

„Making Trade work for People and the Planet Towards an Alternative Mandate for European Trade and Investment Policy“



The need for an alternative trade and investment policy in the EU

Two years ago, a number of trade activists and campaigners from Europe and the Global South initiated a process of working together “Towards an alternative trade mandate for the EU”. After broad consultation and exchanges, this process has now reached a new stage in our struggle.

Until now, the process resulted in a joint document ([“Towards an alternative trade mandate for the EU”](#)), outlining an initial vision of what alternative trade and investment policies could look like. Translated in [several languages](#), this document has been widely circulated and discussed in workshops on several occasions in Europe. These exchanges have indicated a widespread acknowledgement of **the need for more in depth-and coordinated campaign work for alternatives in civil society networks and a widespread support for the alternative trade mandate process.**

The process towards an alternative trade mandate for the EU

After an important strategy meeting in Aachen (Germany) in January 2011, our objective is to move forward, going to the heart of EU trade and investment policy to challenge the mandates given to the Commission’s DG Trade by the Council, which are the basis for the EU's free trade negotiations.

European trade and investment policy must respect and serve the overarching aims of universal and indivisible human rights, decent work, democracy, ecological justice, gender equality, justice between countries, regions, social classes, castes and ethnicities, and the fight against poverty. **We propose to develop a dynamic process of mobilization and interaction among networks in Europe, that will work towards the development of a comprehensive alternative trade mandate within the next two years.** The process will also seek input from organisations in the global South, dealing with the impacts of EU trade and investment policy and also engaged in developing alternatives.

The specific objectives of the process are:

- To **increase awareness and to inspire more public debate** about the impact of the current EU trade and investment policy regarding social rights, employment, development, gender equity and the environment both inside and outside Europe.
- To **develop an “Alternative Mandate for European Trade and Investment Policy”** based on a broad consultation with Fair Trade activists, trade unions, migrant workers, environmentalists, women’s, human rights, development and farmers’ groups and other interested groups.
- To **contribute building a broad European alliance** between these groups, which will campaign and mobilize people, media and policy makers in a discussion and debate on EU trade policy, and on alternative trade and investment policies
- To **help strengthening north-south solidarity** and to give civil society groups in the Global South a forum to voice their concerns and interests and claim their rights in trade and investment policies.

Where are we now and what do we have in mind

These objectives will be achieved through focused consultations with key civil society actors, the compilation of the Mandate and other documents, alliance building in Europe, building links to campaigns in the Global South, establishing a web site, campaigning to promote the alternative

trade and investment policies and finding resources to support it.

1. Focused consultations

The focused consultations will enable us to reach out to different European civil society actors, both to access and engage their expertise and to gather their concerns and interests on specific areas and aspects of Europe's trade and investment policies. **Four concrete consultations** are already planned on **a)** raw materials, consumption and climate; **b)** human rights, labour rights and migration issues; **c)** food and agriculture; and **d)** on democracy in trade and investment policies. All consultations will be held from June 2011 to June 2012. **The results of these consultations will be the basis for developing the Alternative Mandate for European Trade and Investment Policy.** The consultations will ideally involve actors from different European countries.

2. Writing of Key Documents

A writing group has been established which is, first of all, in charge of drafting the **Alternative Mandate for European Trade and Investment Policies**, based on the principles developed in the already existing vision text ("Towards an alternative trade mandate for the EU") and the outcome documents of the focused consultations.

3. Campaigning

The process of reaching out to different civil society actors and the focused consultations will help make the project known more widely and ground it in a solid basis of support and participation.. The social actors involved in the process will form an alliance to campaign and mobilize public support for a complete transformation of EU trade and investment policy – parallel with the necessary changes of the economic model inside the EU. One key moment for our campaigning will be the EP Elections in 2014.

4. Website

A Website will be established as one of the main tools for the coordination, exchange and visibility of the project and for campaigning and awareness raising.

How can you get involved and contribute

The alternative trade mandate process is open to all groups and individuals who want to change European trade and investment policy to make it work for people and the planet. No matter whether you just want to be regularly informed, you want to officially support the process without putting any work into it or whether you want to become more active - let us know!

You can **receive regular updates** on the process, you can **join one of the working groups** (for example, those organising the consultations or the writing group). **If you have an idea that is not yet included** in the process but that you think fits well - an idea for a trade-related issue that we shouldn't miss, a campaign, a workshop, an action etc. - lets try to integrate it together.

The alternative trade mandate process will be what people like you make out of it - so come and join us!

To get involved contact: info@s2bnetwork.org

Organisations or networks that have actively supported the process:

Africa Europe Faith Justice Network, Attac Germany, France, Spain and Austria, Campagna per la Riforma della Banca Mondiale, Colibri, Corporate Europe Observatory, Ecologistas en Acción, European Coordination Via Campesina, Fair Trade Advocacy Office, FAIR, FIAN Germany and FIAN International, Friends of the Earth Europe, MISEREOR, Oxfam Germany, Oxfam Solidarité-Solidariteit (Belgium), SOLIDAR, Seattle to Brussels Network, Terra Nuova/Europafrica Campaign, Transnational Institute, Wide network and World Development Movement.

In the strategy meeting in January 2011, the following additional organisations participated: Aitec, AK Europa, Arbeitsgemeinschaft Bäuerliche Landwirtschaft, Coalition of Flemish North-South Movement 11.11.11., Comhlanh, Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers (CFMW), Transnational Migrant Platform (TMP) & CSC, EED, European Milk Board (EMB), Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Philippinenbüro im Asienhaus, Platform DSE, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, SETEM, Supermacht.nl, Traidcraft, Transfair, Xarxa de Consum and Solidari.