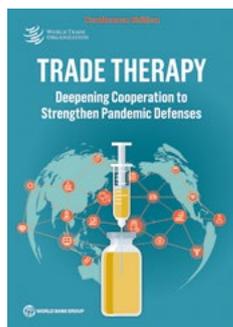
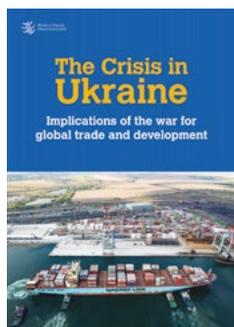




Annual Report

About this report

This report covers WTO activities in 2021 and the early part of 2022. Major developments since then, such as the war in Ukraine and the evolving COVID-19 situation, are covered in separate publications issued in 2022:



At the start of the report, Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala reflects on the current challenges facing world trade (as of end-June 2022) and the role of the WTO in helping the world address these challenges. She also looks back at the successful conclusion of the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference.

This report was originally due to be published at the end of May 2022. However, following the postponement of the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) in December 2021 due to COVID-19, it was decided to delay publication until after the rescheduled MC12, which took place from 12 to 17 June 2022. An additional chapter provides a snapshot of the conference, which resulted in a series of unprecedented decisions known collectively as the Geneva Package. A more detailed account of MC12 will appear in next year's report.

The most up-to-date information about the WTO's activities is available on the WTO website: www.wto.org

Who we are

The World Trade Organization deals with the global rules of trade between nations. Its main function is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible.

The cover features a teal background with several overlapping circles in various colors: a light beige circle at the top left, a medium blue circle below it, a large dark navy blue circle to the right, a yellow circle to the right of the text, a white circle at the bottom right, a light orange circle at the bottom left, and another large dark navy blue circle at the bottom center. Dotted white circles are also present, some overlapping the solid ones.

Annual Report

1 2

Contents

Introduction	4
Message from Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala	6
Highlights of DG Okonjo-Iweala's first year in office	10
Understanding the WTO	14
What we do	16
A brief history	18

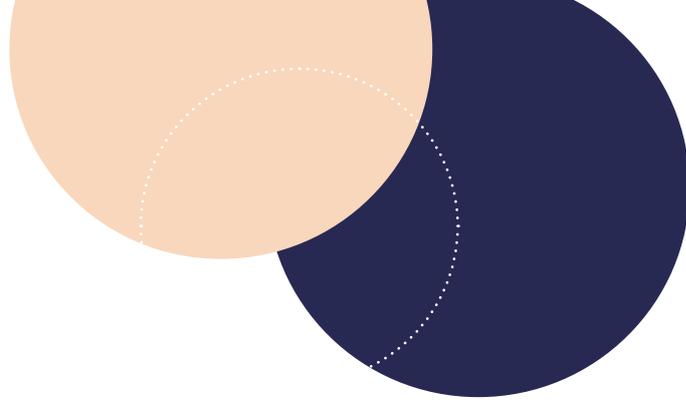
A year in review	22
2021: a snapshot	24
Our year	26



3	12th Ministerial Conference – a snapshot	32
	The 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) was originally scheduled to take place in December 2021 but was postponed due to COVID-19. The rescheduled MC12 took place in June 2022.	

4	Membership	38
	The WTO currently has 164 members. The accession process for new members promotes their integration into the global economy.	
	Joining the WTO	40
	A global membership	44





5

Trade negotiations and discussions 46

Changes to the rules of trade require the agreement of WTO members, who must reach a decision through negotiations.

8

Supporting development and building trade capacity 146

The WTO aims to help developing countries build their trade capacity and allows them a longer time to implement trade agreements. Hundreds of training courses are organized each year for officials from developing countries.

6

Implementation and monitoring 76

Various WTO councils and committees seek to ensure that WTO agreements are being properly implemented. All WTO members undergo periodic scrutiny of their trade policies and practices.

Spotlight: Impact of COVID-19 on world trade 82

9

Outreach 168

The WTO maintains regular dialogue with the business community, non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians, other international organizations, the media and the general public to enhance cooperation and raise awareness of trade issues.

