

# **International Trade:** Putting Gender Into the Process

## **Initiatives and Lessons Learned**

A discussion paper prepared for  
Status of Women Canada

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This document expresses the views and opinions of the author and does not necessarily represent the official policy or opinion of Status of Women Canada or the Government of Canada.

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## Foreword

In the global economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the importance of trade liberalization to Canada has never been clearer. Exports account for 45.6 percent of our gross domestic product. Everyday Canada does over \$2.5 billion worth of business in two-way trade with the rest of the world.

Increasing the amount of goods and services we trade, and reaping the commercial and financial rewards, is certainly a desirable goal of trade liberalization. An equally important objective however, is to contribute to a better quality of life for Canadians and our neighbors around the world.

As we document our record of trade success we must be mindful of the challenges. In designing the trade policy of the future, transparency, engagement, discussion, research and analysis must be part of the process.

This is one of three discussion papers commissioned by Status of Women Canada in the year 2000. The objective is to begin to explore some of the key issues relating to the differential implications and impact of international trade agreements on women and men. It also aims to examine issues of representation and participation of women in the development of international trade policy.

The first paper, entitled *Women and Trade in Canada: An Overview of Key Issues*, provides a brief synopsis of recent trade liberalization processes, and begins to identify key trade issues and their implications for Canadian women.

The second paper, entitled *International Trade Policy: A Primer*, discusses the concepts and evolution of trade rule-making and provides an overview of a number of trade agreements to which Canada is a party. This could be a useful tool for those who are just becoming interested in the development of international trade policy.

The third paper, entitled *International Trade: Putting Gender Into the Process: Initiatives and Lessons Learned*, examines domestic consultative mechanisms for the development of international trade policy, and reviews efforts taken by different actors to integrate gender issues into international trade negotiations both nationally and internationally.

Status of Women Canada is supporting further knowledge building on international trade. In August 2001, the Policy Research Fund of Status of Women Canada issued a call for proposals on the theme *Trade Agreements and Women*. It is hoped that these discussion papers and future policy research through the Policy Research Fund mark important first steps on the path to more transparent trade policy development, with outcomes that support women's economic empowerment, security and autonomy.

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## Introduction

In December 1999, Canadians and people around the globe became intimately acquainted with televised images of police in riot gear and gas masks charging against thousands of shouting, sign-holding women and men at the World Trade Organization (WTO) Third Ministerial in Seattle, who were declaring “No New Round -- Turn Around!” This image is reminiscent of protests against the 1997 Asia-Pacific Economic Forum (APEC) in Vancouver, the 1998 OECD negotiations on Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), International Monetary Fund/World Bank meetings in Washington DC and Prague in 2000, and more recently, at the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly in Windsor. “Anti corporate-led globalization,” “controls on financial capital,” “debt elimination for poor countries,” “fair trade,” “economic, social and environmental justice,” and “sustainable development” are some of the demands and alternative visions being expressed for a new social and economic order.

For many people, the public debates around global economic restructuring and trade liberalization seem remote from their day-to-day concerns, and the issues are only of interest to economists and trade policy-makers. Yet, these recent examples of coordinated global action are a reflection that this perception is changing. The stalled negotiations on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment and the failure to launch a millennial round of negotiations in Seattle conveyed a clear message to policy-makers in Canada and elsewhere. International trade and other economic agreements need to be viewed as a legitimate reflection of the popular democratic will, particularly in an era where trade barriers are no longer about tariffs on goods but about domestic policies and regulations.

Some scholars argue that, when it comes to debates around free trade, what matters is not whether to trade but what kind of rules govern trade. This, it is argued, is at the heart of the debate.<sup>1</sup> This paper departs from

this line of thinking somewhat, arguing that while the rules governing trade are indeed important in a rules-based trading system, equally important are “process issues” related to how trade rules are made, and who is involved in determining and enforcing those rules. For policy-makers, two key points emerge from this argument. First, “process issues” (i.e., who’s in/who’s out) are just as important as the “product.” There is a need to understand how consultation mechanisms at the national, regional or international levels may promote meaningful citizen engagement. Second, while meaningful citizen engagement may be necessary to attain trade objectives, in the long run, it may not address the crisis of legitimacy.

*International economic policies can no longer be divorced from domestic policies and vice-versa. The linkages are significant, particularly with respect to investment, innovation and competition policies, labour markets and intellectual property protection.....Public interest in linking trade policy with non-trade issues such as the environment and social programs is also leading to demands for and concerns about greater international policy convergence and coherence.*

Michael Hart  
Centre for Trade Policy and Law

An analysis of the emerging public debate indicates that the ideological framework itself is being questioned.

There is increasing skepticism about the promises of trade liberalization and whether trade-led economic growth, privatization and market de-regulation, and a diminished role for governments have led to a higher quality of life in Canada and elsewhere. While there has been a great increase in international trade and foreign investment and currency trading, income inequality has persisted and has grown within countries and between countries. According to recent statistics, the poorest 20 percent of the world population saw a decline in income in the past three decades.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, an impetus behind rising opposition to trade and investment liberalization are the issues of inclusion and equality.

The issue of equality has a clear and visible gender dimension. While the purpose of this paper is not to elaborate on the issues related to the gender impact of trade and investment liberalization, a general point to be made is that opportunities in the new global economy are shaped by resource endowments or access to resources (e.g., assets, incomes, education and skills). If one takes into account the differential impact among women and men, based on race, ethnicity, age, family status, disability and other relational factors that mediate the

*Most treatments of structural change harbor a conceptual silence: the failure to acknowledge explicitly or implicitly that global restructuring is occurring on a gendered terrain.*

Isabella Bakker  
The Strategic Silence (1994)

effects of trade, the issues become even more complex. Yet, these are issues that need to come to the fore, if one is to avoid the pitfall of assuming that the development of economic policies or programs is gender neutral<sup>3</sup> in consequence or effect. Taking these factors into account is an important step to building a broad consensus on trade and investment liberalization.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how structures and processes within which trade policy is formulated may be conducive to putting gender issues on the agenda, and to review past efforts to integrate gender concerns in the formulation of trade policy. The second section examines various consultation mechanisms that are already in place and analyzes the extent to which such mechanisms have facilitated women's participation. The third section reviews the efforts of women's organizations in Canada and globally to influence the trade policy agenda, focused on the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The fourth section examines more closely a slightly different approach taken within the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum--the gender mainstreaming approach. The paper concludes by drawing lessons on ways to "engender<sup>4</sup>" ongoing and future trade policy deliberations.



## **“Engendering” Trade Policy: A Look at Mechanisms**

Three core departments are responsible for international trade policy-making -- the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Industry Canada (IC), and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). While other federal departments are consulted and do play a role, DFAIT has primary responsibility for developing and representing Canada’s interests in trade negotiations. Established mechanisms for consultation on Canada’s negotiating positions include parliamentary committee(s) -- the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT); consultation with other government departments (OGD); federal consultation with trade ministers in provincial/territorial governments (FPT); and consultation with Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs).

