



A timeline of UK trade and trade justice

On the occasion of the Trade Justice Movement's 20th anniversary

NOVEMBER 2023



**TRADE JUSTICE
MOVEMENT**

Endorsements

CHRISTINE ALLEN, DIRECTOR, CAFOD

CAFOD is proud to have been a founding member of the Trade Justice Movement over twenty years ago. Since then, **TJM has been instrumental in bringing issues of human rights to the heart of discussions around UK trade.** In the early years CAFOD supporters flocked to support TJM mass lobbies of parliament, raising issues among MPs and showing that trade was not just an economic issue, but one that impacted people and the environment. We have joined together to resist unjust trade practices such as the Investor State Dispute Settlement Mechanisms that give companies far too much power over government and citizens. **And as trade and economic growth are increasingly touted as panaceas for development, TJM is needed now more than ever as we strive to care for our common home and build a world for future generations.**

NICK DEARDEN, DIRECTOR, GLOBAL JUSTICE NOW

Modern trade rules reach well beyond tariffs, affecting our food standards, our public services and how governments are able to regulate big business. Such sweeping rules should be democratic, their primary goals to eliminate poverty and joblessness, to reduce inequality and environmental destruction. Sadly they've done precisely the opposite. That is why it's so important to have an organisation like the Trade Justice Movement. **For 20 years, TJM has exposed the reality of the pro-corporate, hyper-globalisation agenda. It has pushed back on toxic trade deals, with no small degree of success, and brought together coalitions to create fairer, more equal and**

sustainable economics. We've got a long way to go, but I can say without doubt that we're in a better place to take on the fight ahead thanks to TJM.

JUDE KIRTON-DARLING, DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY, INDUSTRIALL EUROPE

Our current global trading system, driven essentially by the logic of profit maximisation and 'competitiveness', exacerbates inequality and exploitation in global supply chains - depriving workers and communities of their human and labour rights, and ransacking the environment. **Another world is possible and it starts with trade justice. It is through building alliances that we can strive to achieve it. This is why working alongside and within the Trade Justice Movement has been so important for me over many years,** whether as a Labour MEP, trade unionist or Trustee of Transform Trade.

CAROLINE LUCAS MP

The struggle for trade justice and an international trading system that puts people over profit has never been more important. It is crucial that trade policy has climate and environmental protection at its heart, and that there are strong voices both in and out of Parliament making that case. **I have been proud to campaign alongside the Trade Justice Movement for much of the last 20 years, and know they will continue to play a crucial role in advocating for a UK trade policy which is truly just.**

CHRISTINA MCANEA, GENERAL SECRETARY, UNISON

UNISON has been a long-standing member of the Trade Justice Movement. The trade in services and the Investor to State Disputes Settlement (ISDS) mechanism pose a potential threat to the ability of outsourced and privatised public services being

brought back under public control. **TJM has played a crucial role in ensuring that trade agreements and trade policy are adequately scrutinised and subject to debate.** TJM's recent research on trade and climate change has been central to this developing aspect of trade policy and UNISON looks forward to working with them in developing the use of citizen's juries on this issue.

JANE NALUNGA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEATINI - UGANDA

Unfair trade and investment rules have obstructed economic development in East Africa and other regions of the Global South. **We need to transform the trading system so that trade can be a tool for spreading prosperity and human rights. Over the last twenty years, the Trade Justice Movement has been a valuable ally in the UK** and we at SEATINI look forward to continuing to work with TJM and other global partners to achieve trade justice.

SHAUN SPIERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GREEN ALLIANCE AND CHAIR, GREENER UK

When environmental groups got together in the Greener UK coalition following the Brexit referendum, it was clear that trade would become an increasingly important aspect of environmental policy. At that time, few UK environmental groups had any trade expertise and we were fortunate that TJM was willing and able to help us, giving expert guidance on the intricacies of trade policy. **TJM combines an unwavering commitment to global justice, not least climate justice, with a clear-headed understanding of what is politically feasible and an extraordinary knowledge of a highly complex and often technical policy area.** Long may it continue to flourish.

Timeline

The trade system we nearly got: the International Trade Organization

Despite the popularity of the proposed ITO, the organisation never came into existence, as it was blocked by the US.

The New International Economic Order (NIEO)

"The demands of the NIEO were as simple but all-encompassing as the name suggests. These countries [of the Global South] were asking for nothing less than a redrawing of the rules of global trade."

The birth of the WTO

With the South's vision for a new international economic order thwarted, Northern leaders got on with advancing their own version of radical change.

The Trade Justice Movement is born

To support the Global South's attempts to rewrite the rules of trade, a coalition of trade unions, civil society organisations and faith groups came together to draft the founding statement of the Trade Justice Movement.

Solidarity with the Global South: fighting unequal trade agreements

"Under the Trade Justice Movement, Northern NGOs were persuasive in impelling their governments [to consider the trade justice demands of the South]..."

Winning the argument on trade and the NHS

"In the UK, the main area of concern has been the NHS - in particular, whether any future measures to reduce the private sector's involvement might be challenged."

Brexit and our new 'independent trade policy'

The 2016 Brexit referendum marked a sea-change for trade policy-making, as this competency moved from the EU back to the UK Government.



Slavery, colonisation, and trade protections for the UK's industrial revolution

The basis of today's trade system was established in this period. Rebalancing the 'unequal exchange' has been a key target for countries of the Global South in later trade negotiations and a central focus of TJM's work.

The trade system we actually got: the start of multilateral free trade

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was meant to only be one strand of a broader international trade agenda. It however became the whole basis of today's multilateral trade system, establishing the liberalisation of trade as the core goal of trade agreements. Securing full employment, economic stability and development were sidelined.

The neoliberal fightback

Global economic events of the 1970s added to the economic challenges already faced by Southern countries. Many were forced into unsustainable debt, and then subjected to IMF 'Structural Adjustment Programmes' (SAPs) which required them to open up to free trade.

The Battle of Seattle

Environmentalists, labour unions, indigenous groups, international NGOs, and students from around the world had filled the streets. The city declared a state of emergency.

Trade is a key pillar of the Make Poverty History campaign

Trade justice was a central pillar of the UK's major Make Poverty History campaign.

Trade policy, climate and the environment

The Energy Charter Treaty risks blocking the phase out of fossil fuels. Investors have already brought cases against countries for phasing out coal fired power stations for banning the exploitation of oil and gas near their coastline.