Spotlight: Public Forum 2021 172

7

Dispute settlement activity 138

WTO members bring disputes to the WTO if they think their rights under trade agreements are being infringed. Settling disputes is the responsibility of the Dispute Settlement Body.

10

Secretariat and budget 198

The WTO Secretariat has over 600 regular staff and coordinates the activities of the WTO. Most of the WTO's annual budget consists of contributions by its members.



1

Introduction

The overall objective of the WTO is to help its members use trade as a means to raise living standards, create jobs and improve people's lives. The WTO operates the global system of trade rules and helps developing countries build their trade capacity. It also provides a forum for its members to negotiate trade agreements and to resolve the trade problems they face with each other.





06

Message from Director-General
Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

10

Highlights of DG Okonjo-Iweala's
first year in office

14

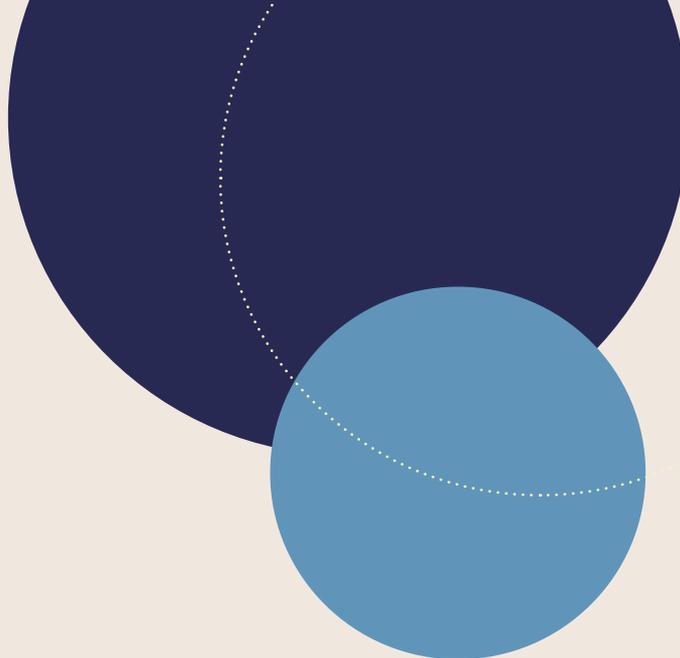
Understanding
the WTO

16

What we do

18

A brief history



Message from Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

This annual report on the WTO's work in 2021 and early 2022 comes a bit later than its usual release in early June. With our Twelfth Ministerial Conference scheduled for the middle of the month, following multiple pandemic-related postponements, it did not make sense to publish this report – much of which deals with efforts to lay the groundwork for ministers to deliver results – only days before the gathering was set to begin.

As we now know, WTO members, supported as always by the Secretariat, made MC12 a resounding success. After nearly six days of negotiations – culminating in a marathon 48 hours of non-stop talks – ministers and delegates adopted a package of multilateral deals that will deliver for people, businesses, and the planet. The scale and scope of the so-called “Geneva Package” of agreements has not been seen at the WTO since the mid-1990s.

