



UNCTAD

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Topic: Developing fair trade access for developing countries



Committee: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Topic: Developing fair trade access for developing countries

Director: Pedro Saúl Ojeda Almanza

Moderator: Valeria Vanessa González Torres

I. Committee Background

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) began on December 30, 1964. The objective of this committee is to promote trade in developing countries, stabilize the prices of their exports, eliminate barriers to entry to industrialized countries, reduce economic inequality in the world, promote sustainable development to make fair trade easier and also acts as a place where countries can coordinate policies and strategies to face the challenges of trade and development, facilitating cooperation international. In the early 1960s, growing concerns about the place of developing countries in international trade led many of these countries to call for the convening of a full-fledged conference specifically dedicated to addressing these issues and identifying appropriate international actions.

II. Topic Information

Fair trade changes the way trade works through better prices, decent working conditions and fairer treatment for farmers and workers in developing countries. Fair Trade allows workers and farmers to have more control over their own lives and how to invest in their future. This kind of trade supports and challenges businesses and governments and connects farmers and workers with the people who buy their products. National fair trade organizations exist in 16 European countries, as well as in Canada, the United States, Japan,



Australia and New Zealand. Fairtrade International also oversees marketing organizations in countries such as the Czech Republic, Korea and Poland. The countries most involved in fair trade are Mexico, Peru, Argentina, Brazil and India, which mainly trade coffee, honey, cocoa, fruits and wine.

a. History of the Topic

Fair trade emerged in the mid-20th century as a response to the injustice of international trade, seeking to improve conditions for producers in developing countries through cooperatives and international networks.

Past solutions have been thwarted in one manner or another despite many initiatives. For instance, the World Trade Organization (WTO) was to be a fair trade system, but at times its policies favored developed nations at the expense of developing nations. UNCTAD has been instrumental in calling for fair trade practices, with its Trade and Development Report, outlining the needs of developing countries and ways of integrating them into the global markets.

b. Current Issues

Currently, several issues on trade barriers, market information, and infrastructure continue to bind the access of developing countries to fair trade. Various stakeholders hold divergent views on how to solve these issues:

- **Improvement of Market Access:** Those who propose this recommend a decrease in tariffs and non-tariff barriers to ensure fair competition.
- **Capacity Building:** Others recommend investment in education and training to enhance the capacities of producers to improve their bargaining position in international markets.

Others, however, hold tight on the requirement for sustainable trade that is environmentally and socially responsible and centers on fair trade in the wider grasp of sustainability.



Key points for delegates to take into account are the necessity of international cooperation, technology aid to improve market access, and establishing trade networks.

c. Bloc Positions

The Developed Countries: In general, favor policies that promote free trade but resist the measures that alter their trade advantage. In detail, there is a possibility that countries like the USA and EU members may protect agricultural sectors in trade negotiations.

- **Developing Countries:** Developing countries often demand greater access to international markets so that they can export their products without many barriers, debt relief to free up resources for domestic needs, and technical assistance to enhance their technological and institutional capacity. These demands seek to foster their economic growth and meet development challenges more effectively. Emerging countries like Brazil and India are two of the major players in pressing reform issues that give support to the campaigns for fair trade.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations:** There are numerous NGOs supporting fair trade initiatives and advocating for ethical consumerism, thus pressuring governments to set policies on fair trade.

III. Conclusion

The roadmap to developing countries' access to fair trade needs an understanding of historical contexts, present barriers, and manifold insights into solutions. The long-term hoped-for result of the committee would be to forge actionable strategies that engender greater equity in trade, thereby empowering developing nations.



IV. Essential Questions

1. What are the main obstacles that have hindered developing countries' access to the principles of fair trade so far?
2. How can international cooperation be increased with the aim of promoting fair trade initiatives?
3. What is the role played by NGOs for and against the creation of fair trade access for developing countries?
4. How does one make use of technology to increase access to higher market levels for producers from developing countries?
5. What are some past UNCTAD initiatives that offer any useful lessons concerning fair trade?

V. References

Fair Trade Certified. (n.d.). *Sustainable development: What we do*. Retrieved from <https://www.fairtradecertified.org/what-we-do/sustainable-development/>

FundsforNGOs. (n.d.). *Fair trade for all: Transforming global trade policies to support developing economies*. Retrieved from <https://www.fundsforngos.org/proposals/fair-trade-for-all-transforming-global-trade-policies-to-support-developing-economies/>

Global Hand. (n.d.). *Fair trade: Organisation profile*. Retrieved from https://www.globalhand.org/en/browse/fair_trade/all/organisation/23818

UN Geneva. (n.d.). *UNCTAD*. Retrieved from <https://www.ungeneva.org/en/about/organizations/unctad>

UN SDG. (n.d.). *UNCTAD*. Retrieved from <https://unsdg.un.org/entities/unctad>

UNCTAD. (n.d.). *Trade policy*. Retrieved from <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-agreements/trade-policy>



UNCTAD. (2023, June 6). *Fair trade movement and UNCTAD join forces*. Retrieved from <https://unctad.org/news/fair-trade-movement-and-unctad-join-forces>

United Nations. (n.d.). *United Nations document E/CONF.46/141(Vol.I)*. Retrieved from [https://documents.un.org/access.nsf/get?OpenAgent&DS=E/CONF.46/141\(Vol.I\)&Lang=E](https://documents.un.org/access.nsf/get?OpenAgent&DS=E/CONF.46/141(Vol.I)&Lang=E)

United Nations iLibrary. (n.d.). *UN iLibrary: Content papers*. Retrieved from <https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/papers/27082822?pageSize=50&page=1>