

## Civil Society Letter on the Future of the WTO Negotiations

February 23, 2016

Dear Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO),

**The upcoming General Council Meeting, scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, is an opportunity for Members of the WTO to reassert, and accept, the importance of the development mandate in the future negotiations of the WTO.**

As 145 civil society organizations including trade unions, environmentalists, farmers, development advocates, and public interest groups from around the world, we have persistently challenged the existing rules of the WTO that are incompatible with people-centered development. Many of us were in Nairobi seeking to forestall efforts by some developed countries to abandon the so called "Doha development agenda" to be able to replace it with new negotiations of a set of "new issues," that would impact deeply on domestic economies and constrain national policy space required for development and the public interest.

For civil society as well as according to the demands of the majority of the membership, the WTO memberships had agreed to strengthening Special and Differential Treatment for all developing countries; this includes removing WTO obstacles to food security, including through removing WTO obstacles to public stockholding for food security and developing a concrete and workable Special Safeguard Mechanism. In contrast, the abandonment of the development mandate would lock out the potential to fulfill this mandate in the future, thus locking the world further into the existing inequalities and imbalances forever.

In terms of process, we were shocked to witness how the majority of WTO members were kept out of the discussions on core elements of the agriculture negotiations and the contentious issues under the Ministerial Declaration. The lack of transparency, participation and inclusiveness in the Nairobi Ministerial Conference contradicts the WTO's claim to be a member-driven and rules-based institution and to operate by consensus.

Developed countries have been quick to promote their interpretation of the Nairobi Ministerial Declaration through the media, proclaiming the "death of Doha" and the "birth of new WTO" and pointing to the potential for "new approaches" and "new issues" at the WTO.

As global observers to the WTO negotiations, we disagree with this assessment. We have heard developing countries repeatedly and continuously reiterating their position calling for the reaffirmation of the Doha Mandate, both throughout the process in Geneva and in the Nairobi Ministerial Conference, as well as opposing the expansion of the WTO's agenda without first addressing its worst flaws and asymmetries.

A handful of WTO Members succeeded in inserting a reference to "other issues for negotiations" under the Ministerial Declaration. At the World Economic Forum, a few countries set forth a list of some these issues. This list includes issues that many developing countries, and civil society around the world, have rejected to negotiate in the WTO as well as in bilateral or plurilateral so-called free trade agreements (FTAs),

It is outrageous to think of allowing such ejected topics back into the WTO.

It is important to underline that under Article III.2 of the Agreement Establishing the WTO, "further negotiations" may take place among Members "concerning their multilateral trade relations." Much of this long list of "new issues" proposed by few members such as investment would not fall within the boundaries of this mandate.

**We expect that developing countries will again strongly reassert their understanding of the Nairobi Ministerial Declaration at the upcoming WTO General Council Meeting and to uphold the development mandate, and not so-called "new issues," as the core agenda of any future negotiations within the WTO. We call on developed country members and others pushing the "new issues" agenda to put aside specious claims that "Doha did not deliver" and instead, to actually deliver on the promises included in the development mandate.**

Sincerely,

## International Networks and Organizations

1	ACP Civil Society Forum	The Forum is a coalition of 80 not-for-profit organisations working on issues relating to ACP-EU development cooperation. It seeks to cater for the diverse range civil society development issues within the wide geographic coverage of the ACP group.
2	ActionAid International	ActionAid is an international organisation, working with over 15 million people in 45 countries for a world free from poverty and injustice.
3	Friends of the earth international (FoEI)	FoEI is the world's largest grassroots environmental network with over 2 million members and supporters around the world. It campaigns on today's most urgent environmental and social issues. FoEI challenge the current model of economic and corporate globalization, and promote solutions that will help to create environmentally sustainable and socially just societies.
4	LDC Watch	LDC Watch is a global alliance of national, regional and international civil society organisations (CSOs), networks and movements based in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).
5	Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG)	PANG is a Pacific regional network promoting economic justice in globalisation with specific attention to: 1) Accountability and transparency in economic and trade policy processes, 2) Poverty eradication, 3) Equitable development and sustainable livelihoods (opportunity, access, impact) and 4) Food sovereignty and environmental sustainability.

