



UNCTAD

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**Policy Dialogue: Redefining the Role of the Government in
Tomorrow's International Trade**

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SESSION 3: AN INCLUSIVE PROCESS FOR TRADE POLICYMAKING

***CIVIL SOCIETY'S PARTICIPATION IN TRADE POLICY MAKING:
CASE OF CUTS INTERNATIONAL***

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Civil Society's Participation in Trade Policy Making
Case of CUTS International

UNCTAD Policy Dialogue
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OUTLINE

- ✓ Why civil society's participation in trade policy making?
- ✓ CUTS' experience in participating in trade policy making in India and Zambia
- ✓ CUTS' work on civil society's participation in trade policy making in India and Africa
- ✓ Lessons from CUTS' work on inclusive trade policy making
- ✓ Points to ponder

Why civil society's participation in trade policy making?

- Trade measures are no longer confined to *borders*
- There are *trade-related* measures and *linkages* between trade and non-trade issues
- To challenge the thinking: “exports are good, imports are bad” – to *align* consumer interests with producer interests

Core mandate for civil society's participation in trade policy making

We shall therefore at the national and international levels continue to promote a better public understanding of the WTO and to communicate the benefits of a liberal, rules-based multilateral trading system – *Paragraph 10* of the Doha Ministerial Declaration.

Participation in trade policy making in India

- ❖ National Advisory Committee on International Trade (1996-2004)
- ❖ Inputs to WTO Ministerial Conferences, and member of the official delegation to the Hong Kong Ministerial
- ❖ Active engagement in amendments to policies and laws – Patents Act, Competition Act, Competition Policy, FDI Policy, Manufacturing etc.
- ❖ Two important suggestions:
 - Long-term (five year) trade policy 😊
 - Inter-State Trade Council 😞
- ❖ Active participation in UNCTAD conferences, in conducting studies and organising conferences, and engaging Parliamentarians

Participation in trade policy making in Zambia

- **Trade Expansion Working Group** – representing those stakeholders not having good access to policy making process
- **Awareness generation on virtues and challenges of Aid for Trade – Enhanced Integrated Framework**
- **Active involvement with the National Implementation Unit of the EIF projects**
- **Engagement with Parliamentarians**

CUTS' work on civil society's participation in trade policy making in India and Africa

- **GRANITE in India** – capacity building of grassroots and community-based organisations
- **MINTDEV in India** – mainstreaming trade into national development strategies – embed social and political considerations in trade policy
- **FEATS in Africa (Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia)** – Inclusive Trade Policy Making Index – 14 action variables determining ITPMI – from 9.50 in Kenya and Zambia to 8.50 (Malawi) to 8.25 (Uganda) to 7.50 (Tanzania)

Why more and more civil society engagement is needed in generating better political buy-in for contentious policies such as FDI in multi-brand retail in India

Myths and Realities



Lessons from CUTS' work on inclusive trade policy making

- **No one-size-fits-all in trade policy prescription**
- **Better to have an inclusive and participatory process with wider stakeholder consultation**
- **A stark contrast between India and Zambia – political consensus building is most important**
- **Evolving nature of trade policy making – importance of information flow and capacity building of stakeholders**

Points to ponder

- ✓ **Why is CSO engagement more inclusive in some countries than others?**
- ✓ **Civil society's articulation of demands – *supply does not always create demand***
- ✓ **Impact of inclusiveness – social, economic, environmental impact**
- ✓ **Development of institutions on norms, procedures and rules so as to facilitate convergence of expectations of a diverse group of stakeholders – making the process from *de facto* to *de jure***



THANK YOU