In response to increasing pressure for transparency and public participation in the formulation of trade policy, DFAIT has recently established a series of mechanisms to facilitate consultation with civil society organizations. These include the Team Canada Inc. Advisory Board; multi-stakeholder consultations; virtual consultations on specific sectors via the DFAIT Web site; *Canada Gazette* notice(s) on consultations for trade negotiations, and the Academic Advisory Council on Canadian Trade Policy. In 1998, a new Trade Policy Consultations and Liaison Division (EBC) was established within DFAIT, with a mission to “facilitate and stimulate the involvement of Canadians in the development and implementation for Canada’s trade policy agenda, to better reflect Canadian values, priorities and interests.”<sup>5</sup> Taken together, there appears to be in place a comprehensive set of established formal and *ad hoc* mechanisms for public consultations to develop Canada’s trade policy negotiating positions.

Critics of these mechanisms claim, however, that the existence of political interests seems to affect the structure, function, degree of permanence and composition of players, which results in differences in relative power to shape the process and, ultimately, to influence Canada’s trade negotiating positions. This situation appears to promote an “uneven playing field” between social actors and may explain in part why efforts for “constructive engagements” by DFAIT seem to have had limited success. As a result, increasing numbers of Canadian women and men are bypassing the state and seeking to influence trade policy from outside of formal national mechanisms.

### **Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT)**

In Canada, there is a division of power between the legislative (parliamentary) and the executive bodies as it relates to trade policy. Parliament does not have a formal role in trade policy-making in Canada, and trade policy falls under the authority of the Minister Responsible for Trade (MINT). With the exception of the MINT’s presentations on trade in the House of Commons, the Government does not need to seek parliamentary approval on negotiating positions. There are entry points for parliamentary input, however, through parliamentary committees. The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade is a multi-party structure. It is tasked by the Minister for Trade to solicit the views of Canadians prior to entering into a set of trade negotiations. The report is tabled in Parliament and is officially responded to by the

Government. Women's equality-seeking organizations, human rights organizations, trade unions, environmental NGOs and other social actors have made extensive use of this consultative mechanism to influence trade policy negotiations.<sup>6</sup> The SCFAIT is a good example of a participatory mechanism whereby a wide array of actors can air their views on trade. There are, however, significant limitations. First, the Minister Responsible for Trade must ask the SCFAIT to engage in the consultative process, and provide resources and enough lead time for its findings to meaningfully influence the government's negotiating position. In theory, a formal written response from the Government<sup>7</sup> is required, thus implying some level of governmental accountability. As critics point out however, the Government is not obligated to formally adopt or incorporate any of the recommendations from the SCFAIT Report into its negotiating position.

### **Other Government Departments**

As indicated above, DFAIT, IC and AAFC are the lead federal departments in developing Canada's trade negotiating positions. The federal Cabinet approves general trade policy directions, but not the specific negotiating details. There is some involvement of other larger, federal government departments (who may or may not consult with their own constituencies or women's groups), depending on the sector or issue involved. Generally, Status of Women Canada (SWC) is not viewed as an important voice within trade negotiation discussions or committees, and is not consulted on trade policy. The fact that the federal Ministry Responsible for the Status of Women, as well as Women's Bureaus within other government departments, are not players in the trade policy-making process is one of the key obstacles to integrating a gender perspective in trade policy.

### **Federal-Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Consultations**

"Trade policy can touch on areas of provincial jurisdiction...Provinces are regularly briefed and consulted by DFAIT officials when negotiating positions are being developed."<sup>8</sup> The Minister Responsible for International Trade formally consults with ministerial counterparts in provincial and territorial governments at least once a year. In 1999, two ministerial consultations took place, one in February and one in October.<sup>9</sup>

At present, annual or biannual meetings focus more on briefing provincial/territorial Ministers on Canada's negotiating positions and less on soliciting inputs. This distinction is crucial when looking at process issues. As trade policy moves into areas of provincial jurisdiction such as education and health care, effective and meaningful consultation at the provincial level is of paramount importance. An important issue to be raised is the extent to which Ministries/Departments Responsible for the Status of Women participate in this process. During the February 17, 1999 meeting, "representatives of the business community were invited to share views [with Ministers at the federal/provincial-territorial table] on upcoming trade talks."<sup>10</sup> The fact that non-industry voices were not invited to share views could be perceived by critics as biased in favor of corporate access to high-level decision-makers, thereby giving the business community greater leverage and power to shape the discussion of the consultation.

### **Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs)**

Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGIT) committees "advise trade negotiators on the complexities and negotiating priorities within different industrial sectors."<sup>11</sup> As of March 2000, the membership of the SAGITs includes industry representatives, lawyers or hired consultants to industrial groups.<sup>12</sup> Since its inception in the mid-1980s, the composition of membership has changed from the inclusion of union representatives and a few environmental representatives<sup>13</sup> to a solely corporate composition.

Within these 12 advisory groups, 26 out of a total of 226 members are women (11.5%).<sup>14</sup> This figure is less than in 1986, when women represented about 20% of SAGIT membership.<sup>15</sup> Although women on the SAGITs represent their business interests, rather than the interests of women's advocacy organizations,<sup>16</sup> it is interesting to note that there are no female representatives on the SAGITs on apparel and footwear<sup>17</sup>-- sectors that are major sources of women's employment.

### **Team Canada Inc. Advisory Board**

In 1998, Sergio Marchi, then Minister for International Trade, established the Team Canada Inc. Advisory Board, a 20-person industrial group with a mandate to "provide counsel on trade policy and market access questions, as well as issues related to trade and investment promotion; review and offer advice on the government's International Business Development Plan (IBD); monitor results of the plan; and provide guidance on the most effective allocation of resources."<sup>18</sup> In the words of Minister Marchi, "[the Board] will be instrumental in guiding the direction of our trade and investment agenda. This initiative demonstrates the close partnership between government and the private sector."<sup>19</sup>

The establishment of the Team Canada Inc. Advisory Board is significant. It guides the direction of the government's agenda, offers counsel, and to some degree, requires governmental accountability regarding resource allocation in the IBD. As such, it is a very powerful body and symbolizes a unique partnership, in that the "Advisory Board engages directly with the business community and complements the various Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade."<sup>20</sup> There is no equivalent partnership with non-corporate actors in Canada. Further, the composition of this board (three women and 17 men) suggests, at least optically, that this structure for trade policy is corporate and male.<sup>21</sup>

### **Academic Advisory Council on Canadian Trade Policy**

The Academic Advisory Council on Canadian Trade Policy is a newer mechanism for engagement in trade policy. It is an informal group of academics that report to the Deputy Minister for International Trade. Generally, the ideological bent of this membership is pro-free trade, with no representation by academics specializing in gender and trade.<sup>22</sup>

## **Trade Policy Consultations and Liaison Division (EBC)**

The recent creation within DFAIT of the Trade Policy Consultations and Liaison Division (EBC) is a positive step forward in efforts to consult with Canadians. Its mission to “facilitate and stimulate the involvement of Canadians in the development and implementation of Canada’s trade policy agenda, to better reflect Canadian values, priorities and interests,” coupled with the fact that the Director and Deputy Director are women, may increase the comfort level of grassroots and equality-seeking women’s organizations seeking greater engagement in formal trade policy-making processes in Canada. Yet, a closer examination of the mandate<sup>23</sup> and specific functions<sup>24</sup> of the EBC indicates that it is more of a coordinating body or a secretariat, rather than an entry point into the trade negotiating process.

