



**TRADE JUSTICE
MOVEMENT**



Our 2024 manifesto for trade justice

Our manifesto sets out the actions we want the next UK Government to take to build a trade system which works for people and planet.

Trade rules have played a fundamental role in shaping the UK, its economy, and how it engages with the world. That's why, as we approach the 2024 General Election, we ask all political parties to ensure UK trade policy supports a transition to a greener and fairer economic model which protects human rights and promotes climate justice.

The Trade Justice Movement represents more than sixty civil society organisations, including trade unions, faith groups and NGOs, calling for trade which works for people and planet.

What we are asking for:

We want all political parties and candidates to commit to our vision of trade justice for the UK:

- 1 Publish a trade strategy.** To have an effective and coherent approach to trade, we urgently need a document which lays out the priorities of UK trade policy. This must:
 - Describe what the UK is intending to achieve through its trade policy;
 - Articulate how trade policy will support the UK's broader priorities around the environment, human rights and international development;
 - Indicate what kind of trade agreements the UK will be seeking, and the minimum standards they will meet.
- 2 Introduce a modern and democratic process for agreeing trade deals.** At present, trade deals are struck behind closed doors, with little input from MPs, civil society or the public. This needs to change:
 - Parliament must have the ability to shape how the government approaches trade negotiations, and must have access to negotiating texts;
 - MPs must have a guaranteed right to approve or reject new trade deals via a vote;
 - The government should engage effectively and openly with civil society experts, the devolved administrations and the general public while formulating trade policy.

3 Ensure trade policy supports climate action.

International trade agreements have failed to promote a just transition to green energy. To align trade policy with climate goals, the government should:

- Make sure trade policies work in service of wider climate and environment goals, including on green industrial strategy, the protection of environmental regulations, and the phase out of fossil fuels;
- Support proposals for a climate waiver, which would prevent trade rules from impeding climate action;
- Ensure a clean break from the climate-wrecking Energy Charter Treaty, which the UK has already begun to leave.

4 Design a trade policy to support human rights and labour rights. The UK should ensure that trade agreements contain strong protections, negating the risk that free trade leads to a downward pressure on rights.

- New trade deals should contain mechanisms to uphold labour rights and other human rights;
- Trade agreements should be assessed to establish their impact on human rights.

5 End the system of corporate courts.

Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clauses exist in more than 80 UK trade and investment agreements. These clauses allow companies to sue states over policies which jeopardise corporate profits, even if those policies are designed to protect human rights or the environment. The UK Government should dismantle this outrageous system by:

- Committing to no new trade and investment agreements containing ISDS;
- Conducting an audit of existing trade and investment agreements to understand their impact on human rights and the environment, with a view to withdrawing or renegotiating.

6 Protect the UK's right to regulate big tech and artificial intelligence. Some UK trade agreements contain digital chapters which constrain the UK Government's ability to control the power of big tech. The UK should:

- Make sure any new trade agreements preserve the right of the government to assess the safety and accountability of digital systems;
- Ensure trade agreements don't undermine protections for UK citizen data.

7 Promote sustainable global development.

UK trade policy should support the economic development of countries in the Global South, including by:

- Rejecting the outdated notion that more and freer trade equates to development;
- Ensuring trade agreements align with the development priorities of the Global South, including the aim to build stronger regional trade networks;
- Assessing all trade policies for their likely impact on sustainable development.

The UK's trade policies have a potentially significant impact - for good and for bad - on many areas of life including jobs, the environment, health, development, food and inequality. The next UK Government has the power to make trade just for people and planet, and it will be judged on whether it meets this challenge.

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