Trade justice in the Global North: the fight against TTIP and CETA

"Today, the EU and US will start the second round of negotiations on what could be the biggest trade deal ever seen. They present us with a stark choice: do we want the rules that govern our society to be decided by government, or by big business?"

Looking to the future: cracks in the system and opportunities for change

As TJM begins its next twenty years, we look out over a global landscape in which trade is more central than ever before. As the tectonic plates of trade shift, the UK Government has choices to make.

1500s to early 1940s

Roots of trade justice

Mid-1940s to 1999

The creation of the modern trade system

1999 onwards

The beginning of trade justice campaigning

Foreword

The 20th anniversary of the Trade Justice Movement (TJM) provides us all - TJM's staff and board, our more than 60 member organisations, and the countless allies and friends who have supported us along the way - an opportunity to look back with satisfaction at two decades of considerable impact.

This report tells the story of that impact, highlighting our many successes over two decades of campaigning in the UK for fairer international trade rules. And it looks back further, exploring the roots of trade injustice and celebrating the efforts of those who led the way in imagining and fighting for an alternative trading system.

The anniversary also offers a moment to look ahead to the challenges to come. There is much to be done. According to TJM's founding statement:

“ *The international trade regime needs fundamental change if it is to succeed and benefit us all. The world needs international trade rules, but to date these have favoured the narrow commercial interests of the most powerful trading nations and the largest corporations, at the expense of the wider public interest and smaller economic enterprises.* ”

This analysis is as relevant and urgent now as it was twenty years ago. Of course, many of the issues we focus on today appear novel: the UK Government's bypassing of parliament and public as it rushes headlong into post-Brexit trade deals; how trade rules undermine efforts to tackle the climate crisis; concerns around the human rights and privacy implications of liberalising the trade in data.

Yet the underlying factors are much the same. Trade policy is too often made behind closed doors, hidden from public view but wide open to corporate lobbyists. Trade deals are designed primarily to further corporate interests, meaning the concerns of people and planet are secondary at best.

International trade has a transformative potential. If the right rules are in place, trade can be an engine for sustainable economic development, equality and climate justice. Our challenge for the next twenty years is to make that happen, in solidarity and partnership with allies in the UK and beyond.

TOM WILLS, DIRECTOR, THE TRADE JUSTICE MOVEMENT

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1500s to 1940s

Roots of trade justice



1500s to 1940s

The roots of trade justice: slavery, colonisation, and trade protections for the UK's industrial revolution

From as far back as the bronze age, there is evidence of people trading everything from tin to spices over long distances. However the scale of this trade increased significantly from the 1500s onwards, fuelled by the enslavement and extractivism practised by the rapidly expanding European empires.

The basis of today's trade system was established in this period. Raw materials and labour, easily exploitable by Global North Governments and their corporations, were systematically undervalued whilst trading in manufactured goods was much more lucrative. Rebalancing this 'unequal exchange', has been a key target for countries of the Global South in later trade negotiations and a central focus of TJM's work.

The UK's industrial revolution was fuelled by the exploitation of workers, including enslaved peoples, [in colonised lands](#) and through extensive trade protections put in place by the UK Government and other colonising powers. These protections included high tariffs and even outright import bans, such as the [Calico Acts](#) which prohibited the import of cotton cloth (but not of raw cotton) from more advanced producers such as India, in order to protect domestic producers.



Map showing trade of the East India Company.

This kind of protectionism is no longer possible, as the use of tariffs and other protections is now strictly limited by [international trade rules](#). This severely constrains [the options](#) available to countries wishing to develop new industries today, and has been another key focus of trade justice campaigning.

“ The Board of Trade ruled in 1708 that it was “absolutely necessary that a trade [the slave trade] so beneficial to the kingdom should be carried on to the greatest advantage.”

Eric Williams, first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Capitalism and Slavery, 1938



1770s to 1840s

The Corn Laws, comparative advantage and early debates about free trade

The [Corn Laws](#) applied tariffs and other restrictions to grain imports, helping to keep grain prices in Britain high. This favoured land owners while increasing costs for industrialists, who had to pay their workers enough to survive and therefore preferred the lower bread prices that came with free trade. The Corn Laws were eventually scrapped following the Great Famine, which in 1846 caused a massive drop in food supplies.

Around this time, and contributing to the Corn Law debates, early economists Adam Smith and David Ricardo were developing theories relating to the benefits of trade. They challenged mercantilist ideas (the use of trade protections to promote domestic industry at the expense of other countries), concluding that [free trade \(without tariffs or restrictions\) makes everyone better off](#).

Debates about the relative benefits of protectionism *versus* free trade continue to the present day. Although often framed in terms of overall benefit, as in Smith and Ricardo's models, the Corn Law debates teaches us that it is not so clear-cut: in most scenarios there are winners and losers, and we need to understand the outcomes that different groups might face when assessing trade policies. This history also reminds us that trade debates originated in rows between elites. Working people and the environment have never been central in trade policy-making, an issue which remains a key concern for TJM.



1915 political cartoon about the Corn Laws.

“ Neither Birmingham, nor Manchester, nor Sheffield, nor Leeds had one word in the making of those laws [the Corn Laws]; they were made exclusively by the representatives of the landed interest.

Mr. M. Phillips MP, House of Commons, 1839

Credits: shorthistoryofen00Iars



1941

The Atlantic Charter: free trade and post-war access to raw materials

The US and UK's objectives for post-war trade were first spelled out in the [1941 Atlantic Charter](#). It stated the the US and UK would, "endeavour to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity."

The focus on states' supposed rights of access to "the raw materials of the world" has been [described as a reassertion of colonial extractivist expectations](#) for the coming post-colonial world.

The statement also makes plain that the US and UK's priorities were *access* to trade rather than the fairness or justice of trade. This vision came to dominate the multilateral trade system as it developed, but is very different from later, more inclusive statements such as the Havana Charter.

“ As leading industrial powers, the prosperity of both [the UK and US] depends on the ready supply of cheap raw materials and on expanding markets for manufactured goods... The insistence on world-wide reduction of tariffs and the removal of trade barriers which has characterised every statement of policy made by either Government ... is thus easily explained.

[Government of India: Comments to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment, 1946 \(quoted by James Scott, 2009\)](#)



A UN preparatory committee composed of some 50 countries meets in Geneva in 1947 to create an International Trade Organization (ITO).

