

International Trade Must Work for Working People

International Trade has been on the agenda of IndustriALL Global Union since its creation. IndustriALL believes that trade is not an end in itself but must benefit workers and societies as a whole. Used appropriately, trade policy is one of the principal drivers of prosperous and inclusive societies with decent economic, social, and ecological development.

Therefore, IndustriALL campaigns for fair trade agreements that contain and guarantee strong and enforceable protections for workers' rights.

Based on the [ten guiding principles](#) identified by its Executive Committee, IndustriALL Global Union takes actions, positions and interventions in trade policy forums and processes since they are important to ensure that workers' interests are protected in trade agreements given the challenges emerging from the imbalance of the global trade system in favour of the interests of capital. Therefore, IndustriALL's interventions always include labour and environmental standards addressing inequalities within and between countries.

We defend rule-based fair international trade, which must contribute to respect fundamental workers' rights, including freedom of association and the right to organise as well as the right to collective bargaining, and the creation of decent jobs and beneficiation of workers and communities. International trade must be grounded in rules that prevent a race to the bottom in wages and working conditions.

The Marrakesh Agreement that established the World Trade Organization (WTO) recognises that trade relations "should be conducted with a view to raising standards of living, ensuring full employment and a large and steadily growing volume of real income and effective demand."

In this context, IndustriALL advocates for regulations on trade, production, and investment that include labour conditionalities. IndustriALL demands binding human rights' due diligence, including in trade agreements, which should create opportunities for cooperation and solidarity between the Global North and Global South.

Within this framework, IndustriALL Global Union is seriously concerned over the imposition of unilateral trade tariffs as it would have serious consequences with a negative impact on economic and social development, particularly in the Global South, job losses for workers, and increasing prices for the

majority of people. The proposed tariffs would also disrupt global supply chains and contradict the principles of fair trade cooperation.

Trade unions believe that tariffs should be used strategically in building and developing manufacturing and enforcing workers' rights with proper trade defence instruments according to WTO-rules. Tariffs must be in place along with industrial policies in order to increase production and enhance employment with strong labour conditionalities.

Workers and trade unions need unity, solidarity and cooperation worldwide in trade policies so that everyone benefits. Workers' involvement is key in trade discussions since the voice of working people must be heard because it impacts our jobs and lives.

Therefore, IndustriALL Global Union:

- once again expresses its commitment to fair rule-based international trade that benefits workers and communities at large;
- continues to defend sustainable industrial policies since manufacturing must be the engine of the national economies with well-paid union-protected jobs;
- conveys and defends the strong political message that current trade agreements must be in line with promoting workers' rights and sustainable development in key forums that are driving global trade policies;
- counters concrete violations of workers' and trade union rights by multinational companies or dependant suppliers along the supply chains by using international mechanisms, such as those foreseen in trade agreements like Rapid Response mechanism USMCA, and ILO complaint procedures;
- cooperates with ITUC, other global unions, IndustriAll Europe and civil society allies in defending fair trade and opposing unilateral measures.