## National Organizations and Networks

6	Fórum das Organizações Não Governamentais Angolanas (FONGA)	Angola
7	Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARDC)	Antigua and Barbuda
8	Center for Encounter and Active Non-Violence	Austria
9	Civil Society Bahamas	Bahamas
10	Bangladesh Krishok Federation	Bangladesh
11	Equity and Justice Working Group	Bangladesh
12	Barbados Association of Non Governmental Organizations	Barbados
13	Belize Enterprise for Sustainable Technology	Belize
14	Groupe de Recherche et d'Action pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture et du Développement (GRAPAD)	Benin Republic
15	Botswana Council of Non Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO)	Botswana
16	Civil Society Organization Network for Development (RESOCIDE)	Burkina Faso

17	Action Développement et Intégration Régionale (ADIR)	Burundi
18	Conseil des ONG Agrées du Cameroun (CONGAC )	Cameroon
19	Association Commerciale, Agricole, Industriel et du Service (ACAISA)	Cape Verde
20	Conseil Inter ONG En Centrafrique (CIONGCA)	Central African Republic
21	Cook Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (CIANGO)	Cook Islands
22	Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País	Cuba
23	Kalingo Carib Council	Dominica
24	Alianza ONG	Dominican Republic
25	Conseil de Concertation des ONGs de Développement (CCOD)	DR Congo
26	Conseil National des ONG de Développement (CNONGD)	DR Congo
27	Forum des ONG pour le Développement Durable (FONGDD)	Eq. Guinea
28	Cotonou Task Force	Ethiopia
29	Solidarité	France
30	Concertation Nationale Des Organisations paysannes et des Producteurs (CNOP)	Gabon
31	Worldview	Gambia
32	Forschungs- und Dokumentationszentrum Chile-Lateinamerika e.V. (FDCL)	Germany
33	Agricultural Workers Union of TUC	Ghana
34	Inter Agency Group of Development Organizations (IAGDO)	Grenada
35	Federation de Femmes Entreprenuers et Affairs de la CEDEAO (FEFA)	Guinea
36	Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa (INEI)	Guinea-Bissau
37	Women Across Differences (WAD)	Guyana
38	Programme de Plaidoyer Pour une Intégration Alternative (PPIA)	Haiti
39	ATTAC Hungary Association	Hungary
40	Amda Jaivik krishi Samuh	India

41	ANANDI, MAKAAM (Mahila Kisan Adhikar Manch)	India
42	Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union (APVVU)	India
43	ASHA Kisan Swaraj	India
44	Bihar Women's Network	India
45	Caring Citizens Collective	India
46	Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society (CECOEDECON)	India
47	Centre for Social Justice	India
48	CIVIC Bangalore	India
49	Collective for Advancement of Womens Land and Livelihoods Rights	India
50	Debjeet, Living Farms	India
51	Diverse Women for Diversity	India
52	Earthcare Books	India
53	Forum for Biotechnology & Food Security	India
54	Gene Campaign	India
55	Gramya Resource Centre for Women	India
56	The Hawkers Federation	India
57	India FDI Watch	India
58	INFAM(IndianFarmers Movement)	India
59	Initiative for Health & Equity in Society	India
60	Janpahal	India
61	Khaadya Nyaya Abhiyan	India
62	Medico Friends Circle	India
63	Mishing Farmer's Association, Majuli, Assam	India
64	Mukta Srivastava - Anna Adhikar . Abhiyan Maharashtra	India
65	Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI)	India