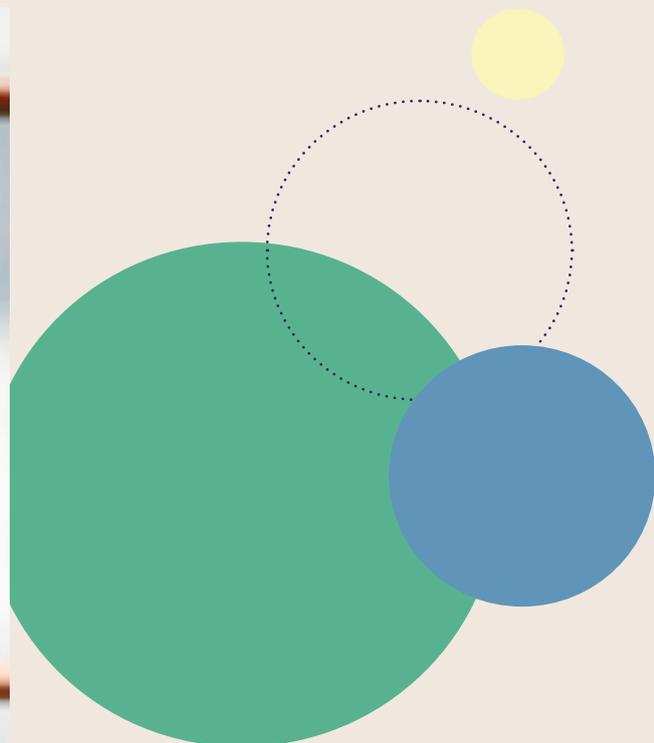
I came to the WTO because I was firmly convinced that trade was part of the solution to the global commons problems, from pandemic disease to climate change, that represent some of the biggest threats to our future prosperity. Speaking to members on my first day in office in March of last

year, I recalled the fundamental goals of the WTO, as set out in the preamble to our founding Marrakesh Agreement: using trade as a means to improve living standards, create better jobs and promote sustainable development. These goals are fundamentally about people. But one more reason I came here was that I felt the WTO had the potential to do much more to improve the lives of people around the world.

MC12 is proof that the WTO can deliver results. Members have shown they are capable of reaching multilateral compromises and finding solutions to contemporary challenges – provided they have the political will to do so.

The results achieved at MC12 will enhance the role trade has been playing in helping people cope with the multiple problems we currently confront – economic, environmental, and of course, the COVID-19 pandemic and the more recent food security crisis.

The deal on fisheries subsidies – concluded after nearly 21 years of negotiations – is only the second new agreement WTO members have reached since 1995, and the very first WTO agreement to put environmental

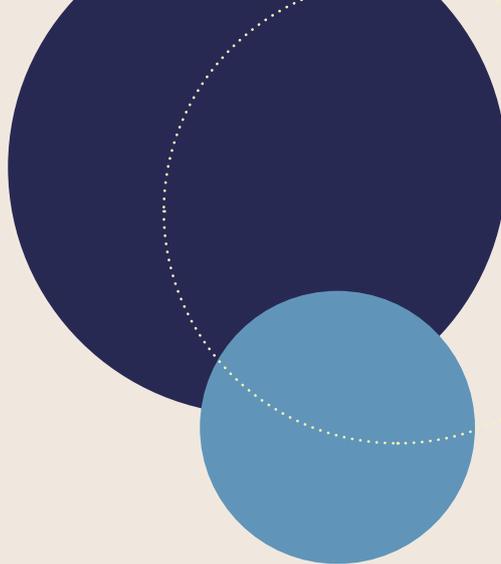


sustainability at its core. By banning subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, as well as fishing in the high seas and in overfished stocks, the pact represents a major step forward in protecting ocean health and biodiversity. Importantly, it also means that WTO members have delivered on the mandate given to them in Sustainable Development Goal 14.6.

Amid the pandemic, cross-border supply chains – often blamed for supply shortages early on – have in fact been a source of supply resilience. Trade has been central to manufacturing and distributing vaccines, personal protective equipment and other essential goods. Between the first half of 2019 and the first half of 2021, the value of global trade in medical goods grew by 30 per cent, compared to the 12 per cent growth in total global merchandise trade over that

period. The MC12 outcomes on pandemic response – a hard-won compromise on the proposed waiver of intellectual-property protections related to COVID-19 countermeasures, together with pledges to keep cross-border trade in medical supplies and components open and transparent – will help deconcentrate and diversify vaccine production, and foster better access to medical supplies in this pandemic and the next one.

