

GET THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION OUT OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT !!

“OUR WORLD IS NOT FOR SALE !”

1. We are members of environmental, economic and social development NGOs, faith-based and community-based organisations, workers, women, youth and other peoples organisations which participated in a workshop on “Trade and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)”, 4-5 April 2002 in Cape Town, under the auspices of the Trade Strategy Group, a nation-wide South African network of NGOs, labour organisations and social movements.

2. We have examined the current United Nations WSSD Chairman’s Paper which provides the basis for the preparatory discussions on the text to be presented for inter-governmental negotiations, and multi-stakeholder (civil society) dialogue with governments in the World Summit on Sustainable Development that is due to take place in Johannesburg 26 August to 4 September 2002.

3. OUR GENERAL POSITIONS AND CONVICTIONS

On the basis of our long and deep experiences in our organisations and communities, and from our discussions in this workshop we are convinced that

3.1 Sustainable development is a participatory process based on sustainable use of global resources and on fundamental changes in: the current methods and modes of economic production, the unbalanced and unjust social and geographical distribution of income and economic resources, and the grossly exaggerated levels of consumption for privileged minorities. These unsustainable global features demand socially equitable and environmentally sustainable global redistribution.

3.2 Economies must be designed and operate to serve people and the planet, rather than people and the planet serving economies and narrow economic interests. Thus we are opposed to the over-exploitation, commercialisation and privatisation of natural resources (particularly water), community knowledge, people (particularly women and children) and public social services, which are being turned into exploitable and trade-able commodities rather than protected and preserved as public goods and human rights. Such policies are aggravating the exploitation and outflow of natural and human resources from the poorer communities and countries, especially in Africa, to the rich.

3.3 International trade must be fundamentally restructured and redirected in practice, and re-defined in policies to ensure the protection of peoples livelihoods, food security, social needs and cultures, and domestic production within communities and countries. This demands the ending of trade and production subsidies in the more highly industrialised economies which encourage export dumping and irresistible import competition in less industrialised economies; and

which has damaging effects on production, employment and other aspects of our societies and economies. This also requires the ending of current policies of import tariff reductions in weaker economies that contribute further to such unfair competition and pressures.

3.4 International agreements are essential to deal with matters of common concern and responsibility of all humanity on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities. These concerns include the guarantee of fundamental human and labour rights, gender equity, environmental integrity and justice enshrined in global agreements. These must constitute the over-arching framework of principles within which all other policies, particularly on international trade and investment, and economic programmes are located.

3.5 International institutions and meetings, such as the WSSD, are essential platforms for all peoples and nations to negotiate such fundamental policy frameworks within agreed principles. The organisations of the United Nations are the central universal agencies, although they are in dire need of reform and democratisation. Above all, they are in serious danger of being taken over or subordinate to the currently dominant trade-and-growth ideology and the corporate interests driving it. This must be resisted and reversed. In this light, too, other powerful international organisations, particularly the IMF, World Bank and the WTO must – if they are to continue to have any role - be firmly located within the international system of organisations and subject to the collective framework of global agreements.

3.5 The World Trade Organisation is not an institution located within and serving the long-established and evolving body of international agreements by and for humanity and the planet. The WTO is a recently devised instrument for economic globalisation, using international trade and ‘trade-related’ agreements to advance the interests and serve the needs of global corporations. These are promoting the ever-greater ‘integration’ - or rather the opening up to global corporations - of all economies and all economic sectors within the emerging ‘globalised’ economy.

4. OUR PROPOSALS AND DEMANDS TO THE WSSD ON THE WTO

It is within the above understandings that

- We do not accept that neo-liberal economic globalisation promoting limitless ‘growth’, deregulated markets and exponential increases in consumption is compatible with sustainable development.
- We do not accept that international trade and investment as currently regulated and projected by the WTO serve sustainable development and our needs.
- We are convinced that the so-called Doha Development Agenda that emerged from the most recent WTO Ministerial Conference, in November 2001, will not advance the development needs of the majority of the world’s population and will undermine global environmental management and the crucial Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) promoting this.

And we therefore make the following proposals and demands to the WSSD

- 4.1 The WSSD must not promote the WTO in any way or form, because WTO-driven economic globalisation does not and cannot promote sustainable development and global equity and justice.**
- 4.2 The WSSD must remove any references to the Doha Declaration which was produced through a thoroughly undemocratic process and is being used by supporters of the WTO to push the world towards a new round of negotiations for the extension of the coverage and powers of the WTO.**
- 4.3 The WSSD must counter the current global 'free' trade system and regime by promoting alternatives based on local production for local markets and needs, and in order to reduce the social, environmental and economic costs of international trade and dependence upon foreign markets.**

5. OUR PROPOSALS ON NePAD

Within the above considerations and positions, we note that the WSSD Chairman's Paper (Para 21, a) states that actions are required to "promote the establishment of mechanisms necessary for the immediate implementation of the New Partnership for African Development (NePAD) in its totality".

While we recognise the high aspirations in the 'African Renaissance' initiative and the aim of African unity, we are concerned that NePAD is

- located within the currently dominant globalised economic system, which is leading to ever-widening inequality and deepening poverty in the world;**
- based on an economic growth model driven by foreign investment and the private sector, as opposed to holistic people-centred development that prioritises the satisfaction of peoples needs and human rights;**
- promotes the discredited and destructive structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and World Bank including investment liberalisation, privatisation and so-called PPPs (public-private partnerships) etc.**

We also note that NePAD

- has been largely created and driven by the South African government in conjunction with a few other of the larger/stronger governments in Africa;**
- has been produced with minimal, if any, input and ownership by all African governments and peoples;**
- has been publicly launched with virtually no information to and engagement with the people of Africa, or the incorporation into NePAD of the wide and varied experiences from African social movements;**

- **has, to the contrary, been elaborated through wide-ranging bilateral and multilateral consultations with foreign governments, multilateral agencies such as the WTO and World Bank, and business organisations on the aims, substance and financing of this programme.**

In this context

- 5.1 We urge all African people's economic, social, labour, environmental, cultural, professional, political and other organisations to support this preliminary statement; and to subject this African programme to thorough and detailed analysis, public dissemination and discussion, and appropriate responses and actions, based on the principle that popular participation and ownership is fundamental to democratic process and sustainable development.**
- 5.2 We call upon African governments to suspend any further implementation or international promotion of this programme, pending full governmental engagement, broad and inclusive popular consultation within civil society, and active engagement between civil society and governments throughout Africa on the substance and aims of this programme.**
- 5.3 We urge the allies of African social movements, and civil society activists throughout the world to support these popular African initiatives; and, in turn, to challenge the governments of the highly industrialised economies on their roles and responsibilities, together with their transnational corporations and international financial forces, in shaping a global economy and regime so inimical (hostile) to the needs and aspirations of the people of Africa, the rest of the Third World, and the world.**

“ANOTHER AFRICA IS POSSIBLE !!”

“ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE !!”