## **Virtual Tools and the “*Gazette Notices*”**

There are a number of other consultation mechanisms listed on the DFAIT “Consultations with Canadians” web page.<sup>25</sup> These include sectoral consultations on various trade agreements; electronic versions of ‘*Gazette Notices*’ (i.e., calls for submission of views on trade negotiation printed in the *Canada Gazette*); and virtual consultations with exporters relating to the ongoing General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) negotiations. These mechanisms are unidirectional, in that they provide opportunities for women and men to send submissions in writing or electronically to DFAIT. There are no written responses to submissions or feedback on the uptake of views into negotiating positions.

## **Multi-Stakeholder Consultations**

In May and November 1999, “the DFAIT held consultations on Canadian trade policy agenda with .... business, labor, environmental, human rights, international development, consumers, youth and gender groups.”<sup>26</sup> The goal of the May meeting was not to provide input into the development of Canada’s negotiating positions, but rather to offer “comments, questions and advice... on ways to enhance the process of engaging Canadians.”<sup>27</sup> The participants joined working groups, two of which focused on process issues: approaches to integrating horizontal issues in the formulation of Canada’s trade objectives and priorities; and mechanisms and processes for providing multi-stakeholder advice to government. Process recommendations from the working groups include:

- Greater transparency and public dialogue on the trade agenda;
- Meaningful dialogue which requires a steady two-way flow of information on substance, approaches and process, as well as input and equal access to official and political levels;
- Ongoing consultation, follow-up and communication, which are essential to a successful process of engagement;
- Government use of analytical work by groups in areas of expertise in the development of government positions and throughout the negotiating process;

- Creation of mechanisms for consultation on horizontal policy issues (environment, gender) mirroring the SAGITs. There was no consensus on whether the mechanism should be parallel to or within the SAGIT process;
- A process of consultation that is transparent, accessible and accountable to, and inclusive of civil society;
- A pro-active approach in international negotiations to “champion” the broader dimensions of trade.

(From the May 20, 1999 Report on Multi-stakeholder Consultations)

While these recommendations are very useful, they highlight certain realities relating to issues of structure, function, permanence, composition of players and relative ability of civil society to shape the trade policy-making process through this mechanism.

A major concern with the multi-stakeholder consultative mechanism is that it is *ad hoc* and informal. While this may be attributed to its relative newness as a consultative mechanism, of greater concern is the fact that its structure, long-term function, permanence and composition of players have not been clearly laid out. Former Minister of Trade, Sergio Marchi has stated that “the multi-stakeholder approach to consultations are dictated by the nature of the issues and the interdependence of domestic and international economic and social policies.” Such statements seem to suggest that this mechanism will remain fluid in terms of representation and structure. Critics argue this is not an effective means for giving equal and institutionalized weight, on an on-going basis, to the interests of civil society organizations. Should this mechanism be made permanent however, or, as the recommendation above suggests, be incorporated within the SAGIT structure -- the issue then becomes one of representation or composition. Any new structure would need to ensure that women’s equality-seeking organizations are well represented and thus able to integrate a gender perspective into future Canadian trade negotiating positions.

In the absence of institutionalized mechanisms for civil society engagement at the national level in Canada, women’s organizations concerned with the “gender blindness” of trade policy will, as in the past, use multiple approaches and strategies of engagement to influence trade negotiations now underway multilaterally (i.e., World Trade Organization) and regionally (i.e., Free Trade Area of the Americas).

# Initiatives to Integrate Gender Into Trade Policy

Since the late 1980s, women's organizations have sought to influence the trade policy agenda, beginning with the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA). As the discussion below will show, the strategies used to influence the formulation of trade policy reflect a high level of frustration on the part of these organizations, with the lack of meaningful participation in the national-level policy-making process.

## The Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA)

The Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA) came into force in 1989 after 18 months of negotiation. What is interesting about the CUSFTA is that it marked the beginning of political activism in Canada on trade, with women's organizations playing a leading and highly visible role outside of formal structures.

Trade policy in Canada has historically been viewed as a purely economic exercise requiring limited civil society input. This de-politicized view of trade meant that only business interests were involved in consultations, with participation from labor representatives in some of the SAGIT committees. It was assumed that trade unions would represent social sector concerns and, by that logic, women's interests.<sup>29</sup> While initially, trade unions agreed to participate, the Canadian Labour Congress subsequently dictated that their members not participate, based on the strength of ideological objections to free trade.<sup>30</sup> The lack of participation by trade unions in the SAGITs meant that social sector and women's issues or gender concerns were completely absent during the development of negotiating positions.

Women's voices continued to be absent in consultations at the provincial-territorial level. The Trade Minister held closed meetings with private sector representatives and with provincial government representatives from finance or economic departments, and not with ministries responsible for social or women's issues.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, to the disappointment of many women's organizations and labour groups, the government did not incorporate any of the recommendations from the Special Joint Parliamentary Committee established for CUSFTA, nor from the Royal Commission on the Economic and Development Prospects for Canada Report, which "recommended a whole series of social sector adjustments and transitional arrangements to protect the labour force."<sup>32</sup>

When negotiations began in 1986, women's groups and other organizations, frustrated with exclusion from national-level consultation mechanisms, attempted to communicate directly to Simon Reisman (the chief Canadian negotiator) and his team. Reports indicate that Reisman found this approach "frustrating... as 'special interest groups' were trying to communicate their perceptions of costs and benefits of what was being negotiated *after* the process has already commenced."<sup>33</sup> Reisman, however, admitted that "there may have been important interests which were not adequately reflected by the representative government process which needed direct access to the formation of negotiating objectives."<sup>34</sup>

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) was one of the most vocal challengers of the CUSFTA, although early challenges stressed the possible negative effects of trade on employment rather than ideological or social policy concerns.<sup>35</sup> By the time negotiations ended in 1987, NAC had joined anti-free trade groups in a coalition called the Pro-Canada Network (PCN). The PCN engaged in a National Day of Action and was active in the pre-election and election campaigns of 1988.<sup>36</sup> As a member of this coalition, NAC's approach and engagement with government on trade became more confrontational.<sup>37</sup>

During this period, there were also efforts to understand the impact of international trade on women. For example, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) commissioned three background papers on the impact of free trade on women. While the findings from these papers were diverse, the common position was that "trade liberalization is not gender neutral."<sup>38</sup>

### **The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**

After fourteen months of intense negotiations, Canada, the United States and Mexico signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on December 17, 1992. NAFTA was ratified in all three countries by 1993, and went into effect in January 1994. Like the CUSFTA, consultations on NAFTA did not seek to engage women's organizations, but only business representatives and trade unions. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women indicated that it was through "leaks of preliminary documents related to NAFTA that valuable information was gleaned and resistance mobilized."<sup>40</sup> According to feminist scholars Gabriel and Macdonald, Canadian women were less active in the fight against the NAFTA than the CUSFTA.<sup>41</sup>

Women's responses to NAFTA were conditioned by their prior experiences organizing against the CUSFTA. What this translated into were fewer efforts to try to attain gains for women within the agreement and a renewed focus on challenging the paradigm of corporate-led, neo-liberal restructuring through coalition building.