At the macro level, the 9.8 per cent expansion in global merchandise trade volumes in 2021 – nearly double the expansion in global output – made external demand a key driver of growth for many countries. This was particularly true for several developing countries where domestic demand had been slow to recover. The strong rebound in trade, coupled with a pandemic-induced



WTO members, supported as always by the Secretariat, made MC12 a resounding success. After nearly six days of negotiations – culminating in a marathon 48 hours of non-stop talks – ministers and delegates adopted a package of multilateral deals that will deliver for people, businesses, and the planet.

shift in consumption from services to heavily traded durable goods, pushed global merchandise trade volumes to record highs by early 2021. However, producers and logistics infrastructure have struggled to meet demand, leading to snarled supply chains, overwhelmed ports and high freight costs.

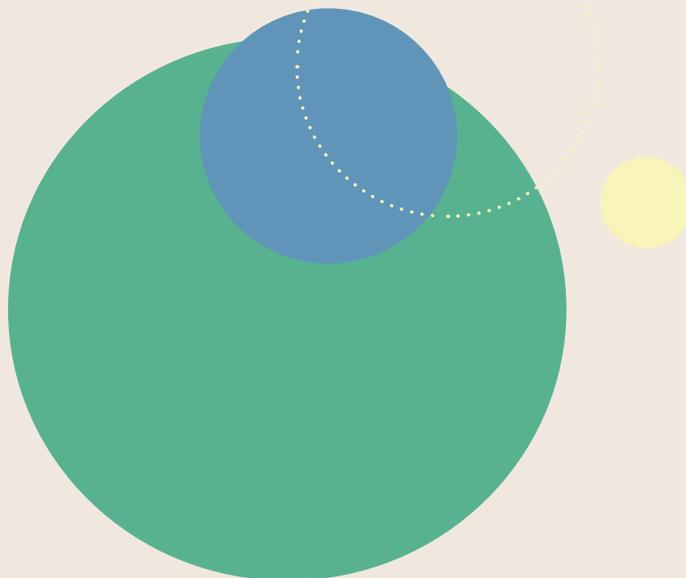
The war in Ukraine has darkened the global economic and trade outlook, adding to continuing COVID-19-related disruptions, notably in China. WTO economists this past spring recently lowered projections for merchandise trade volume growth in 2022 to 3.0 per cent, compared with the 4.7 per cent they were forecasting last October.

Global food trade had held up well through the pandemic, but it has been disrupted by the war. While Ukraine and Russia together account for barely 2 per cent of global GDP, they are major suppliers of food and energy to international markets. Prices for both, already high by historical standards, have soared since the war began in late February. Hundreds of millions of people in

poor economies are at risk of hunger and deprivation. Cooperation on trade will be critical to manage and mitigate food security impacts from the war as well as from weather-related reductions in crop yields. This is why it is so valuable that at MC12, WTO members pledged to make trade in food and agricultural inputs more predictable, recognizing the risks that come with export restrictions. They also agreed to exempt the World Food Programme's humanitarian food purchases from export restrictions, which the Nobel-winning UN agency says will save it time and money when delivering relief to millions of the world's most vulnerable people.

As this annual report makes clear, the WTO has been working to support global trade throughout the pandemic.

In line with our historical role going back 75 years to the creation of the multilateral trading system, WTO rules and norms helped members keep international markets mostly open despite protectionist pressures and severe economic and political disruptions.



We worked with leading COVID-19 vaccine manufacturers from around the world to identify trade bottlenecks holding back the production and distribution of vaccines. We convened leading port operators and logistics actors to look for solutions to supply chain problems. The Secretariat continued to shine a spotlight on pandemic-related trade policies, contributing to the steady reduction in export restrictions.

In December 2021, 67 members accounting for over 90 per cent of global services trade reached an agreement setting out common parameters for services domestic regulation. That deal will save businesses as much as US\$ 150 billion a year in reduced trade costs.

In addition, members continued to use WTO committees to share views, raise questions about each other's policies, and monitor implementation of the WTO agreements.

Despite the enduring impasse over the Appellate Body, members looked to the WTO to resolve disputes, filing nine cases in 2021, compared with five in 2020. Parties in four disputes agreed to an alternative mechanism for appeals of final panel reports.

