

## 10 WAYS TO DEMOCRATIZE THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Citizens can and should play an active role in shaping the future of our global economy. Here are some of the ways in which we can work together to reform global trade rules, demand that corporations are accountable to people's needs, build strong and free labor and promote fair and environmentally sustainable alternatives.

### 1. No Globalization without Representation

Multilateral institutions such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund create global policy with input mainly from multinational corporations and very little input from grassroots citizens groups. We need to ensure that all global citizens are democratically represented in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of all global social and economic policies. The WTO must immediately halt all meetings and negotiations in order for a full, fair, and public assessment to be conducted of the impacts of the WTO's policies to date. The WTO must be replaced by a body that is fully democratic, transparent, and accountable to citizens of the entire world instead of to corporations. We must build support for trade policies that protect workers, human rights, and the environment.

**Our World Is Not For Sale** [www.ourworldisnotforsale.org](http://www.ourworldisnotforsale.org)  
**Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch** [www.tradewatch.org](http://www.tradewatch.org)  
**Third World Network** [www.twinside.org.sg](http://www.twinside.org.sg)  
**Focus on the Global South** [www.focusweb.org](http://www.focusweb.org)  
**International Forum on Globalization** [www.ifg.org](http://www.ifg.org)

### 2. Mandate Corporate Accountability

Corporations have so heavily influenced global trade negotiations that they now have rights and representation greater than individual citizens and even governments. Under the guise of 'free trade' they advocate weakening of labor and environmental laws – a global economy of sweatshops and environmental devastation. Corporations must serve the needs of the communities they work in or be subject to having their corporate charters revoked. Corporations must be accountable to public needs, be open to public scrutiny, provide living wage jobs, abide by all environmental and labor regulations. Shareholder activism is an excellent tool for challenging corporate behavior.

**Polaris Institute** [www.polarisinstitute.org](http://www.polarisinstitute.org)  
**CorpWatch** [www.corpwatch.org](http://www.corpwatch.org)  
**Citizen Works** [www.citizenworks.org](http://www.citizenworks.org)  
**Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility** [www.iccr.org](http://www.iccr.org)  
**United Students Against Sweatshops** [www.usasnet.org](http://www.usasnet.org)  
**Program on Corporations, Law, and Democracy** [www.poclاد.org](http://www.poclاد.org)

### 3. Restructure the Global Financial Architecture

Currency speculation and the derivatives market move over \$1.5 trillion daily (compared to world trade of \$6 trillion annually), earning short-term profits for wealthy investors at the expense of long-term development. Many countries are implementing 'capital controls' to regulate the influence foreign capital, and grassroots groups are advocating the restructuring and regulation of the global financial architecture including the dismantling of the failed IMF. Citizens can pass local city resolutions for the Tobin Tax - a tax of .1% to .25% on currency transactions which would provide a disincentive for speculation, and create a huge fund for building schools & clinics throughout the world.

**Tobin Tax Initiative** [www.tobintax.org](http://www.tobintax.org)  
**ATTAC** [www.france.attac.org](http://www.france.attac.org)  
**Institute for Policy Studies** [www.ips-dc.org](http://www.ips-dc.org)

### 4. Cancel all Debt, End Structural Adjustment and Defend Economic Sovereignty

Debt is crushing most poor countries' ability to develop as they spend huge amounts of their resources servicing odious debt rather than meeting the needs of their populations. Structural adjustment is a set of policies mandated by the IMF and World Bank to keep countries on schedule with debt payments, promoting export-led development at the expense of social needs. There is an international movement demanding that all debt be cancelled in order for countries to prioritize health care, education, and real development. Countries must have the autonomy to pursue their own economic plans, including prioritizing social needs over the needs of multinational corporations.

**Jubilee USA Network** [www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org)  
**50 Years is Enough!** [www.50years.org](http://www.50years.org)  
**World Bank Bonds Boycott** [www.worldbankboycott.org](http://www.worldbankboycott.org)

### 5. Prioritize Human Rights - Including Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights - in Trade Agreements

The United Nations must be the strongest multilateral body - not the WTO. The US must ratify all international conventions on social and political rights. Trade rules must

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comply with higher laws on human rights as well as economic and labor rights included in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. We should promote alternative trade agreements that include fair trade, debt cancellation, micro-credit, and local control over development policies.