Credits: World Trade Organization (WTO)



Late 1940s

The trade system we nearly got:
the International Trade Organization

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The trade system we nearly got: the International Trade Organization

The [1948 Havana Charter](#) was the founding document of the International Trade Organization (ITO), a body that was intended to be the third component of the post-war Bretton Woods institutions, alongside the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. It was strenuously debated by countries from both North and South, and ultimately signed by a balanced group of 53 countries from all six inhabited continents.

The Charter covered what we now think of as the main content of trade agreements: “the reduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade.” However, [thanks to the influence of Southern nations](#) including Brazil, China and India, this was only the fourth out of six stated objectives. The broader focus was on the need to maintain full employment (with fair labour standards), a healthy balance of payments and progressive economic development.

Some sections responded to the specific concerns of Global South Governments and created space for considerable government intervention. For instance, the Charter included a framework for governments to manage the supply and prices of primary commodities in order to “prevent or alleviate serious economic difficulties” and “provide a reasonable return to producers”.

Despite the popularity of the proposed ITO, the organisation never came into existence, as it was blocked by the US. Despite signing the Charter, the US Congress refused to ratify it, meaning the establishment of the ITO was [“indefinitely postponed”](#) in 1950.



November 1947, Havana. Delegations from 56 countries start negotiating the charter of the ITO. The charter was signed in March 1948 but not ratified by all governments.

Credits: WTO



Late 1940s

The trade system we actually got: the start of multilateral free trade

In parallel with negotiating the ITO Charter, the principle trading nations of the world met in 1947 to agree on a set of tariff and trade barrier reductions. This culminated in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the GATT), signed by 23 countries.

The GATT was intended to be only one strand of a broader international trade agenda, yet - because of the blocking of the ITO by the US - its narrow focus became the entire basis of today's multilateral trade system. This established the liberalisation of trade as the core goal of trade agreements, an agenda with energetic corporate support. Meanwhile the original wider agenda of securing full employment, economic stability and development was sidelined.

Addressing this skewed focus, and its impact on people and planet, has been and remains the ultimate target of the Trade Justice Movement's work.

“ The idea was for the GATT to serve as a temporary vehicle that would quickly obtain results and achieve the provisional application of the tariff negotiations. The larger rule-making and institutional discussions of the ITO Charter would continue and these were clearly meant to prevail over the GATT.

Roy Santana, WTO Counsellor, 2017



Eric Wyndham-White, Executive Secretary and subsequently Director-General of the GATT, 1948 to 1968.

Credits: WTO



The 1960s & 70s

The Global South fights back

By the 1960 and 70s, the hard-won independence of many Southern countries was tasting bittersweet. Following decades of deliberate under-development by their former colonial masters, countries of the South found themselves locked into a cycle of selling raw materials cheaply, while buying more valuable manufactured goods from richer nations. This followed the price imbalance which had been established as the norm during the colonial era. These unfair terms of trade cemented North-South inequalities and severely restricted Southern countries' economic development.

The creation of UNCTAD

The GATT had done nothing to alleviate trade injustice. Meanwhile [new economic theories](#) emerging in Latin America highlighted the role of unjust trade in perpetuating economic hardship. Throughout the 1950s and early 60s, Southern nations began to organise, culminating in the 1964 creation of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). UNCTAD's priorities at the time were: international commodity agreements to secure fair prices, supplementary financing for the South, and trade preferences in the North for the industrial exports of the South, to support Southern industrial development. All of these priorities faced significant resistance from countries of the North, especially the US, leading ultimately to little progress.



13 April 1972 Third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Santiago, Chile

“ *Prebisch [UNCTAD's first Secretary-General] made a fundamental point that developing countries should be compensated for past and future losses through deteriorating terms of trade, either through commodity agreements or compensatory financing. This indicated that he wanted the Conference to be less about trade promotion or the giving of aid than the rectification of an injustice.*

[UNCTAD, 'UNCTAD at 50', 2014](#)

Credits: United Nations, Audiovisual Library of International Law



The New International Economic Order (NIEO)

In 1974, Southern countries intensified their fight back against global economic injustice, working together to push through a radical resolution at the UN called the [“Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order”](#).

Two key principles of the new international economic order were to establish a “just and equitable relationship between the prices of raw materials, primary commodities, manufactured and semi-manufactured goods,” and an “inalienable right” for countries to nationalise their “natural resources and all economic activities.” Had this resolution been realised, it would have created a radically different landscape for global trade.

“ The demands of the NIEO [New International Economic Order] were as simple but all-encompassing as the name suggests. These countries were asking for nothing less than a redrawing of the rules of global trade so that all countries could enjoy economic as well as political independence.

[Kojo Koram, Uncommon Wealth, 2022](#)

‘Special and differential treatment’ for the South

Alongside these radical demands, the 1970s saw the South win concrete changes to the international free trade regime which still endure. The 1979 [‘Enabling Clause’](#) in the GATT established the principle of ‘special and differential treatment’ for Southern countries. This allowed them to be exempted from certain trade rules and to be allowed tariff-free access to Northern markets without needing to scrap their own tariffs in return. Fighting for respect for the principle of Special and Differential Treatment and its realisation in trade rules is a core part of today’s ongoing battle for trade justice.



9 April 1974 Sixth special session of the General Assembly, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Credits: United Nations, Audiovisual Library of International Law

The 1970s, 80s & 90s

The neoliberal fightback

Debt and Structural Adjustment Programmes

The NIEO demands for more equitable terms of trade were never realised. Global economic events of the 1970s, including the collapse of the Bretton Woods exchange rate system and the 1973 and 1979 oil price crises, added to the economic challenges already faced by Southern countries as a result of unequal exchange. Many were forced into unsustainable debt, and then subjected to IMF 'Structural Adjustment Programmes' (SAPs). These programmes [required them to open up to free trade](#) in exchange for IMF support.

These wider economic events also [weakened demand for raw materials in the Global North](#), which left advocates for fairer prices fighting the tide. The [open scorn](#) of ascendant neoliberal leaders Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan further added to this toxic mix.

The birth of the WTO: A post-Cold War policy land-grab?

With the South's vision for a new international economic order thwarted, Northern leaders got on with advancing their own version of radical change: neoliberalism. In trade this reached its fullest expression in the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations (1987 to 1994) which culminated in the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO).