WTO training work continued in 2021, all of it on a virtual basis, with 11,700 participants, mostly government officials from developing countries, using these opportunities to increase their understanding of WTO rules.

Looking to the future, I hope that MC12 will become a foundation for the ongoing reinvention and reinvigoration of the WTO. This involves carrying forward the WTO reform process members launched at MC12 to make all of the institution's core functions – negotiation, monitoring and dispute settlement – more effective and efficient. It entails finding solutions to longstanding development issues and addressing fact-based concerns about the full spectrum of subsidies. It also means leveraging the full power of trade and the WTO to accelerate a just, rapid, and cost-effective low-carbon transition; to articulate new rules for digital trade; and to expand opportunities for women-owned businesses and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises to be included in regional and global value chains.

The Secretariat and I look forward to supporting members as they work to reinvest in the multilateral trading system and keep the WTO fit for purpose in the 21st century.

DR. NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Highlights of DG Okonjo-Iweala's first year in office

2021

MARCH

1 March: On first day in office, DG calls on WTO members to adopt a “change of approach” to deliver results.

1 March: DG welcomes civil society's plea for a successful conclusion to the fisheries subsidies negotiations.



5 March: DG meets with WTO staff to outline her priorities and to answer questions from staff members.

15-17 March: DG makes official visit to Nigeria, meets President Muhammadu Buhari, senior members of the government, women entrepreneurs and representatives of small businesses.

31 March: DG addresses G7 trade ministers.

APRIL

1 April: DG establishes Delivery Unit to coordinate efforts to reach outcomes at 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12).

9 April: DG attends World Bank-IMF spring meetings in Washington DC.

14 April: DG calls “vaccine summit” with WTO members, vaccine manufacturers, international organizations to address vaccine inequity.



16 April: DG launches an external review of the WTO Secretariat to assess how to achieve greater efficiencies within the organization.

MAY

4 May: DG announces her four Deputy Directors-General: Angela Ellard (United States), Anabel González (Costa Rica), Jean-Marie Paugam (France), Xiangchen Zhang (China).



10 May: DG meets with Italy's Prime Minister Mario Draghi and senior members of the government in Rome to discuss global response to COVID-19.

18 May: DG participates in Summit on the Financing of African Economies in Paris, convened by French President Emmanuel Macron.

19 May: DG meets EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and President of European Council Charles Michel in Brussels to discuss vaccine equity and role of trade in combating the pandemic.

21 May: DG addresses G20 leaders at Global Health Summit on vaccine inequity.

31 May: DG meets with Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to discuss Kazakhstan's chairmanship of MC12.

JUNE

1 June: DG joins leaders of IMF, World Bank, WHO in call for US\$ 50 billion investment in health, trade, finance to end pandemic.

7 June: DG welcomes President Kersti Kaljulaid of Estonia to WTO.



9 June: DG welcomes Tunisia's Head of Government, Hichem Mechichi, to WTO.



12 June: DG addresses G7 leaders at summit hosted by the United Kingdom.

JULY

6 July: DG delivers keynote address to UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

15 July: DG convenes a meeting of ministers in Geneva to advance the negotiations on curbing harmful fisheries subsidies.

21 July: DG participates in WHO/WTO High-Level Dialogue on "Expanding COVID-19 vaccine manufacture to promote equitable access".

30 July: DG welcomes launch of IMF, World Bank, WHO, WTO joint vaccine information website on access to COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics.

AUGUST

26 August: DG meets with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva in Geneva to discuss vaccine equity, global recovery from COVID-19.

26 August: DG meets former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and heads of OECD, IMF, World Bank, ILO at Federal Chancellery in Berlin.



SEPTEMBER

6 September: DG joins global leaders in Rotterdam to participate in high-level dialogue on climate change.



15 September: DG features on cover of Time Magazine as one of world's most influential leaders.

20-23 September: DG makes official visit to United States, meeting with heads of state, senior US officials, members of Congress and representatives from US business and labour groups.

21 September: DG attends UN General Assembly in New York.

22 September: DG joins other global leaders at virtual Global COVID-19 Summit convened by US President Joe Biden and focused on ending the pandemic, building health security.