**Citizen's Trade Campaign** [www.citizenstrade.org](http://www.citizenstrade.org)  
**Alliance for Responsible Trade** [www.art-us.org/](http://www.art-us.org/)  
**Alternative Agreement for the Americas**  
[www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/ftaa/background.html](http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/ftaa/background.html)

## **6. Promote Sustainable Development - Not Consumption - as the Key to Progress**

Global trade and investment should not be ends in themselves, but rather the instruments for achieving equitable and sustainable development, including protection for workers, farmers, and the environment. Global trade agreements should not undermine the ability of each nation, state or local community to meet its citizens' social, environmental, cultural or economic needs. International development should not be export-driven, but rather should prioritize food security and sovereignty, ecological sustainability, and democratic participation.

**Friends of the Earth** [www.foe.org](http://www.foe.org)  
**Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy** [www.iatp.org](http://www.iatp.org)  
**Sierra Club** [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)  
**Via Campesina** [www.viacampesina.org](http://www.viacampesina.org)  
**Food First** [www.foodfirst.org](http://www.foodfirst.org)

## **7. Integrate Women's Needs in All Economic Restructuring**

Women make up half the world but hold less than 5% of positions of power in determining global economic policy, and own an estimated 1% of global property. Family survival around the world depends on the economic independence of women. Economic policies need to take into account women's important role in nutrition, education, and development. This includes access to family planning as well as education, credit, job training, policy decision-making, and other needs.

**Int'l Gender and Trade Network** [www.genderandtrade.net](http://www.genderandtrade.net)  
**Women's EDGE** [www.womensedge.org](http://www.womensedge.org)  
**Women's Environment and Development Org** [www.wedo.org](http://www.wedo.org)

## **8. Build Free and Strong Labor Unions Internationally and Domestically**

As trade becomes more 'free,' labor unions are still restricted from organizing in most countries. The International

Labor Organization should have enforcement power as strong as the WTO. The US should ratify ILO conventions and set an example in terms of enforcing workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. As corporations increase their multinational strength, unions are working to build bridges across borders and organize globally. Activists can support their efforts and ensure that independent labor rights are an essential component of any 'free trade' agreements.

**American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations** [www.aflcio.org](http://www.aflcio.org)  
**Int'l Confederation of Free Trade Unions** [www.icftu.org](http://www.icftu.org)  
**International Labor Organization** [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)  
**Jobs With Justice** [www.jwj.org](http://www.jwj.org)

## **9. Develop Community Control Over Capital; Promote Socially Responsible Investment**

Local communities should not be beholden to the IMF, international capital, multinational corporations, or any other non-local body for policy. Communities should be able to develop investment and development programs that suit local needs including passing anti-sweatshop purchasing restrictions, promoting local credit unions and local barter currency. Cities, churches, and unions should implement investment policies that reflect social responsibility criteria.

**ACORN** [www.acorn.org](http://www.acorn.org)  
**United for a Fair Economy** [www.ufenet.org](http://www.ufenet.org)  
**Alliance for Democracy** [www.thealliancefordemocracy.org](http://www.thealliancefordemocracy.org)  
**Social Investment Forum** [www.socialinvest.org](http://www.socialinvest.org)

## **10. Promote Fair Trade**

While we work to reform 'free trade' institutions and keep corporate chain stores out of our neighborhoods, we should also promote our own vision of Fair Trade. We need to build networks of support and education for grassroots trade and trade in environmentally sustainable goods. We can promote labeling of goods such as Fair Trade Certified, organic, and sustainably harvested. We can purchase locally made goods and locally grown foods that support local economies and cooperative forms of production and trade. Fair Trade Certified coffee is the first product with an independent monitoring and certification system for a product produced in developing countries.

**Fair Trade Federation** [www.fairtradefederation.org](http://www.fairtradefederation.org)  
**TransFairUSA** [www.transfairusa.org](http://www.transfairusa.org)  
**Coop America** [www.coopamerica.org](http://www.coopamerica.org)  
**Oxfam America** [www.oxfamamerica.org](http://www.oxfamamerica.org)  
**Green Festivals** [www.greenfestivals.org](http://www.greenfestivals.org)

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