During the NAFTA negotiations, NAC made real efforts to promote international solidarity among women in Canada, the United States and Mexico. NAC joined a group of "reformers" and anti-NAFTA "radicals" as part of the Action Canada Network, which played a major role in fostering tri-national alliances. Resistance took the form of "cross-border alliances between groups such as Mujer Obrera in El Paso, Fuerza Unidad in San Antonio and the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras."<sup>42</sup> Tri-national linkages among women were promoted by Mujer a Mujer, a non-governmental organization (NGO) engaged in public education, lobbying and training programs to develop gender and race analysis on the effects of global restructuring on women.<sup>43</sup>

Wider opposition to NAFTA emerged on environmental and labour issues. Groups in Mexico joined in an informal alliance with groups and coalitions in the United States and Canada (including Quebec) under the banner of the "Common Frontiers" project.<sup>44</sup>

“While transnational coalitions could not derail the NAFTA agreement outright, groups in the United States were able to capitalize on domestic political opportunities in the United States and Mexico (i.e., elections), and get side agreements on labour and environment by 1993.”<sup>45</sup> While the side agreements on environment and labour are often criticized as ineffective and gender-blind, some women’s groups were “hopeful that it would open up new institutional space for contesting violations of women’s rights.”<sup>46</sup>

### **The World Trade Organization (WTO)**

Representatives of 23 non-Communist countries signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) at the Geneva Trade Conference in 1947. The purpose of the GATT was to develop common rules for international trade and to promote world peace through economic interdependence. “Subsequent rounds of tariff and trade negotiations of goods took place at regular intervals until the conclusion of the Uruguay round at the end of 1994, at which time provisions for a new organization to govern world trade was agreed upon.”<sup>47</sup> On January 1, 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) replaced the GATT.

The World Trade Organization (WTO), with a current membership of 141 countries, “encompasses broad areas of economic and development policy enforced through a dispute settle mechanism. These areas include: services, agriculture and intellectual property rights, and some regulations on investment.”<sup>48</sup> Arguably, the dispute settlement mechanism is what makes the WTO so powerful, as judgements from disputes are binding and enforceable through the imposition of large fines or even trade sanctions against the nation in breach of WTO tenets. Another feature unique to the WTO is the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM), “designed to promote greater understanding of the costs and benefits of trade policies of GATT member countries.”<sup>49</sup> While these substantive and procedural changes have brought both praise and criticism of the new organization, there continues to be criticism from women’s groups that the WTO remains a male-led institution,<sup>50</sup> blind to concerns of women and/or gender in international trade policy.

WTO Ministerial meetings occur every two years. The first WTO Ministerial took place in Singapore (1996), the second in Switzerland (1998) and the third in the United States last year (1999). While NGOs, including women’s groups, were accredited to attend each Ministerial, national-level consultations processes varied among countries. As a result of increased lobbying and high profile campaigns against global trade and investment negotiations (e.g., the anti-MAI campaign), however, most G-7 countries were motivated to hold at least some form of pre-Ministerial consultation with civil society organizations. In Canada, the full complement of national-level mechanisms for consultation was utilized.



### *Efforts to Influence the WTO Agenda*

Representation on national delegations is one way that civil society organizations and women's groups can influence WTO negotiations. In 1999, two environmental NGOs were included in the official Canadian delegation<sup>51</sup> and many European governments sent NGO representatives, including some women's groups, as official delegates.

For most international NGOs, however, national affiliation is not feasible as there are issues of representation based on gender, geography, North-South differences and ideological orientation.

For many women's groups, the WTO Ministerial is a strategic venue to increase visibility and raise awareness on gender and trade issues. For instance, at the 1996 Ministerial, activists from all over the world created a Women's Caucus. It issued "a press statement calling for gender-sensitive policy formulation and decision-making processes, for the collection of gender disaggregated data in all WTO research, as well as argued for a gender analysis in the reports of country Trade Policy Reviews."<sup>52</sup> In 1998, groups from the first Ministerial women's caucus banded together to create the Informal Working Group on Gender and Trade (IWGGT). The group presented a concept paper on gender and trade and a case study it commissioned, which showed the gender-differentiated aspects of trade liberalization in Ghana.<sup>53</sup> These documents were presented to governments, WTO staff and other civil society organizations (CSOs) at the second Ministerial—before the Trade Policy Review for Ghana was scheduled to begin.

At the third Ministerial in the United States, events by and for women were even more elaborate and extensive. In Seattle, the Women's Caucus issued "calls for dialogue and participation from the global women's community, held two panels highlighting women's efforts to organize around trade at the regional and international level, and produced a two page *Declaration* addressing issues and implementation of the *Agreement on Agriculture and Services* from a feminist gender perspective."<sup>54</sup>

In addition to the activities of the Women's Caucus, a full-day parallel NGO event around the theme "Women, Democracy and Development" was organized for non-accredited groups to examine the gender effects of trade policy.<sup>55</sup> While the third Ministerial in Seattle will be remembered for the collapse of the negotiations and the massive, non-violent protests by well-organized CSOs, it should be noted that attempts were made to influence the trade negotiations and to put gender issues on the agenda—both inside and outside of the official negotiations.

Beyond the efforts of women's groups to raise the level of visibility and dialogue around gender and trade at WTO Ministerials, there are few options to further influence international trade policy. Early efforts by the IWGGT to contact staff and Directors within the WTO yielded few results.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, in the absence of formal mechanisms for NGO participation within the WTO, efforts to lobby the Secretariat or the Director General to promote gender issues are *ad hoc*. To ensure continuity in the event of a new Director General, international women's organizations have opted for a long-term strategy of building capacity, which includes promoting trade and economic literacy among women globally, undertaking further research and disseminating these results. As well, women's groups have looked to other international forums (e.g., United Nations conferences) and organizations (e.g., International Labour Organization) to

find horizontal entry points or opportunities to address issues of gender and international trade policy.<sup>57</sup>

### ***Specific Initiatives to Influence WTO Trade Policy***

There have been a number of different strategies to address the “democratic deficit” at the WTO and the absence of mechanisms to ensure that social, labor and environmental concerns are taken into account. While many groups focus their energies on issues of access, transparency and participation,<sup>58</sup> others, such as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), World Confederation of Labor, International Labor Rights Fund (USA), International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Montreal, Canada) and Brussels-based SOLIDAR, are actively promoting the inclusion of a social clause within the WTO/ILO. While quite supportive of efforts to democratize the WTO, women’s groups remain divided over the latter, partly as a result of the anti-social clause work of the UK-NGO Women Working Worldwide.<sup>59</sup> There are also attempts by some academics and NGOs in Europe to introduce sustainable impact assessment (SIA) of trade agreements<sup>60</sup> in order to ensure that environmental and social development goals are not worsened (and, preferably, are bettered) by trade liberalization. Many of the above-mentioned strategies have not been the main entry points through which women’s groups have attempted to “engender” WTO processes.

To date, organizations such as the Informal Working Group on Gender and Trade (IWGGT) and Women in Development Europe (WIDE) have focused their attention on promoting gender-aware country Trade Policy Reviews. Other groups, such as the US-based Women, Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) and the Canadian Feminist Alliance for Feminist Action (FAFIA), focus their efforts on advocacy and information dissemination on globalization and trade/economics.