22 September: DG meets with Katherine Tai, US Trade Representative, in Washington DC to discuss potential outcomes for MC12.



23 September: DG meets with President Julius Maada Wonie Bio of Sierra Leone to discuss the road to MC12 and Sierra Leone's capacity-building needs.

28 September: DG welcomes participants to opening session of 2021 Public Forum, at which South African President Cyril Ramaphosa delivers keynote speech.

OCTOBER

4 October: DG participates in World Leaders Summit Dialogue of UN Conference on Trade and Development, hosted by Barbados.

7 October: On World Cotton Day, DG meets with Prime Minister Choguel Kokalla Maïga of Mali and Minister of Commerce Harouna Kaboré of Burkina Faso.

12 October: DG attends G20 Trade Ministers' Meeting in Sorrento, Italy.



15 October: DG joins other leaders to attend IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings in Washington DC.

19 October: DG meets with UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and participates in Global Investment Summit in London.

20-22 October: DG conducts visit to India and meets with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, government ministers, business leaders, vaccine manufacturers, small businesses and self-help groups engaged in addressing the needs of poorer communities.



30-31 October: DG participates in G20 Leaders' Meeting in Rome with other global leaders.



NOVEMBER

2 November: DG participates with other global leaders in UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland.

22 November: DG welcomes launch of WTO/IMF COVID-19 Vaccine Trade Tracker, aimed at providing greater transparency on cross-border flow of vaccines.



24 November: DG receives Turkmenistan's official application to join WTO.

29 November: DG and IFC Managing Director Makhtar Diop agree to explore ways to improve availability of trade financing for regions in need.



DECEMBER

2 December: Following postponement of MC12, DG urges members to redouble efforts to reach consensus on WTO response to pandemics, curbing harmful fisheries subsidies, agriculture and WTO reform.

2 December: DG is named as one of Financial Times' 25 most influential women of 2021.

2 December: DG welcomes successful conclusion of negotiations on services domestic regulation, aimed at cutting red tape to facilitate services trade worldwide.



6 December: DG participates in "1+6" Roundtable with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and heads of IMF, World Bank Group, ILO, OECD, Financial Stability Board.

9 December: DG is awarded Global Leadership Award by United Nations Foundation, as a "Champion for Global Change".

10 December: DG delivers opening remarks at High-Level Forum to mark 20 years of China's WTO membership.



15 December: DG welcomes launch of ministerial statements on trade and environmental sustainability, plastics, and fossil fuel subsidy reform.

2022

22 December: DG and heads of IMF, World Bank, WHO issue joint statement titled "From Vaccines to Vaccinations" on behalf of Multilateral Leaders Task Force.

JANUARY

10 January: University of Amsterdam awards honorary doctorate to DG in recognition of her contributions to global equity, fair trade, environmentally sustainable development.



28 January: DG gives keynote speech at Sustainable Trade Conference organized by French trade minister Franck Riester to mark France's 2022 presidency of Council of the European Union.

FEBRUARY

1 February: DG hosts DGs of WHO and WIPO to chart future directions for trilateral cooperation in support of an effective global response to COVID-19.



14 February: DG meets with EU Trade Ministers in Marseille to discuss reforming the WTO and other EU priorities for MC12.

17 February: DG attends African Union-European Union Summit in Brussels and discusses Africa's vaccine needs with a number of world leaders.

18 February: DG attends Munich Security Conference to discuss post-pandemic economic recovery and UN Sustainable Development Goals with other world leaders.

MARCH

8 March: DG announces the WTO Secretariat is undertaking a gender audit to advance gender equality and inclusivity in its workforce.

9 March: DG announces that Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, will be the first guest speaker of the WTO's Presidential Lecture Series at the WTO's headquarters.



Understanding the WTO

Who we are

Improving people's lives

The fundamental goal of the WTO is to improve the welfare of people around the world. The WTO's founding Marrakesh Agreement recognizes that trade should be conducted with a view to raising standards of living, ensuring full employment and increasing real income while allowing for the optimal use of the world's resources.