Credit: Levan Ramishvili/Via Flickr

Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan share a laugh in Brussels ahead of the NATO Council meeting 21 Nov. 1985

The Uruguay Round was the most comprehensive set of trade negotiations to date. It aimed to liberalise whole new sectors, ultimately securing the position of dominant Northern corporations. Writing in 1998, the WTO reported that the Uruguay Round ["covered almost all trade"](#), from toothbrushes to pleasure boats, from banking to telecommunications, from the genes of wild rice to AIDS treatments." In line with the spirit of the times, the WTO wondered whether it would be the ultimate trade agreement, never to be changed so substantially again: ["a round to end all rounds."](#)



This is not just trade; this is corporate-friendly 'free market' trade

The WTO bears only the faintest resemblance to the earlier ITO. Warm words on its ['Who We Are'](#) page hint at the earlier broad mission: "The overall objective of the WTO is to help its members use trade as a means to raise living standards, create jobs and improve people's lives." However, the organisation's true *raison d'être* is perhaps more clearly expressed on their ['WTO in brief'](#) page which states that, "[The WTO's] main function is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible."

The WTO agreements - the legal documents which govern international trade for all WTO members - all clearly contribute to the latter goal (except where this disadvantages corporations in the North). They cover trade in goods services, overseas investment, intellectual property, food and farming standards, other regulations and standards and, more recently, agriculture. In order to bring these other areas into the trade system, agreements focus not just on limiting tariffs, but on 'simplifying' and 'harmonising' countries' regulations in order to make it easier for corporations to trade across borders.

“ They're rules for investors.... Thus free trade is a misleading term - the question is who will write the rules for the global economic system, and who will benefit from them.

[Oregon AFL-CIO President Tim Nesbitt, 2002](#)



The first WTO Ministerial Conference was held in Singapore from 9 to 13 December 1996.

Credits: World Trade Organization (WTO)



Free trade - but only when it suits those with power

Participation in the GATT gradually expanded: [128 countries](#) had signed by the end of 1994, while the WTO now boasts 164 members plus a further 25 observers. However, these arrangements have not secured free trade in all circumstances: significant exceptions have been made to suit the preferences of major players.

Agriculture: As far back as 1946 countries including [India and Brazil](#) argued for an end to agricultural subsidies, which allow richer countries (which can afford subsidies) to sell goods very cheaply, unfairly outcompeting farmers in the Global South. Despite this, GATT and WTO disciplines have been minimal and major subsidy programmes still exist in the [US](#), the [UK](#) and [Europe](#). Meanwhile agricultural policy interventions which aim to support food security and maintain decent prices for growers in the Global South, such as public stockholding, [have been obstructed by the WTO](#).

Textiles: As Southern countries industrialised, textiles became an important export sector. Textile corporations in the Global North struggled to compete, so lobbied their governments to secure exceptions to GATT rules, which began in [1961](#). Over the following decades, as textile corporations became transnational, these exceptions became barriers for corporations. In line with these shifting interests, special arrangements were [gradually phased out](#).

Intellectual property: Against the grain of true free trade, the WTO created strong, enforceable rules in 1994 (the [TRIPS](#) provisions) which required countries to protect intellectual property. This obliges countries to give 'first-mover' corporations effective monopolies on production, reduces competition and keeps prices artificially high. This is applied even to essential goods such as medicines, so [reduces supply and increases prices for patients](#) while boosting profits for pharmaceutical firms.



Bangladeshi labourers in a garment factory near Dhaka

Credit: Mamunur Rashid / Alamy Stock Photo

“ The major developed countries did not hesitate to bypass the normal GATT disciplines in sectors of particular importance to the developing countries when the exports were perceived to cause problems for their domestic industry. The normal principle of free and liberal trade was totally forgotten.

[Bhagirath Lal Das, Third World Network](#)

As these examples show, the trade system is not a fixed or a neutral set of rules: it has been adapted to suit certain interests, and it could be changed again to better suit the interests of people and the planet today. This is what TJM is fighting for.



1999

The beginning of trade justice campaigning

2005

Trade is a key pillar of the Make Poverty History campaign

2003 to 2014

Solidarity with the Global South: fighting unequal trade agreements

2008 to 2015

The financial crash and the rise of the right: keeping the trade justice flame alive

2010 to TODAY

Trade policy, climate and the environment

2013 to 2016

Trade justice in the Global North: the fight against TTIP and CETA

2014 to TODAY

Trade justice solidarity with the South - the fight continues

2016 to TODAY

Brexit and our new 'independent trade policy'

2017 to 2020

Trade democracy: the fight for democratic oversight of UK trade deals

2013 to TODAY

Winning the argument on trade and the NHS

The fight against corporate courts: ISDS in BITs, trade deals and the ECT

2017 to TODAY

Wider issues: gender, human rights, data, food standards and health

1999 to TODAY

The beginning of trade justice campaigning



1999 to TODAY

The beginning of trade justice campaigning

The Battle of Seattle

Five years after the creation of the WTO, its members met in Seattle aiming to launch a new round of negotiations. Tensions were already high. [Martin Khor of Third World Network](#) writes, “[Southern countries] put forward dozens of proposals, including changing some of the rules. But most of their demands were dismissed by the major powers that, instead, pushed for their own proposals to further empower the WTO through introducing new areas such as investment, competition [and] government procurement.”

When they arrived at the talks, Southern members found that the important decisions were being made in private ‘green room’ discussions, while their trade ministers [“were left hanging around in the corridors or the canteen, trying to catch snippets of news”](#). Their expected role was to rubber stamp the final agreement in a brief meeting on the final day. Meanwhile environmentalists, labour unions, indigenous groups, international NGOs, and students from around the world had filled the streets, with many [blocking entrances](#) to the convention centre.

The city declared a state of emergency and the police used tear gas and rubber bullets to attempt to disperse the crowds. These protests, combined with the outraged refusal of the African, Caribbean and some Latin American ministers to sign the declaration led to a sudden and total shutdown of the talks.

“ What has been going on in Seattle is a scandal. Developing countries that form more than two-thirds of the membership of the WTO are being coerced and stampeded by the major powers, especially the host country the US, to agree to a Declaration which they were given very little opportunity to draft or to consider.

[Statement by Third World Network, 3 December 1999](#)

“ As trade is a means to development, not an end in itself, the [World Trade Organization’s] policies should be judged not on whether they are ‘trade-distorting’ but whether they are ‘development-distorting’.

[Martin Khor, Third World Network, 2008](#)



Anti-WTO protesters in Seattle, November 1999.

Credit: The Seattle Municipal Archives, 176987



The South reclaims space: the Doha Development Agenda

With the great trading powers chastened by the events in Seattle, the Doha WTO Ministerial of 2001 was dubbed a ‘development round’, which promised that the interests of Southern countries would be more centrally addressed.