66	Muskaan Jaivik SHG - Himachal Pradesh	India
67	Paschim Sridharkati Janakalyan Sangha	India
68	Ponnithai Sappani	India
69	Research Foundation for Science Technology & Ecology	India
70	Richharia Conservation Farm, Bardhaman, West Bengal	India
71	Right to Food Campaign	India
72	Rythu Swarajya Vedika	India
73	The Sahayak Trust	India
74	Sangtin, Sitapur, U.P.	India
75	Satark Nagrik Sangathan	India
76	Save our Rice Campaign	India
77	Sheelu Francis	India
78	SPREAD, Koraput, Odisha, India	India
79	Sundry Perumal	India
80	Sunray Harvesters	India
81	Susthayee Krishi Bikash Manch	India
82	Swadeshi Andolan	India
83	Swala Kisan Sangathan- Godda, Jharkhand	India
84	Tamilnadu Organic FArmers' Federation	India
85	Udayani Social Action Forum	India
86	Ulka Mahajan - sarvahara Jan andolan	India
87	Uthnau, Mallarpur, West Bengal	India
88	Water Initiatives Odisha	India
89	Trócaire	Ireland
90	Alliance Pour la Reconstruction et le Developpement Post-Conflict (ARDPC)	Ivory Coast

91	Jamaica Civil Society (Coalition) Forum	Jamaica
92	National Council of NGOs	Kenya
93	Kiribati Association of Non-Governmental Organisation (KANGO)	Kiribati
94	Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN)	Lesotho
95	Policy Analysis and Research Institute of Lesotho (PARIL)	Lesotho
96	West African Women Association (WAWA)	Liberia
97	Plate-Forme Nationale des Organisations de la Societe Civile de Madagascar	Madagascar
98	Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN)	Malawi
99	Foundation pour le Developpement au Sahel (FDS)	Mali
100	Marshall Islands Council of NGOs (MICNGOS)	Marshall Islands
101	Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)	Mauritius
102	FSM Alliance of NGOs (FANGO)	Micronesia
103	National Forum for Mozambiquan NGOs and CBOs (TEIA)	Mozambique
104	Namibia Non-Governmental Organisations Forum Trust	Namibia
105	Nauru Island Association of NGOs (NIANGO)	Nauru
106	All Nepal Peasants Federation (ANPFa)	Nepal
107	Both ENDS	Netherlands
108	Association Nigérienne des Scouts de l Environnement du Niger	Niger
109	National Association of Nigerian Traders (NANTS)	Nigeria
110	Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre	Nigeria
111	Niue Island (Umbrella) Association of NGOs (NIUANGO)	Niue
112	ATTAC Norway	Norway
113	Melanesian NGO Centre for Leadership (MNCL)	Papua New Guinea
114	Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)	Philippines
115	Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services (IDEALS)	Philippines

116	National Confederation of Small Farmers and Fishers Organizations (PAKISAMA)	Philippines
117	Rwanda Civil Society Platform	Rwanda
118	Samoa Umbrella for Non Governmental Organisation (SUNGO)	Samoa
119	Forum das Ong de São Tomé e Príncipe (FONG-STP)	Sao Tomé and Príncipe
120	Plate-forme des acteurs non étatiques pour le suivi de l'Accord de Cotonou au Sénégal	Senegal
121	Liaison Unit of the non-governmental organisations of Seychelles (LUNGOS)	Seychelles
122	Civil Society Movement of Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
123	Development Service Exchange (DSE)	Solomon Islands
124	South African NGO Council (SANGOCO)	South Africa
125	Iyanola (St. Lucia) Council for the Advancement of Rastafari Incorporated (ICAR)	St. Lucia
126	Windward Islands Farmers' Association (WINFA)	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
127	Stichting Projekta	Suriname
128	Council for NGOs (CANGO)	Swaziland
129	Alliance Sud	Switzerland
130	Berne Declaration	Switzerland
131	Tanzania Association of NGOs	Tanzania
132	Worldview	The Gambia
133	Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (MVIWATA)	Tanzania
134	The Asia Foundation	Timor-Leste
135	Groupe d'Action et de Reflexion sur l'Environnement et le Développement (GARED)	Togo
136	Civil Society Forum of Tonga (CSFT)	Tonga
137	Grassroots Organisations of Trinidad & Tobago (GOTT)	Trinidad & Tobago

138	Tuvalu Association of NGOs (TANGO)	Tuvalu
139	Consumer Education Trust	Uganda
140	Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) Uganda	Uganda
141	Global Justice Now	United Kingdom
142	AFL-CIO	United States
143	Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO)	Vanuatu
144	Zambia Council for Social Development (ZCSD)	Zambia
145	National Association of NGOs (NANGO)	Zimbabwe