



Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange Congregational Stance on International Trade and Investment October 2002

Background: There are profound ethical issues raised by international trade and investment. Global corporations look for lowest paid and most vulnerable workers.

Multinational corporations pit poor countries against each other, forcing them to compete for the lowest wages and the least benefits, with no taxes, no tariffs, no unions, no enforcement of laws that might protect the health and safety of workers or environmental standards.

Action: We call on global corporations to respect internationally recognized worker and human rights and to assure that workers are free to exercise those rights. We insist that governments and financial and trade institutions protect human rights and environmental standards. We urge relief in the debts owed by the poorest nations and that new resources made available to them to relieve the staggering effects of poverty.



We join the Interfaith Working Group on Trade and Investment, a coalition of churches in support of the following principles endorsed by religious congregations and Catholic Social Justice organizations.

The Principles for Endorsement:

1. International trade and investment systems should respect and support the dignity of the human person, the integrity of creation, and our common humanity.
2. International trade and investment activities should advance the common good and be evaluated in the light of those who are most vulnerable.
3. International trade and investment policies and decisions should be transparent and should involve the meaningful participation of the most vulnerable stakeholders.
4. International trade and investment systems should respect the legitimate role of Government, in collaboration with civil society, to set policies regarding the development and welfare of its people.
5. International trade and investment systems should safeguard the global commons (shared natural systems and cycles that underpin the functioning of ecosystems everywhere, the collective heritage of humankind) and respect the right of local communities to protect and sustainably develop their natural resources.

Source: The Interfaith Working Group on Trade and Investment.