The immediate outcomes were mixed. The talks were weighed down by over [200 corporate lobbying groups](#), some of whom were included as members of the official US delegation, while [Oxfam](#) reported that, “The refusal of rich countries to address long-standing concerns of developing countries was apparent.”

Nevertheless, some small victories were secured. The [Declaration](#) committed countries to action on agricultural subsidies and to flexibilities in the implementation of the intellectual property agreement.

Despite these hopeful signs, the ‘development round’ eventually reached deadlock, as rich country governments ultimately proved unwilling to agree to the South’s version of just trade. More than two decades later the Doha negotiations are [technically](#) ongoing, though there have been no new texts since 2008. WTO negotiations have tended to proceed in smaller groupings that inevitably favour those countries committing the most resources.

The Trade Justice Movement is born

To support the Global South’s attempts to rewrite the rules of trade, a coalition of trade unions, civil society organisations and faith groups came together in June 2002 to draft the founding statement of the Trade Justice Movement.

This document, titled, “[For whose benefit? Making trade work for people and the planet](#),” puts forward “a positive agenda for change aimed at using the trade system to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.” The principles that it expresses, including a core belief in the potential of trade and trade rules to benefit people and planet, remain the driving force behind all of TJM’s work.



November 2001. Minister Youssef Hussain Kamal of Qatar at the Fourth Ministerial Conference, Doha.

Credit: WTO



2005

Trade is a key pillar of the Make Poverty History campaign

Trade justice was a central pillar of the UK's major Make Poverty History campaign, alongside further demands that the UK 'drop the debt' and provide 'more and better aid'. Throughout 2005, over 25,000 people took part in the all-night [Wake Up to Trade Justice](#) demonstration, while a further [8,000](#) queued on [Lambeth Bridge](#) to lobby their MPs in parliament.

TJM's [key demands in the campaign](#) mirrored the demands made by Southern countries in trade talks. Agriculture was a key battleground, with demands centred around the need to prevent the destruction of Southern farmers' livelihoods.

2005 📣

Trade justice is subject of largest ever mass lobby of parliament

Over 8,000 people descend on parliament to meet their MPs and demand trade justice.

2006 🏆

Company law changed to protect people and planet

[TJM and partners secured vital changes to UK company law](#) to make companies accountable for their social and environmental impacts overseas.



Demonstrators outside the German Consulate in Newcastle with representatives from Tearfund, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Cafod, Justice & Peace and various other supporters of the North East regional coalition Make Poverty History.

Credit: TJM



2003 to 2014

Solidarity with the Global South: fighting unequal trade agreements

Soon after the WTO was created, [it ruled](#) that the longstanding trade preferences offered by European countries, including the UK, to their former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) were inconsistent with the GATT. The European countries kicked off negotiations for new trade arrangements, 'Economic Partnership Agreements' (EPAs).

EPAs were controversial for two main reasons. Firstly, they replaced non-reciprocal trade arrangements with reciprocal ones, so any low-tariff access offered by EU countries to ACP nations had to be matched by a lowering of tariffs in these much less economically-powerful countries. However there was little guidance as to what asymmetrical arrangements would be allowed and the EU and ACP entered into a protracted battle about how far the latter should lower its tariffs. The EU also wanted ACP countries to negotiate on issues such as services, competition and investment, effectively cranking open their economies for multinational corporations.

EPAs faced global resistance, led by ACP Governments and civil society groups, and supported by solidarity networks across Europe and beyond. TJM coordinated the UK civil society effort, bringing together a wide range of groups and organising major campaign actions including a simultaneous mass lobby of every European embassy in the UK.

As a result of this global effort a majority of ACP countries (53 out of 79) did not sign an EPA at all including all but one of the poorest Least Developed Countries. Of the agreements that were signed, [all but one was goods-only](#), so blocked the EU's push to open up ACP countries to their investors. However the reciprocal liberalisation requirements remained in place, leaving farmers and productive

2007



EPAs mass lobby targeting European embassies

Activists simultaneously arrive at every European embassy in the UK to lobby against harmful EU trade deals with the Global South.

2014



Most countries do not sign EPAs and the agreements that were signed were limited in line with Southern demands

53 out of 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries are still not part of, or implementing any EPA, including all but one of the poorest countries. EU pressure to further liberalise economies was resisted in six out of the seven final EPAs. TJM was key in coordinating UK solidarity and support for this global effort.

industries with less protection. A recent [review of the impacts](#) found that EPAs have increased EU farm exports to southern Africa - with associated impacts on African farmers - while decreasing southern Africa's exports of manufactured goods to Europe.

“ Under the Trade Justice Movement, Northern NGOs were persuasive in impelling their governments on the implications of the EPAs on ACP States. One of the more notable actions of the Northern Campaign was the persuasion of the European Parliament to vote ... in favour of more time to negotiate fairer trade agreements.

[Samuel Kasirye, Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation East Africa, 2014](#)



2008 to 2015

The financial crash and the rise of the right: keeping the trade justice flame alive

The 2008 financial crisis, and the resulting economic hardship faced around the world, became a new focus for TJM. Working with our partners, we [petitioned the Government](#) to include Southern countries in recovery discussions, campaigned for UK citizens to '[Vote Global](#)' in the 2010 general elections, and [lobbied the EU](#) and [the UK](#) to prioritise decent work, sustainability and global justice in their new trade policies and in [supply chain monitoring](#). From 2013 this expanded into a public education initiative, [The Economic Justice Project](#), which educated people across the UK - including activists at the Occupy London protests - about economics and trade justice.

With short-term political opportunities thin on the ground, the movement also worked to deepen its longer term vision for just trade. From 2012 TJM [began work](#) in collaboration with fifty trade unions and civil society organisations from across Europe which culminated in the [Alternative Trade Mandate](#), a document which outlines how trade policies should be changed to better support the interests of people and planet.

“ In recent decades, trade has become less about exchange of goods and more about eliminating social and environmental safeguards in pursuit of corporate profit. This [Alternative Trade Mandate] calls for an overhaul of the trade regime – one that leads to real workable alternatives, where trade works for everyone, and the environment.

[The Alternative Trade Mandate, 2013](#)



Credit: Alternative Trade Mandate

Front cover of the Alternative Trade Mandate, a document outlining how trade policies should be changed to better support the interests of people and planet.