Negotiating trade rules

The WTO was born out of five decades of negotiations aimed at progressively reducing obstacles to trade. Where countries have faced trade barriers and wanted them lowered, the negotiations have helped to open markets for trade. Conversely, in some circumstances, WTO rules support maintaining trade barriers – for example, to protect consumers or the environment.

Overseeing WTO agreements

At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations. Essentially contracts, these documents provide the rules for international commerce and bind governments to keep their trade policies within agreed limits. Their goal is to help producers of

goods and services, exporters and importers conduct their business, with a view to raising standards of living, while allowing governments to meet social and environmental objectives.

Maintaining open trade

The system's overriding purpose is to help trade flow as freely as possible – provided there are no undesirable side effects – because this stimulates economic growth and employment and supports the integration of developing countries into the international trading system. Its rules have to be transparent and predictable, to ensure that individuals, companies and governments know what the trade rules are around the world, and to assure them that there will be no sudden changes of policy.

Settling disputes

Trade relations often involve conflicting interests. Agreements, including those painstakingly negotiated in the WTO, often need interpreting. The most harmonious way to settle these differences is through a neutral procedure based on an agreed legal foundation. That is the purpose behind the dispute settlement process written into the WTO agreements.

What we stand for

The WTO agreements are lengthy and complex because they are legal texts covering a wide range of activities. But certain simple, fundamental principles run throughout all of these documents and form the foundations of the multilateral trading system.

1

Non-discrimination

A country should not discriminate between its trading partners, and it should not discriminate between its own and foreign products, services or nationals.

2

Opening trade

Lowering trade barriers is an obvious way to encourage trade; these barriers include customs duties (or tariffs) and measures such as import bans or quotas, that restrict quantities selectively.

3

Predictability and transparency

Foreign companies, investors and governments should be confident that trade barriers will not be raised arbitrarily. With stability and predictability, investment is encouraged, jobs are created and consumers can fully enjoy the benefits of competition – such as increased choice and lower prices.

4

Fair competition

“Unfair” practices, such as export subsidies and dumping products at below normal value to gain market share, are discouraged. The issues are complex, and the rules try to establish what is fair or unfair, and how governments can respond, in particular by charging additional import duties calculated to compensate for damage caused by unfair trade.

5

Support for less developed countries

Over three-quarters of WTO members are developing economies or in transition to market economies. The WTO agreements give them transition periods to adjust to WTO provisions and, in the case of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, provide for practical support for implementation of the Agreement.

6

Protection of the environment

The WTO agreements permit members to take measures to protect not only public, animal and plant health but also the environment. However, these measures must be applied in the same way to both national and foreign businesses: members must not use environmental protection measures as a means of introducing discriminatory trade barriers.

7

Inclusive trade

The WTO seeks to build a more inclusive trading system that will allow more women and small businesses to participate in trade and to reap the economic benefits of global trading.

8

Partnerships

The WTO maintains regular dialogue with civil society, labour unions, universities and the business community to enhance cooperation and build partnerships. The WTO's Trade Dialogues initiative and the annual Public Forum provide a platform for civil society and business groups to discuss the latest developments in world trade and to propose ways of enhancing the multilateral trading system.

9

Supporting digital trade

The WTO recognizes the growing importance of e-commerce. Periodic reviews of the WTO's work programme on e-commerce are conducted by the General Council based on reports from various WTO bodies. In addition, a group of like-minded members are conducting negotiations on e-commerce, with a view to developing global digital trade rules and addressing challenges posed by the digital divide.

What we do

- › The WTO is run by its members. All major decisions are made by the membership as a whole, either by ministers (who usually meet at least once every two years) or by their ambassadors or delegates (who meet regularly in Geneva).
- › While the WTO is driven by its members, it could not function without its Secretariat to coordinate the activities.
- › The Secretariat employs over 600 staff, and its experts – lawyers, economists, statisticians and communications specialists – assist WTO members on a daily basis to ensure, among other things, that negotiations progress smoothly, and that the rules of international trade are correctly applied and enforced.



