

AGEZ Position Paper on the WTO-Conference in Cancún 2003

Recommendations and Demands

Priority to “Human Development Goals” before WTO Transactions and Free Trade Targets

Protection of human rights, social justice, preventive health services, environmental conservation, sustainable regional development, development co-operation and gender justice, precedence given to multilateral agreements on human rights, environment and social issues over trade and investment regulations of the WTO

Stop of Further Negotiations and Evaluation of Experiences made with Liberalisation so far

Comprehensive independent and external examination of country specific effects of trade liberalization from economic, ecological and social viewpoints, in relation to food security, preventive health services, gender relations, social contexture, effects on consumers, peasants and workers as well as to the regulating capacity of national states. Comprehensive examination of the effects of liberalization of services (GATS), the TRIPs-agreement as well as liberalisation of trade with farm products (AoA).

Democratisation of WTO

Elimination of institutional discrimination of developing countries, no more “Green Room Meetings” nor “Mini-Ministerials”, adjustment of the judiciary in favour of poor countries, genderization of the WTO structure: opening access for gender-competent and gender-aware women to high level and key positions within the WTO, gender impact assessments as integral part of all WTO policies

Priority Given to Effects on Women and Gender Relations

The WTO policy is affecting women negatively, especially in Southern countries leading to a constant rising of their poverty and marginalisation levels. This state of affairs must be made public, the statutes must be amended by a clear commitment to gender justice; all relevant strategies and existing agreements must be evaluated and reoriented from a comprehensive women’s perspective. All trade policy reviews must take into consideration the effects on women.

Public Character of the Dispute Settlement Understanding

No conflict settlement on free trade and other political issues within WTO but in the respective UN-organisations like ILO or UNCTAD.

Decisive Strengthening of UN-Organisations

Greater executive power to UN-organs and organisations in the field of trade and development (UNCTAD), environmental protection (UNEP), sustainable development (UNCSD), development co-operation (UNDP), labour standards (ILO), preventive health measures (WHO) as well as human rights (UNHCR) and women’s rights (CSW). Support for the establishment of additional UN-organisations, e.g. a global tax board in order to levy the Tobin Tax and taxes on resources, closing down tax havens.

Positive Discrimination of Fair Trade

Focused promotion of Fair Trade and its organisational structures

No Global Negotiations on Liberalisation and Privatisation of Public Goods and Services (GATS)

The insidious dismantling of public services, the undermining of the democratic shaping power of national states, the effects on the social web and gender relations, the constant weakening of developing countries as well as the secret character of the negotiations make further negotiations unreasonable.

No Patents on Life Forms

Exclusion of patents on any living things and their parts, on natural microbiological as well as non-biological processes for the production of living organisms or at least, the free choice of countries whether or not they want to admit patents on genetic resources, as in poor countries patents on living organisms have severe negative effects on agriculture, food security, health services and gender relations.

No Impairment of other Agreements by the TRIPS-Agreement

The TRIPS-Agreement must not impair the goals of other international agreements, especially the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Biosafety Protocol, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Food Security and Food Sovereignty

Reshaping the WTO-agreements (AoA, TRIPS) in such a way that the reduction of poverty and hunger in developing countries is achieved in rural areas and that people's access to sufficient and balanced nutrition and to pharmaceuticals is guaranteed.

Trade must be put at the service of reaching the millennium goal to reduce the number of persons living in extreme poverty and hunger by half until the year 2015.

Precedence given to Right to Nutrition (Food)

The WTO member states must recognize the precedence of human rights; equally, the precedence given to the right to food must be included in the WTO preamble.

As concerns food aid, the use of surplus goods, export credits, promotion of foreign trade and investments and public trade companies, they must be subjugated to clear rules, geared to the implementation of economic, cultural and social human rights, especially the right to have sufficient food.

No more Export Subsidies in Industrialised Countries

The export subsidies given by industrialised countries must be eliminated, the marketing of their surplus goods on world markets at dumping prices must be stopped and all forms of protective measures for domestic trade which are distorting the markets must be reduced.

Establishing a Development-Box

Within the framework of the Special and Differential Treatment a Development-Box should be installed in order to promote food security, to protect domestic production of basic food stuff and to foster small scale farmers in the South.

Integrating Non-trade-related Issues in the Negotiations on Agriculture

Non-trade related issues - social standards, health impact, protection of consumers, animals and the environment, special and differential treatment of developing countries - must be taken into consideration in the course of the negotiations on agricultural policy and other

negotiations and enacted within the framework of the WTO-agreements. The countries of the South should be granted a comparable financial volume for compensations, to serve as basis for the negotiations.

Clear Rules and Regulations for Transnational Companies

Regulation of investments in the interest of the general public through a “reversed” agreement on investment or an “agreement on the protection of locations”, e.g. within the frame of UNCTAD. Internationally binding rules and regulations which should control transnational companies and approval of binding codes of conduct.

Unconditionality

It is to be rejected that developing countries are required to approve the new issues concerning investments and competition in return for concessions made in the farming sector.

No to New Issues

Stop all efforts to include new issues in the WTO negotiations, in particular no agreement on investments (MIA).

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AGEZ - Working group on Development Co-operation- is an umbrella organisation comprising 29 NGDOs.

A-1090 Vienna, Berggasse 7
Tel/Fax 0043/1/317 40 16
E-Mail: agez-office@utanet.at
Homepage: www.agez.at

This position paper was drafted by members of:

AGEZ – Arbeitsgemeinschaft Entwicklungszusammenarbeit
ATTAC Austria – Netzwerk für eine demokratische Kontrolle der Finanzmärkte
FIAN – Food First Informations- und Aktionsnetzwerk Österreich
KOO - Koordinierungsstelle der Österreichischen Bischofskonferenz für internationale Entwicklung und Mission
ÖFSE – Österreichische Forschungsstiftung für Entwicklungshilfe
WIDE – Women in Development Europe/Österreich