2013 to 2016

Trade justice in the Global North: The fight against TTIP and CETA

In mid 2013 the EU launched secretive negotiations with the US on what would have been the biggest trade deal of all time - the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). In response, the Stop TTIP campaign was established across Europe, with TJM coordinating activity in the UK.

The campaign built enormous momentum, with regular [public events](#) and [protests](#) taking place over several years, and [over a million signatures](#) collected in less than two months for a petition against the deal.

By August 2016, as a [result of public pressure](#) and the resulting disagreements between negotiating parties, the TTIP negotiations were [effectively dead](#). The [election of Donald Trump](#) in the US later that year on an anti-trade ticket put the final nail in the coffin.

“ Today, the EU and US will start the second round of negotiations on what could be the biggest trade deal ever seen. They present us with a stark choice: do we want the rules that govern our society to be decided by government, or by big business?

Ruth Bergan, Director of TJM, Huffington Post, 2013

“ TTIP is already dead. It has been killed off by the millions of European and American activists who have campaigned against it for the last three years.

Nick Dearden, Director of Global Justice Now, The Guardian, 2016



February 2015. Citizens from across Europe protesting against the TTIP treaty negotiations.

Credit: Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament



2013 to TODAY

Winning the argument on trade and the NHS

With the NHS still reeling from the 2012 Health and Social Care Act's privatisation measures, TTIP risked locking in access to the UK's healthcare 'market' for overseas companies. [New 'market access' rules](#) would have prevented the UK establishing an 'exclusive service supplier' for healthcare (e.g. the NHS), or limit the number of doctors and nurses moving over to private practice.

TJM was among the first to highlight the risks posed by TTIP to the NHS. Concern about the impact on the NHS grew into a key strand of the anti-TTIP campaign, with voices as diverse as the [BMA](#) and the [Church Times](#) speaking out.

Early in the negotiations, there seemed little hope that either the NHS or the UK Government would step up in defence. In 2014 a [new pro-privatisation Chief Executive of NHS England](#) was appointed, directly from his leadership role at the US' largest health insurance firm. In that role he had been a [founder member of a pro-TTIP group](#) which lobbied to gain access to European healthcare systems via trade deals. On the government side, the [UK trade minister](#) in 2014 "did not see us as having a carve-out for the NHS per se."

Yet as a result of consistent civil society campaigning, the Conservative Government were eventually forced to make concessions. Since 2019 they have maintained that the [NHS is 'not on the table'](#) in trade talks. Although the actual protections provided to the NHS in trade agreements remain far from adequate, the principled argument has been won.

“ It matters what we think about NHS privatisation. If the current commissioning set-up turned out not to work, in theory, we could lobby our MPs to change it. Under ISDS, that would cease to be possible. The huge and powerful US health industry could throw its significant resources behind a case and argue that changes to our policy had hurt their investment. This could see the government shelling out millions, if not billions of dollars. The threat of this kind of payout is on its own enough to make governments think twice about policy change.

[Ruth Bergan, Director of TJM, Huffington Post, 2013](#)

“ In the UK, the main area of concern has been the NHS – in particular, whether any future measures to reduce the private sector's involvement might be challenged under these provisions.

[House of Commons Library research briefing on TTIP, 2015](#)

“ There will be nothing in the UK's future agreements that will stop it from being able to regulate public services, including the NHS. Ministers have said that there would be no requirement to increase private provision, no allowing American companies to ramp up drug prices, and no undermining the safeguards on healthcare data.

[House of Commons Library briefing on Trade Deals and the NHS, 2020](#)



2013 to TODAY

The fight against corporate courts: ISDS in BITs, trade deals and the ECT

2013 saw the launch of TJM's [long-running campaign against Investor-State Dispute Settlement \(ISDS\)](#): the special rights and private court system granted to multinational companies through trade and investment agreements. In 2015 TJM undertook pioneering research into the impacts of the UK's little-known Bilateral Investment Treaties, as published in the report '[Worried About UK BITs?](#)'. This report was the first to highlight the risks posed by ISDS in UK treaties to countries of the Global South.

ISDS has remained a central issue throughout debates on the UK's post-Brexit trade policy, and has been the key concern relating to the UK's membership of the ISDS-based Energy Charter Treaty.

The campaign has secured some notable successes. Following an oral evidence session with TJM's director Ruth Bergan, the UK [parliament's International Trade Committee](#) concluded that, "The UK cannot just go back to the approach [to International Investment Agreements] it used before 2009, given how hugely controversial international investment policy has since become and how significantly the policy environment has, in consequence, changed." All major UK opposition parties, including [Labour](#), the [Liberal Democrats](#) and the [Greens](#), have now expressed opposition to ISDS. The Conservative Government is yet to be moved but has made [certain concessions](#) in terms of the transparency of proceedings.



TJM joined over 350 organisations calling on governments at COP27 to remove the threat that ISDS poses to the climate.

“ *Ultimately Brexit may improve the UK's ability to attract companies to structure their investments in the UK so as to take advantage of the UK's BIT regime.*

[Norton Rose Fullbright \(a global law firm\), 2017](#)

“ *The Government should consider the compatibility of investment liberalisation and investment protection provisions in International Investment Agreements with UK policies in the areas of development, climate and human rights.*

[International Trade Committee, following oral evidence from TJM, 2019](#)

Credit: Friends of the Earth International



2010 to TODAY

Trade policy, climate and the environment

Since 2010, TJM has driven discussion in the UK on the links between trade policy, environmental damage and the climate emergency. During debates on TTIP, Brexit and innumerable international summits, TJM has helped to establish a coordinated UK civil society and academic response that has demanded trade policy that is consistent with the UK’s environmental and climate commitments.

In 2021, TJM in partnership with Queen Mary University of London established the UK Climate and Trade Commission, a body of experts that works to develop practical proposals on trade and climate for the UK Government. The Commission released their findings in the report “Towards a fair and strategic trade and climate policy” in December 2022.

A recent core focus of TJM’s climate work has been to put pressure on the UK Government over the Energy Charter Treaty: a binding international investment agreement that puts the UK at risk of ISDS litigation over decarbonisation plans. Politicians are taking notice, with MPs including some from the ruling Conservative party speaking out. The government appears to have partially succumbed to the pressure, as in 2022 they supported changes to the treaty which removed ISDS protection from future overseas investors in North Sea oil and gas and in UK coal power. As of October 2023, the fight continues to get a full UK withdrawal from the treaty.

