultimedia.com/business/Be-wary-of-pacts-with-rich-states-Supachai-30188582.html

The Pacific free trade deal that's anything but free
The draft TPP deal may grant new patent privileges and restrict net freedom, but it's secret – unless you're a multinational CEO. "Free trade" is a sacred mantra in Washington. If anything is labeled as being "free trade", then everyone in the Washington establishment is required to bow down and support

it. Otherwise, they are excommunicated from the list of respectable people and exiled to the land of protectionist Neanderthals. This is essential background to understanding what is going on with the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), a pact that the United States is negotiating with Australia, Canada, Japan and eight other countries in the Pacific region. The agreement is packaged as a "free trade" agreement. This label will force all of the respectable types in Washington to support it.
http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/aug/27/pacific-free-trade-deal

The Trans-Pacific Partnership: Free Trade at What Costs?
http://justinvestment.org/2012/08/the-trans-pacific-partnership-free-trade-at-what-costs/

Trade Law Implications of Procurement Practices in Sustainable Energy Goods and Services

The government as an entity is quite often the largest, single consumer of goods and services in developed as well developing countries. Government procurement can be a powerful tool for positive environmental change by creating a market for environmental goods and services. At the same time, procurement policies will need to be designed and implemented in a manner that does not discriminate against trading partners. What sort of space is available in the context of existing trade-rules for governments to pursue proactive procurement policies for sustainable energy goods and services? Is there a need to review existing rules so as to enhance their effectiveness with regards to the objectives of strengthening markets for renewable energy?
http://ictsd.org/downloads/2012/10/trade-law-implications-of-procurement-practices-in-sustainable-energy-goods-and-services.pdf

New Comhlamh Report on Southern Alternatives on Trade and Development

Tired of being told there's no other way? There are alternatives! In spite of the global crises, the EU insists that free trade and deregulation is the only way for economies to develop, and is pushing this damaging economic approach on its poor trading partners. This is despite of the fact that free trade has weakened the economy of many developing countries, and led to job losses, food insecurity, reduction of local industry and environmental degradation.

The good news is that people, movements and governments across the global south think and act differently. Our new policy report "Southern Alternatives to EU Trade Policy", published by Comhlámh, WEED, and AITEC, presents the views of 8 activists and thinkers from the global south, from the Philippines to Colombia, Zimbabwe to India, in a series of 8 individual papers. Each paper details a vision of an alternative European trade policy, based on principles of sustainability, democracy, flexibility, human rights, transparency and poverty eradication.
http://www.comhlamh.org/NewReport_Southern_Perspectives_TradeDev.html

A Review of Trade Preference Schemes for the World's Poorest Countries

The current low participation of least developed countries (LDCs) in world trade could be a critical factor hindering their development. In fact, today LDCs only account for about one per cent of world trade. As a result, the international community has put in place a number of initiatives aimed at stimulating LDCs participation in the international trading system. These initiatives include supporting LDCs with preferential market access as well as special and differential treatment in regard to their international trade obligations. This study analyses the implementation of preferential trade schemes in seven major markets - Canada, China, European Union, India, Japan, Korea, and the United States - and simulates the possible impact on LDCs stemming from extending full duty free and quota free market access in concluding non-agriculture market access negotiations in the Doha Round. The paper provides detailed information on country and product coverage, limitations on the schemes, and estimates of their value.
http://ictsd.org/downloads/2012/10/a-review-of-trade-preference-schemes-for-the-worlde28099s-poorest-countries.pdf

TRIPS-related patent flexibilities and food security

Food security is a pressing global challenge. Agricultural innovation is critical to addressing it. Equally important is ensuring that the benefits of such innovation are widely diffused, especially in developing countries. The TRIPS Agreement provides WTO members with flexibilities for implementing its provisions in a way consistent with their agriculture and food security objectives. Yet such flexibilities have received little attention so far. This Policy Guide by Carlos Correa seeks to fill this gap. The Guide provides an overview of TRIPS-related patent flexibilities that support agriculture and food security objectives.
http://ictsd.org/downloads/2012/10/trips-related-patent-flexibilities-and-food-security.pdf