Two groups, the Washington-based Centre of Concern (COC) and a coalition of women from the developing “South” called the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), have spearheaded a unique NGO initiative. The “gender and trade project” began with an electronic conference on gender and trade in 1998, wherein participants from around the globe were linked to electronic conference rooms, each with a different sectoral focus (e.g., agriculture, intellectual property rights, etc.). This exchange took place over a nine-month period, after which a “Strategic Planning Seminar on Gender and Trade” was held in Grenada in December 1999. This seminar brought together feminist economists and activists from around the globe. The outcome of this meeting was the establishment of the International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN) with an interim secretariat (Center of Concern); a steering committee with regional representation from Africa, Asia Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, North America and the Pacific; and focal points for research and trade literacy work for women and other NGOs focused on the WTO and the FTAA.<sup>60</sup>

There have been positive developments within the WTO that hold some promise in terms of “engendering” trade policy. Statistics recently produced by the WTO included gender-disaggregated data in the area of agriculture, industry and services.<sup>61</sup> While further investigation needs to be undertaken to determine if this information is available in all sectors, this is a victory for the 1996 Women’s Caucus that originally issued this demand -- a positive sign that international lobbying can effect change.

## The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

The Summit of the Americas process is an institutionalized set of meetings at the highest level of government decision-making in the Western Hemisphere. While regional summits are not new, the 1994 Miami Summit of the Americas is viewed as the first modern hemispheric summit.

In addition to producing a *Declaration* and a *Plan of Action*, the 34 elected government heads in attendance agreed "to work towards creating a *Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)*, to be concluded no later than 2005."<sup>62</sup> While negotiations of the FTAA officially began in April 1998 at the second Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile, negotiations unofficially began a month earlier at the Trade Ministers meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica. At this meeting, Canada was selected to act as the Chair for the first eighteen months of FTAA negotiations, and to host the fifth Ministerial meeting in Toronto in November 1999. The sixth Western Hemisphere Trade Ministers meeting took place in Argentina in April 2001, just prior to the third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City.

At the national level, DFAIT has conducted consultations with industry and civil society organizations (CSOs) since 1998, using the mechanisms detailed earlier. Consequently, the criticisms that consultative mechanisms favour industry, and are not conducive to engendering trade policy, carry over to the FTAA.

What is unique about the FTAA structure is that a consultative mechanism for civil society participation exists. This mechanism, called the "Open Invitation to Civil Society", allows CSOs to submit their views in writing to the Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society (CGR), which in turn transmits these views to trade ministers. On November 1, 1998, CGR issued an open invitation seeking input by March 1999, to feed into the Trade Ministers meeting in Toronto, Canada. From this first call, 72 submissions were received, the majority from business or business-related non-profit organizations in Canada and the United States.<sup>63</sup>

Critics consider it undemocratic that CSO recommendations are not directly made known to Trade Ministers, and suggest that the CGR openly filters input not deemed to be on trade-related matters or presented in a constructive manner.<sup>64</sup> While it is not clear what "trade-related matters" are exactly, nor what input is considered to be constructive, it is believed that these two stipulations were made to "alleviate the concern of some officials that 'non-trade issues' such as human rights, gender issues and poverty were being brought into the trade arena."<sup>65</sup>

In response to what is seen as an ineffective means of consultation with civil society, Canadian CSOs have joined with human rights, labour, women's, environment and other organizations from across the hemisphere to form a coalition called the Hemispheric Social Alliance (HSA).<sup>66</sup> The Alliance works outside of formal structures to present a new ideological vision for the FTAA and the Hemisphere. It created an *Alternatives for the Americas* document, which:

...address[es] the major topics of the agenda for the FTAA negotiators...and topics which governments [consider to be 'non-trade concerns'] ...but are of extreme social

importance -- human rights, environment, labor, immigration, the role of the state and energy... Issues concerning women and indigenous peoples have been incorporated throughout the document.<sup>67</sup>

Immediately preceding the Toronto Trade Ministerial in 1999, the Alliance organized, along with other groups, an Americas FTAA Civil Society Forum and presented papers and proposals to Trade Ministers from 22 countries that agreed to receive directly recommendations regarding FTAA negotiations.<sup>68</sup> Women's groups from across the Hemisphere are active in the Alliance, particularly Women's Edge, a Washington-based NGO.<sup>69</sup> In concert with other women's groups, Women's Edge organized the "Women's Forum" within the Americas FTAA Civil Society Forum, and drafted a chapter for the *Alternatives for the Americas* document.

Efforts to influence the FTAA negotiations are also coming from other quarters of civil society. Since the first meeting of Trade Ministers in 1995, the business sector has held parallel meetings called The Americas Business Forum in order to promote business interests and influence the terms of FTAA negotiation and debate.<sup>70</sup> The ABF has been successful largely because it recognized the importance of early input into negotiations. Since 1996, the ABF has held meetings prior to Trade Ministerial meetings.<sup>71</sup> At present, there are no mechanisms within the FTAA to include the ABF formally and permanently. Requests to participate as observers at the Ministers' meetings and negotiating groups have been rejected.<sup>72</sup> As the private sector's participation at the hemispheric level is determined by the Americas Business Forum, it is interesting to note that the women leaders and representatives from women's business associations held an inaugural "Breakfast" on the margins of the ABF in 1999. This event involved the presentation of recommendations *Women and the FTAA: Our Contribution to Economic Prosperity*<sup>73</sup> directly to Canada's Minister of Trade.

# Gender and APEC: A Mainstreaming Approach

Efforts to influence the trade policy agenda have not been exclusively outside formal structures and institutions. The experience in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum has demonstrated that some concrete results can be achieved through partnerships, working both from outside and from within formal structures.

## Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum is an inter-governmental forum created in 1989, and consists of 21 Asia-Pacific economies. APEC is not a trade bloc, nor a negotiating body. It is used as a vehicle to promote “free and open trade and investment” and to further multilateral trade at the WTO. Trade liberalization schemes are adopted voluntarily by member economies through Individual Action Plans (IAPs). As APEC is not a trade agreement, there has been no impetus to establish national level consultation mechanisms for civil society consultation. Within APEC structures, there are no mechanism for consultation or links with civil society. APEC, however, is formally linked with business groups such as the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) and the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PEEC). Through the APEC Study Center’s Consortium (ASC), the forum is linked to academic research institutions in APEC member economies. As a result of these formal linkages with business and academia, it may not be surprising that APEC is the object of political and process-related criticisms from grassroots organizations as being undemocratic, unaccountable, non-transparent and business-led. Civil society activists have been very visible around APEC, with prominent international protests involving thousands of participants. These include parallel People’s Forums and two International Women’s Conferences against APEC in 1996 and 1997.

## APEC and Gender

Despite the fact that there are no formal mechanisms within APEC for civil society input, a number of individuals and women’s business organizations, in partnership with officials from select APEC economies, have lobbied extensively through the Women Leaders Network of APEC economies (WLN) to put gender issues “front and center.” Efforts to mainstream gender into APEC fora were facilitated through inter-governmental mechanisms at multiple levels within APEC structures, and through domestic level mechanisms in Canada.