The broader environmental risks of trade deals, including potential impacts on food and farming, deforestation and pollution, have remained a persistent parallel focus. In 2022 TJM collaborated with a group of leading environmental organisations to launch a legal bid against the UK Government over breaches of the UN Aarhus convention. The case has been accepted and is ongoing.

“ The WTO is considered by many as an institution that not only has no solutions to offer on environmental concerns, but is part of the problem.

Katherine Tai, US Trade Representative, 2021

“ The ECT risks blocking the phase out of fossil fuels. Investors have already brought cases against countries for phasing out coal fired power stations, banning the exploitation of oil and gas near their coastline, and requiring environmental impact assessments.

Letter to the Secretary of State from 110 academics, 2023

2022

Some UK fossil fuels investors lose ISDS protections in the new ECT

New investments in North Sea oil and gas, and (from 2024) all investments in UK coal, were exempted from ISDS protections in the updated Energy Charter Treaty.



Credit: Alternative Trade Mandate

This report from the UK Climate and Trade Commission calls for Government-led change so that trade policy helps to deliver COP27 promises.



2016 to TODAY

Brexit and our new 'independent trade policy'

The 2016 Brexit referendum marked a sea-change for trade policy-making, as this competency moved from the EU back to the UK Government.

The government's first job was to establish a new trade relationship with the EU. TJM followed these [highly-charged negotiations](#) closely, reporting on the [justice implications of each option](#) and managing to build [consensus](#) among UK trade unions and civil society organisations on the best way forward. This culminated in the creation of a set of [model agreements](#), which laid out a positive vision for post-Brexit European trade.

Since 2016, the UK has been negotiating new, post-Brexit trade agreements, for example with Australia, New Zealand, India, a group of Asian and Pacific Rim countries (CPTPP), the Gulf states, and Israel. [TJM has followed them all](#), researching what's at stake, building coalitions of resistance, and lobbying the UK Government for change.

“ While trade agreements do not require governments to privatise services, they make it extremely difficult to reverse privatisation... A trade deal with the United States or any other country must not tie the hands of future UK Governments that may wish to restructure the health and social care sectors towards a more collaborative model.

[British Medical Association \(BMA\), 2020](#)

2020 📣

Positive vision for post-Brexit EU-UK trade developed

TJM worked with a broad coalition of trade unions and civil society organisations to develop a [comprehensive shared vision for the UK's post-Brexit trade with the EU](#).

2020 🏆

Mothballing of new US-UK trade deal

Years of trade justice work on the NHS, food standards, and other key areas contributed to controversies, delays and ultimately the [mothballing of US-UK negotiations](#).

Keep our NHS out of US Trade deals

1,419,596 Signatures | 1,500,000 Next Goal

Support now

Sign this petition

First name

Last name

Email

Started 4 June 2019
Petition to [Boris Johnson \(Prime Minister\)](#)

Why this petition matters

Screenshot of 'Keep our NHS out of US trade deals' petition with its 1.4 million signatures.

Credit: Change.org



2017 to 2020

Trade democracy: the fight for democratic oversight of UK trade deals

As the UK regained the power to sign its own trade agreements, the government's [archaic and undemocratic processes](#) for agreeing trade deals became a new focus for TJM. To maximise the opportunities for change presented by the [Trade Bill](#), TJM built a [broad coalition of support](#) for trade democracy, which comprised over a hundred organisations including major trade unions and business associations.

Backed by this coalition, we worked with a cross-party group of MPs and Lords to secure the introduction of [key legislative amendments](#) that mirrored [TJM's demands](#). This included a change that would have given MPs a guaranteed vote over whether new trade deals should be passed: however, in a case of 'turkeys voting for Christmas', [MP's ultimately voted against giving themselves this power](#).



Front cover of the 2019 TJM report "Securing democracy in UK trade policy".



2017 to TODAY

Wider issues: gender, human rights, data, food standards and health

Trade policy covers almost all aspects of everyday life. TJM's analysis and policy work reflects the diversity of its impacts.

Gender

TJM has researched the impacts of trade policy on [gender equality](#) and presented a [feminist analysis](#) of the trade system.

Human rights

Human rights are affected in myriad ways by trade policy, as outlined in TJM's [ongoing research](#) and through events of the [Trade Justice All Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\)](#).

Digital rights

Ownership and control over our data - "[the new oil](#)" - has been put at risk by new e-commerce and digital economy chapters and standalone deals made in trade fora. TJM has been [monitoring the risks](#).



Credit: Manoj Paateel / Shutterstock

Farmers of Maharashtra rally in 2021 to support the rights of smallholder farmers.

2019

Threat to our digital rights revealed in US-UK trade talks leak

[TJM's analysis of leaked documents](#) unearths risks to our data ownership and privacy, to digital product safety and to future protections for platform workers from the proposed US-UK trade deal.

2022

WTO rules on intellectual property suspended for COVID vaccines

Worldwide collaboration between health and trade justice campaigners culminates in the passing of a [waiver to the WTO's TRIPS rules for COVID-19 vaccines](#). Although the waiver was [far from adequate](#), it has some potential to enable an upscaling of production thanks to more flexible intellectual property rules.



2014 to TODAY

Trade justice solidarity with the South - the fight continues

When founded in 2003, the [Trade Justice Movement's mission](#) was to articulate “a positive agenda for change aimed at using the trade system to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.” This remains the driving force behind all of TJM’s work, whether focused on the UK and Europe or on the Global South.

TJM has continued to work on issues specific to Southern countries, including demanding an [improved post-Brexit trade preferences scheme](#) and renewed [demands for policy space](#) to enable Southern Governments to develop their economies in line with their people’s aspirations. Further work has focused on proposed UK trade deals with Southern countries, including [significant research](#) and [international partnership work](#) relating to the proposed UK-India free trade agreement.

Justice for people in the South has also been interwoven into our explorations on broader topics including [health](#), [COVID-19](#), [human rights](#), [climate](#) and [ISDS](#). The TJM aims to highlight this shared struggle in all of our work, and develop common cause between people everywhere to fight for just and sustainable trade.

“ The poorest countries must be permitted to use all industrial policy options, including tariffs - revenues from which can form a significant proportion of GDP - in order to protect, build and diversify their economies.

[TJM, 'Brexit and Trade Justice for the Global South', 2017](#)

“ We, as organisations representing Indian and UK civil society, call on the Indian and UK Governments to rethink the [India-UK] FTA. An FTA between the two countries [as currently outlined] will fail to serve the interests of large numbers of ordinary people in India and the UK or to align with Sustainable Development Goals.