Trade negotiations

The WTO agreements cover goods, services and intellectual property. They spell out the principles of trade-opening and the permitted exceptions, and set procedures for settling disputes. They include countries' commitments to lower trade barriers and to open services markets. The agreements are renegotiated from time to time and new agreements can be added, as was the case at the 2013 and 2015 ministerial conferences.



Implementation and monitoring

The WTO agreements require governments to make their trade policies transparent by notifying the WTO about laws in force and measures adopted. Various WTO councils and committees seek to ensure that these requirements are being followed and that WTO agreements are being properly implemented. All WTO members must undergo periodic scrutiny of their trade policies and practices.



Supporting development and building trade capacity

The WTO agreements contain special provisions for developing countries, including longer time periods to implement commitments, measures to increase trading opportunities, and support to help them build their trade capacity, handle disputes and implement technical standards. The WTO organizes many technical cooperation missions for developing countries and holds numerous courses for government officials. The Aid for Trade initiative aims to help developing countries develop the skills and infrastructure needed to expand their trade.



Dispute settlement

The WTO's procedure for resolving trade disputes under the Dispute Settlement Understanding is vital for enforcing the rules and therefore for ensuring that trade flows smoothly. Countries bring disputes to the WTO if they think their rights under the WTO agreements are being infringed. Judgments by specially appointed independent experts are based on interpretations of the WTO agreements and individual countries' commitments.



Outreach

The WTO maintains regular dialogue with the business community, non-governmental organizations, labour unions, parliamentarians, the academic community, other international organizations, the media and the general public on various aspects of the WTO and its negotiations, with the aim of enhancing cooperation and increasing awareness of WTO activities.

World Trade Organisation

A brief history

The WTO began life on 1 January 1995, succeeding the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which had regulated world trade since 1948. Over the past 27 years, the WTO has made a major contribution to the strength and stability of the global economy, helping to boost trade growth, improve people's lives and support the integration of developing countries into the trading system.



2001

November

Fourth Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar.
Doha Development Agenda is launched.
China becomes the WTO's 143rd member.



1999

November

Third Ministerial Conference takes place in Seattle, United States.

2003

September

Fifth Ministerial Conference takes place in Cancún, Mexico.



2005

December

Sixth Ministerial Conference takes place in Hong Kong, China.
Aid for Trade initiative is launched.





1995

January

The WTO is born on 1 January.



1998

May

Second Ministerial Conference takes place in Geneva.

Celebration to mark 50 years of the GATT.



1996

December

First Ministerial Conference takes place in Singapore.

Information Technology Agreement concluded.



2006

September

First WTO Public Forum takes place in Geneva.

2007

November

First Global Review of Aid for Trade takes place in Geneva.



2009

September

First WTO Open Day in Geneva.

November

Seventh Ministerial Conference takes place in Geneva.



2010

January

WTO Chairs Programme launched to support developing country universities.



2015

December

Tenth Ministerial Conference takes place in Nairobi, Kenya.

“Nairobi Package” includes abolition of agricultural export subsidies and expansion of Information Technology Agreement.



2016

July

Afghanistan and Liberia become the WTO's newest (163rd and 164th) members.



2017

January

Amendment to the TRIPS Agreement enters into force, easing access to medicines.

February

Trade Facilitation Agreement enters into force.

December

Eleventh Ministerial Conference takes place in Buenos Aires, Argentina.





2011

December
Eighth Ministerial Conference takes place in Geneva.



2013

December
Ninth Ministerial Conference takes place in Bali, Indonesia.



2012

November
Historic signing ends 20 years of EU-Latin American banana dispute, the longest-running dispute in WTO history.



2020

November
WTO marks its 25th anniversary.



2021

February
Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala becomes the first African and first woman to be chosen as Director-General.

December
Negotiations on services domestic regulation conclude successfully. The 12th Ministerial Conference is postponed until June 2022.