As early as 1993, the Human Resources Development Working Group in APEC began to address gender issues; however, the catalyst for the integration of gender in APEC is the WLN. Created in 1996, the WLN is a network of largely middle- and senior-level women in business, government, academe and civil society from APEC member countries. Capitalizing on its access to resources, information and APEC decision-makers, the WLN has been proactive in its efforts to offer recommendations on gender mainstreaming and analysis to Leaders, SME Ministers and Trade Ministers in their annual meetings since 1996. The WLN lent its political support to the first APEC Ministerial Meeting on Women in 1998, and has since engaged in initiatives relating to issues facing business women in APEC economies. Two early Canadian think-pieces which detail some of the policy and structural constraints involved in engendering APEC fora are *The*

*Policy Implications for Gender Equality Issues in APEC*(1996) by Lorna Marsden and *Gender Front and Centre: An APEC Primer*(1997) by Heather Gibb from the North-South Institute. More recently, other WLN initiatives include the creation of the Confederation of Women's Business Councils of APEC economies (1998); and the Indigenous Women in Exporting Business Seminar (1999).

At its first meeting in the Philippines in 1996, the WLN adopted a *Call to Action*, which urged APEC Leaders to recognize and integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue in APEC and to work in partnership with the WLN. The WLN also made specific recommendations with respect to small and medium enterprises, human resources development and industrial science and technology. As a result of these efforts, Leaders at the APEC Summit in 1996 agreed to put special emphasis on the full participation of women and youth in the implementation of APEC's economic and technical cooperation agenda.

Building on the opening secured by the WLN, Canada, as the 1997 APEC Chair, established within the federal government an interdepartmental subcommittee on APEC and Gender, to "advance in APEC, government commitment to promote and support global gender equality, as well as to implement the 1996 APEC Ministerial and Leaders' directives on women."<sup>74</sup> The objectives of the interdepartmental subcommittee were "to build on existing work on gender; to identify gaps in knowledge and activity and to target key entry points in the APEC structure."<sup>75</sup> The interdepartmental subcommittee was co-chaired by Status of Women Canada and DFAIT. Through this internal governmental mechanism, Canada adopted a two-track approach to integrating gender in APEC, using high-level APEC senior officials as "champions" for gender issues at the senior officials' meetings (SOM) and also promoting gender-related initiatives in various APEC working groups. In concert with other APEC economies, these champions were able to exert influence at the Ministerial and Leaders' levels. As a result of these strategies, change has been startlingly rapid at all levels.

At the Leader and Ministerial levels, Canada and the Philippines were successful in generating the political will, supported by the WLN, to hold an APEC Ministerial Meeting on Women in the Philippines in 1998. The output from this Ministerial was the recommendation to the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) to develop a Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC. The SOM subsequently established an Ad Hoc Task Force for the Integration of Women in APEC with the sole mandate to develop the Framework. The Framework was completed and endorsed by Ministers within the year. In order to implement the Framework, the SOM Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Gender Integration (AGGI) has been established, with a two-year mandate to "develop APEC's awareness of the Framework; build capacity in gender analysis and the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data; acquire knowledge of good examples of gender-integrated policies and projects; and for APEC to gain experience with gender integration."<sup>76</sup>

The AGGI have since delivered information sessions to a number of APEC fora.

At the working group level, there have been significant efforts since 1996 to integrate gender in the Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG), the Industrial, Science and Technology Working Group (ISTWG), the Telecommunications Working Group (TELWG), the Transportation Working Group (TPTWG) and the Tourism Working Group. Policy level work has also taken place in the Working Group on Small and Medium Enterprises (PLGSME) and at

the project level in the Working Group on Fisheries (FWG).

Despite positive mainstreaming outcomes in APEC, grassroots women's organizations and other critics contest the processes through which these gains were achieved, particularly the role played by the WLN. According to some critics, the WLN is a network of professional or economically privileged middle-aged women, with power in government and/or their respective economies, who use "efficiency arguments" to gain support for women's inclusion in APEC. Critics of the WLN argue that the "efficiency approach" supports neo-liberal ideology, privileging economic development and growth over human development and ecological sustainability. In addition to ideological differences, "power, age, class, race, ...differentials determine which women work from within formal structures and which ones work from the outside."<sup>77</sup>

Other critics maintain that much of the success in integrating gender has occurred at the working group level and in the economic and technical cooperation agenda (ECOTECH) of APEC, and that the trade investment liberalization and trade facilitation agenda (TILF) of APEC remains relatively untouched by gender mainstreaming efforts.

Indeed, there is much still to be done. Nevertheless, APEC remains a unique example, as it is the only one of the multilateral trade forums to explicitly address gender concerns at the official level, "despite the fact that social issues are considered peripheral to its [main economic] agenda."

## Lessons for the Future

An examination of consultative mechanisms already in place, past efforts by women's organizations to influence trade policy, and the gender mainstreaming efforts within APEC offer a set of valuable lessons. It is clear that over the last decade, there has been a high level of frustration among civil society organizations, including women's organizations, with respect to national-level mechanisms for consultation on international trade policy. This frustration has been the impetus for bypassing the state to form international networks and alliances, in order to express opposing views and alternative visions of a global economic order. Parallel summits and conferences, as well as street protests, have become a common feature of high-level international economic forums.

Another point to be made is that there have been marked differences in approach and strategy to "engender" trade policy. The strategies range from ensuring access and representation (i.e., NGO representatives in delegations, gender mainstreaming), to social clauses, to "engendering" review mechanisms such as the Trade Policy Reviews, and long-term capacity-building via trade literacy initiatives. The differences in approach are marked by ideological perspectives, most evident in the polarization of views with respect to "engendering" the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. The question of whether to engage and ensure women's access and participation through the Women Leaders Network, or to express opposition to the whole model of corporate-led globalization, was the hallmark of this polarization. The wide range of perspectives and strategies, however, provides a fertile ground for identifying the positive elements that can be built upon.

### *Representation*

A recurrent theme in the review, starting from CUSFTA in the late 1980s to ongoing negotiations under the FTAA and the WTO, is the unevenness of the playing field. In all of these cases, business interests are well represented, although women's business interests may be less so. The predominance of industry representation is evident in the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade and the business advisory bodies that are formally affiliated with APEC. There are no equivalent links with civil society organizations.

The under-representation of women is also a key feature of the process. In ensuring women's representation in consultative or advisory bodies, the CUSFTA and NAFTA consultations offer a valuable insight. During consultations on these agreements, the assumption was made that trade unions would represent women's interests. Yet trade unions do not necessarily refer to women's issues, nor do they necessarily represent the specific concerns of women workers. Further, female representatives on the SAGITS often represent business interests and not the concerns of grassroots women's groups.

In order to integrate gender into trade negotiations, representatives from women's organizations should be represented in advisory groups and involved at the beginning of the consultation phase at all levels.



### ***Diversity Lens***

As international networks were formed, it became apparent that there were differences in perspectives between the North and the South, and within Northern countries where the impact of trade agreements is mediated by factors such as race, ethnicity, culture and geographical location, among others. During the NAFTA negotiations, many women's groups in the United States and Mexico offered a gender analysis of NAFTA and trade policy in general, which included a diversity lens. As women are not as a group, homogenous, their experiences of increased trade liberalization will not be the same. This is a key argument for building a broad consensus on trade and investment liberalization.

### ***Accountability***

Another recurrent theme is the absence or lack of accountability in consultative mechanisms. For example, while the government does respond to the concerns outlined in the report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT), it has no obligation to integrate any of the concerns in the formulation of trade policy. Another example is the call for submissions through *Gazette* notices, whereby there are no government responses to the submissions. These unilateral or one-way consultations were a key concern identified during the *ad hoc* informal multi-stakeholder consultation.