[Trade Justice Movement and Indian and UK partners, 2022](#)

2022 

Trade and the SDGs

TJM partnered with Bond and Traidcraft Exchange to [press the WTO](#) on how trade policy could better support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

2023 

Small wins in the UK's new trade scheme for the Global South

In line with [TJM demands](#), the UK’s new Developing Countries Trading Scheme contains some [small improvements](#) that open up non-reciprocal tariff-free trade for more Southern countries, and may make it easier for Southern countries to expand South-South trade.

The next 20 years

Looking to the future: cracks in the system and opportunities for change

As TJM begins its next twenty years, we look out over a global landscape in which trade is more central than ever before. [Forty-five times more things are traded](#) around the world today than it was in 1950. However, unjust neocolonial dynamics have persisted, with the [terms of trade](#) faced by the Global South deteriorating throughout [most of the twentieth century](#) and global economic [inequalities persisting](#). As the rising tide of trade has clearly not lifted all boats, a renewed focus on trade justice will be vital. Cracks in the structure are beginning to show, opening up significant opportunities to recreate global trade for people and the planet.

The demise of the WTO opens new possibilities

The slow-motion crumbling of the WTO is symptomatic of the shift. After decades of gestation, the WTO only briefly fulfilled its expected function, and is now described by many analysts as [‘toothless’](#) and even [‘comatose’](#) due to its growing inability to make and enforce global trade rules. The Doha ‘development’ round stalemate has wiped out the organisation’s ambitions to establish uniform global trade liberalisation, leading countries to once again revert to creating a patchwork of bilateral and plurilateral trade deals. Even the enforcement of WTO rules now sits outside of the organisation itself, and applies to only a small minority of WTO members, as a result of the [Appellate Body crisis](#) in which the US has blocked the appointment of new judges to oversee trade appeals.

This ‘crisis’ presents a potential opening for the global trade justice movement, which long-time [trade justice advocate Walden Bello](#) has urged countries of the South to grab with both hands. Problematic and increasingly unenforceable



Anti-WTO protester.

global trade rules could be allowed to fade into history, reopening economic development pathways that have been banned under WTO agreements and allowing countries to find new and better ways to collaborate on trade.

The scales begin to tip: shifts in the global trade system

The wider geopolitics of trade are also in flux, presenting further opportunities to rethink our trade system. China has become a major trading nation, eroding the longstanding dominance of the US. At the same time, the [world’s largest free trade area](#) is now established across Africa, comprising 55 countries and 1.2 billion people. Although [far from uncontroversial](#), it represents a shift towards

South-South trade cooperation which [some expect to boost intra-Africa trade](#) and support economic opportunities across the continent.

Meanwhile the EU and many of its member states are capitulating to public pressure to [leave the Energy Charter Treaty](#), a move that would begin restoring the freedom of governments to take action against climate change without risking ISDS. Progress is also emerging on intellectual property, as the [COVID-19 TRIPS waiver](#) and the [UNFCCC's commitments](#) to green technology transfer are challenging the WTO's three-decade drive to protect corporate intellectual property through the trade system.

The UK's role: holding back or pushing forward?

As the tectonic plates of trade shift, the UK Government has choices to make. Will the UK support or punish Southern countries that choose to reclaim their policy freedom from the wreckage of the WTO? Will the UK follow the European trend and exit the Energy Charter Treaty, as part of a broader rejection of the ISDS system? Will the UK stand in the way of access to medicines and green technology diffusion?

As the UK's key organising body on trade justice, TJM is working with parliamentarians, trade unions and civil society organisations to develop a just and sustainable vision for trade and push the UK Government towards a progressive response. As we look forward to the next 20 years, the time is ripe to capitalise on our work to date, leaning into these emerging opportunities to secure real change.

As expressed in our [founding statement](#), and equally true today, "The performance and legitimacy of the international trade system must be judged in relation to its ability to meet global challenges: namely poverty, social injustice and environmental degradation. The challenge is clear, but meeting it will require political will and fundamental changes to the world trading regime so as to put people and the environment at its heart. This is the demand of [the member organisations of TJM] and we call on our governments to rise to the challenge."



10th Extraordinary Summit of the African Union, signing of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement. Kigali, 21 March 2018.

“ In becoming members of the WTO, most developing countries made far-reaching concessions, making development well-nigh impossible for many. It is time for developing country governments to retake that critical policy space they yielded.

They can move either individually or collectively. Governments can bring back quotas on agricultural imports that were banned by the Agreement on Agriculture. When it comes to manufacturing, governments can bring back banned trade policies like “local content” measures to build up their industries. Indeed, they may eventually decide to make the TRIPS waiver no longer a matter of negotiation but a “fact on the ground.”

[Walden Bello, 'The Global South in the WTO: Time to go on the offensive', 2022](#)

A timeline of UK trade and trade justice

On the occasion of the Trade Justice Movement's 20th anniversary

NOVEMBER 2023

Members and supporters

ActionAid
ACTSA
All We Can
Baby Milk Action
Banana Link
BECTU
British Association for Fair Trade Shops
Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (supporter)
Cafedirect
CAFOD
Christian Aid
Christians On the Left
Church in Wales
Church of England
Church of Scotland, Board of World Mission
Equal Exchange Trading Ltd
Fair Trade Wales
Friends of the Earth
Global Justice Now
GMB

Goodweave
Greenbelt Festival
Greenpeace
Health Poverty Action
Labour Behind The Label
National Federation of Women's Institutes
National Justice and Peace Network
National Union of Students
One World Week
PCS
People & Planet
Peru Support Group
Quaker Peace and Social Witness
Reading International Solidarity Centre
SCIAF
Send a Cow
Shared Interest
SPEAK
Student Christian Movement
Teach A Man To Fish

Tearfund
The Fairtrade Foundation
The Woodcraft Folk
Tools for Self Reliance
Trading Visions
Transform Trade
Trocaire
TUC
UNISON
Unitarian Office of Social Responsibility
United Nations Association of the UK
United Reform Church
VSO
War on Want
We Own It
Women's Environmental Network
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
World Vision UK
WWF (supporter)

Authors

This report was written by Laura Bannister and Ruth Bergan.

The Trade Justice Movement

The Trade Justice Movement is a network of nearly 60 organisations, including trade unions, environmental groups and justice campaigns, who push for trade policy that works for people and planet.

🌐 www.tjm.org.uk
✉ [@TradeJusticeMov](https://twitter.com/TradeJusticeMov)



TRADE JUSTICE
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