

Foreword

The WTO's 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13), which took place earlier this year in Abu Dhabi, reaffirmed the international community's shared commitment to promote inclusive and sustainable development through trade. Aid for Trade remains a critical element of our collective commitment to ensuring that the benefits of trade are shared more widely, particularly with developing economies and least-developed countries (LDCs).

MC13 emphasized the role that Aid for Trade can play to support economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainable development. Recognizing the significant challenges faced by developing economies and LDCs, ministers underscored the need to enhance trade-related capacity building and support to facilitate their integration into the global economy. This commitment is reflected in the Aid for Trade priorities outlined by developing economies and donors, which echo the objectives set forth in the Abu Dhabi Ministerial Declaration.

The 2024 joint OECD–WTO Aid for Trade monitoring and evaluation (M&E) exercise provides valuable insights into the progress made since the Initiative's start in 2006 and the challenges ahead. It highlights the relevance of targeted interventions in key areas such as infrastructure development, agriculture and digitalization, which are essential for building resilient and inclusive economies.

As we navigate the complexities of the post-pandemic world, amidst geopolitical tensions, increasing debt burdens and a

changing climate, trade remains a vital tool for advancing global development – and consequently, so does Aid for Trade. The digital transformation is reshaping trade, creating new opportunities and challenges for developing economies – and Aid for Trade needs to support digital infrastructure and build capacity to ensure that no country is left behind. Similarly, climate change and environmental sustainability are central issues, impacting trade patterns and shaping development priorities. Aid for Trade must address these challenges by helping developing economies transition to cleaner, more sustainable economies. Shifting geopolitical dynamics and pressures for fragmentation in global supply chains also underscore the importance of building the infrastructure and partnerships needed to pursue greater resilience, including through what the WTO calls “re-globalization”: diversifying production and trade networks, providing opportunities to marginalized groups and communities. Aid for Trade has a critical role to play here.

Innovative financing mechanisms are needed to address new challenges and finance trade-related needs. Traditional forms of development finance are under stress, which calls for new models and fresh approaches. This means engaging a broader array of actors, including the private sector, and leveraging sustainable finance and blended finance mechanisms. By tapping into these innovative approaches, we can complement traditional public funding and better support trade integration and development efforts.

In conclusion, the 2024 edition of the joint WTO–OECD Aid for Trade at a Glance reaffirms our continuing commitment to leveraging trade as a force for development. By investing in Aid for Trade, we can unlock new opportunities for growth, create jobs and promote inclusive development. As we

look ahead, let us work together to ensure the Aid for Trade Initiative remains effective and relevant. Together, we can work towards a more inclusive and sustainable multilateral trading system, where all countries and all people have the opportunity to thrive.



Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
Director-General
World Trade Organization

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala".



Mathias Cormann
Secretary-General
Organisation for Economic Co-operation
and Development

A handwritten signature in black ink consisting of stylized letters "M" and "C".