### ***Effective Consultative Mechanisms***

In cases where formal links with civil society organizations were established, how the input from these organizations is channeled into the trade policy-making process is an area that warrants further study. In the case of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), issues that were considered not trade-related or constructive were filtered out by the Committee of Government Representatives for Civil Society Input (CGR). It is clear that effective mechanisms need to not only provide an entry point for civil society input, but ensure an upward flow to policy-makers.

### ***Internal Government Mechanisms***

As mentioned earlier in the discussion, trade and economic policy tend to be considered as primarily within the purview of a few government departments. Governmental bodies responsible for gender issues have not had a role in the development of negotiating positions. This may be considered as a missed opportunity for trade policy to be informed by a wider range of constituencies. In fact, input provided through interdepartmental collaboration would serve to complement consultative mechanisms that are external to government. Women's ministries can play a role in ensuring that a wide spectrum of women's voices is heard in the development of negotiating positions.

In the case of APEC, the creation of an interdepartmental subcommittee, co-chaired by Status of Women Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs, was an extremely important element of the process. Regular meetings were held on a monthly basis, and included representatives from other government departments. The close collaboration between Status of Women Canada and DFAIT meant that the APEC policy-making process was accessible to gender experts.

### ***Multi-Level Approach***

Another perspective on public engagement in policy development is offered by the gender mainstreaming approach that was taken with respect to APEC, wherein work was undertaken on multiple levels. At the highest level, a *Leaders Declaration* included a commitment to women's participation. Government officials (via the interdepartmental committee) acted as champions for gender issues at the level of APEC Senior Officials and Working Groups, raising the profile of gender issues to a Ministerial level, which provided an opening to pursue a mainstreaming agenda. Opportunities presented by this opening were fully realized through the creation of a Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC, and the establishment of the SOM Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Gender Integration (AGGI) with a clear mandate to build capacity in gender analysis within APEC. The systematic, multi-level approach used in the case of APEC offers important lessons for future engagement.

## Conclusion

Given the myriad strategies that have been taken in the past, it may not be useful to take a cookie-cutter approach to putting gender on the trade policy agenda. The reality is that no two trade agreements, organizations or multilateral forums are alike and that structures, frameworks, processes and mandates differ from one agreement or organization to the next. Drawing from the review of the experiences in CUSFTA, NAFTA, FTAA, the WTO and the APEC forum, however, it may be possible to develop a “hybrid approach” for gender integration in the Canadian context. The hybrid approach would adopt aspects of the APEC mainstreaming approach that were effective, while heeding process-related concerns raised in each of the cases with respect to participation, representation and inclusiveness. Overall, steps would need to be taken to make institutions transparent, accessible, open and accountable, in order to allow for democratic expression and participation within structures of decision-making. This would include reform of the national-level machinery for consultations with civil society, in order to level the playing field for all social actors.

Judging from the polarization occurring around globalization processes, which are viewed as corporate-led and representing a narrow range of interests, a different international trade strategy for the future may need to be considered -- one which is inclusive, equitable and sustainable; allows for the attainment of both economic and social goals; and ensures that the benefits of globalization are shared by all countries and all people.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Cathy Blacklock. 2000. *Women and Trade in Canada an Overview of Key Issues*. A discussion paper prepared for Status of Women Canada. Ottawa: SWC. August.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP. 1999. *Human Development Report 1999*. New York United Nations.

<sup>3</sup> For more on the presumed “gender neutrality” of economic policy, see Elson, Diane. 1991. *Male Bias in the Development Process*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Webster’s New World Dictionary defines the term “engender” as “to bring into being; to bring about; cause; produce; to be produced; originate.” (New York: Webster’s New World Dictionary, 1988, p. 450) Feminists have adopted this term to reflect the use, need, or application of ‘gender analysis’ to inform a particular process, structure or policy. In this context, the term ‘engender’ has gained widespread popularity in policy circles. See for example the UNDP (1995) Human Development Report 1995, p. 23: “[Economic] Development if not engendered, is endangered.”

<sup>5</sup> Personal communication with Danielle Ayotte, Director, Trade Policy Consultations and Liaison Division (EBC), the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, March 24, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.parl.gc.ca> for names of individuals and groups who participated in past SCFAIT cross-country hearings.

<sup>7</sup> The Government of Canada’s response to the SCFAIT Report on the World Trade Organization and the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations can be found at <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca>.

<sup>8</sup> Kathleen Macmillan. 2000. *International Trade Policy: A Primer*. A paper prepared for Status of Women Canada. Ottawa: SWC. March.

<sup>9</sup> For the reports from the October 7, 1999 and February 17, 1999 FPT Trade Ministers’ meetings, go to the web page <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca> under “Consultations with Canadians.”

<sup>10</sup> Canada Export on-line. “FPT Trade Ministers Meet.” (Today’s Stories, March 20, 1999) <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/news/newsletr/canex/990320ae.html>.)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 8. (2000)

<sup>12</sup> From SAGIT Membership Lists, EBC, March 24, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Susan Joekes and Ann Weston. 1994. *Women and the New Trade Agenda*. New York: United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM.) p. 26.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 13 (1994) p. 26

<sup>16</sup> This distinction is also noted in Joekes and Weston, 1994, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>18</sup> DFAIT. “Marchi Announces Members of Team Canada Inc. Advisory Board.” [http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/news/press\\_releases/98\\_press/98-002e.html](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/news/press_releases/98_press/98-002e.html). January 9, 1998, No. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 18. Membership list attached.

<sup>22</sup> Personal communication. Source requested anonymity.

<sup>23</sup> EBC Mandate: “The Trade Policy Consultations and Liaison Division (EBC) develops and implements the strategy that coordinates the Canadian Government’s approach to consultations on trade policy. The Division: Supports and provides guidance to DFAIT trade policy divisions for their consultation and outreach initiatives; provides Canadians with accurate, clear, up-to-date information on Canada’s trade policy agenda; establishes mechanisms for collecting the opinions of Canadians on trade policy including in connection with trade negotiations/agreements (e.g., WTO, NAFTA, FTAA, EFTA) and related issues.” Personal communication, Danielle Ayotte, Director EBC, March 24, 2000.

<sup>24</sup> EBC Functions: “More specifically, EBC: I) Manages and coordinates FPT trade policy relations and the ongoing exchange of information, positions, concerns on trade policy issues; II) Manages and coordinates the SAGIT process that provides the Minister with advice on trade policy; III) Develops and maintains, in collaboration with other divisions, a series of operational tools such as the Trade Negotiations and Agreement website, E-branch contact databases, consultation/outreach calendars, etc.; IV) Develops and maintains a network of stakeholders; V) Manages and coordinates, as mandated by senior management, multi-stakeholder consultations dealing with horizontal issues;

VI) Collaborates with the Communications Branch in preparing outreach and communications strategies and products on trade policy.” Personal communication, EBC, March 24, 2000.

<sup>25</sup> DFAIT web site: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca>, “Consultations with Canadians.”

