

World Trade Organisation

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is made up of 153 countries negotiating trade deals that aim to progressively liberalise trade.

The deal currently on the table, the 'Doha Round', would force developing countries to open up their economies too much and too fast, undermining development.

Poorer countries will also have to commit to continuing to open up their economies regardless of what happens in the future. This will lead to:

- deepening poverty
- increasing inequality
- restricting governments' ability to pursue their own development strategies.

The WTO's free trade agenda has contributed to the financial, food and climate crises we are now facing. There can be no going back to business as usual.

Under the right circumstances trade can be a powerful tool in the fight against poverty, but a fundamental change in approach is needed if the WTO is to reduce poverty.

Latest news

Monday 30 November 2009 marked the first WTO meeting of trade ministers in four years. The meeting in Geneva was part of an effort to revive the languishing Doha Round negotiations and bring them to a conclusion during 2010. Ministers also discussed the WTO's role in tackling the economic and climate crises we face.

[Read our response to the 2009 Ministerial Meeting in Geneva.](#)

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