<sup>26</sup> DFAIT, “Public Consultations on FTAA and WTO negotiations: Multi-stakeholder Consultations on Canada’s Trade Agenda.” [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tnc-nac/multi-summary-e.asp](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tnc-nac/multi-summary-e.asp)

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>29</sup> Lorna Marsden. 1992. “Timing and Presence: Getting Women’s Issues on the Trade Agenda.” Revised Version (1) prepared for the July 18-19 Meeting of the GUILD INN GROUP, Bangkok, Thailand.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 29. For a good summary of The Special Joint Parliamentary Committee Report, refer to Marsden, 1992, p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>36</sup> It is important to recognize that in any coalition there may be differing approaches and political strategies followed by diverse actors. What is important to recognize is that they are united over a larger theme and committed to some kind of action. For more on the nuances between groups in Pro-Canada Network, see Canadian Development Report (CDR) (1999), “Confronting the Global Economic Constitution.” *Civil Society and Global Change*. Alison Van Rooy. (ed.) Ottawa: The North-South Institute. Chapter 8.

<sup>37</sup> Martha Macdonald. 1994. “Economic Restructuring and Gender in Canada: Feminist Policy Initiatives.” Prepared for Gender and Macroeconomics Workshop University of Utah. June. p. 19 (quoting Sylvia Bashevkin. (1989) “Free trade and Canadian feminism: The Case of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women,” *Canadian Public Policy*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 303-375.)

<sup>38</sup> MacDonald (1994). For more detail on the differences in the CACSW-commissioned papers see MacDonald, p. 18.

<sup>39</sup> Ann Weston. 1993. “The NAFTA Side Agreements and their Implications for Women: Soft Bark and Not Much Bite?” Paper presented at Economic Equality Workshop, November 29-30, 1993. Ottawa: Status of Women Canada.

<sup>40</sup> Marjorie Griffin Cohen, Laura Ritchie, Michelle Swenarchuck, Leah Vosko. 1998. “Globalization: Some Implications and Strategies for Women.” Toronto: The National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

<sup>41</sup> Christina Gabriel and Laura Macdonald. 1994. “NAFTA, Women and Organizing in Canada and Mexico: Forging a Feminist Internationality.” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 3, (Winter) pp. 535-62.

<sup>42</sup> Laura Macdonald. Forthcoming. “Trade with a Female Face: Women and the New International Trade Agenda,” *Trade and the New Social Agenda*, in Caroline Thomas and Annie Taylor (eds.) pl: Routledge.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 42. P. 22. Mujer a Mujer has recently dissolved b/c of lack of funding.

<sup>44</sup> See the Common Frontiers Web site for more information at: <http://www.web.net/comfront/>

<sup>45</sup> Weston (1993)

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 42

<sup>47</sup> Barbara Guptill, and Carol Goldenberg, Elyn Swanson. 1999. “Evolving Trade Treaties: Threats or Opportunities.” The League of Women Voters of Seattle Education Fund. April, Seattle, USA.

<sup>48</sup> International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) “Accreditation Schemes and Other Arrangements for Public Participation in International Fora: A Contribution to the Debate on WTO and Transparency.” Geneva: ICTSD. November.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 13. p. 30.

<sup>50</sup> Women Working Worldwide cites the Management of the GATT as 100% male (quoted in Macdonald).

<sup>51</sup> For a full list of delegates on the ‘official’ Canadian delegation to the Third WTO Ministerial in Seattle, December 1999, refer to the DFAIT Web site: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca>

<sup>52</sup> Press Release, 12 December 1996. “WTO is Gender Blind.” A copy of the press release can be found in the *ICDA Journal: Focus on Trade and Development*. Vol. 5, no. 1, 1997, pp. 55-56.

<sup>53</sup> Myriam Vander Stichele. 1998. “The Need for a Gender Analysis of the WTO: Ghana Case Study.” IWGGT.

<sup>54</sup> Maria Riley. 2000. “Trade is a Woman’s Issue: Women at the WTO Third Ministerial in Seattle.” *Report from the Centre of Concern*. January. This report can be accessed from the Centre of Concern’s web site at: <http://www.org/coc>.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 54. <http://www.org/coc>.

<sup>56</sup> For an account of these efforts see Halle, Angela 1997, "Follow-Up Meeting." In *ICDA Journal: Focus on Trade and Development*. Vol. 5, no. 1, 1997, p. 56.

<sup>57</sup> These efforts have yielded results. Within the context of the United Nations, the *United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)* Trade Program focuses specially on "the gender differentiated impact of trade policies and the gender dimensions in the trade policy making process." In addition to commissioning papers and other resources on gender and trade, UNIFEM is involved in capacity building on gender and trade at global, regional and national levels. For more on UNIFEM's work see <http://www.unifem.undp.org>. Another UN agency, the *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* hosted in 1999, a *pre-UNCTAD X Experts Workshop on Trade, Sustainable Development and Gender*. According to the Chair's Summary, "much interest was shown in the lack of attention paid to gender issues in the negotiations of international trade agreements and in sub-regional and regional trade arrangements..." A full report on the pre-UNCTAD X meeting can be found at <http://www.unctad.org>. Women's equality-seeking organizations have also looked to global (United Nations) conferences as an entry point to engender trade policy. Evidence of this can be seen in the *Declaration for Economic Justice and Women's Empowerment* produced during the Preparatory Committee meetings for the CSW, Beijing +5 Review, March 1999. The influence of these advocacy groups along with growing literature on the gender implications of economic policies, economic restructuring, structural adjustment and trade liberalization is beginning to be felt. The official Beijing +5 and the World Summit for Sustainable Development WSSD+5 make reference to globalization and the gender-differentiated effects of trade liberalization on women.

<sup>58</sup> See for example, Charnovitz, Steve. 1996. "Participation of Non-Governmental Organizations in the World Trade Organization." *Pennsylvania: Journal of International Economic Law*. Spring, Vol. 17, no 1.

<sup>59</sup> For more on the Women Working Worldwide WTO Project contact Manchester University, UK. <http://www.women-ww@mcrl.poptel.org.uk>.

<sup>60</sup> For a copy of the Report on the Grenada Seminar, planning and outcomes from the gender and trade project and information on WTO gender and trade advocacy see <http://www.coc.org.coc>

<sup>61</sup> See WTO Negotiations on Agriculture and Services (Press/167). Accompanying statistics for employment in agriculture, industry and services for all WTO member economies in 1980 and 1990 are gender-disaggregated.

<sup>62</sup> Summit of the Americas Information Network. "The Summit Process." <http://www.summit-america.org/Summit-papers/Summit-Process.html>, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> Yasmine Shamsie. 2000. "Engaging with Civil Society: Lessons from the OAS, FTAA and Summits of the Americas." Ottawa: North-South Institute (NSI), Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) and the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD.) January.

For a breakdown of the 72 submissions (i.e., 4 relating to gender) see <http://www.newecon.org/global/Trade/FTAA-Analysis.html>

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 18

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 64

<sup>66</sup> For more on the Hemispheric Social Alliance see <http://www.web.net/>

<sup>67</sup> For the full text of the *Alternatives for the Americas* document see <http://www.globalexchange.org>

<sup>68</sup> For the final Report from the Americas FTAA Civil Society Forum see [http://www.web.net/~comfront/cf\\_doc\\_final](http://www.web.net/~comfront/cf_doc_final) report.html

<sup>69</sup> For more on the efforts by Women's Edge to integrate a gender perspective into trade negotiations and trade policies see <http://www.womensedge.org>

<sup>70</sup> "Civil Society vis-à-vis regional and hemispheric integration III" [http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/sela/eng\\_docs/spclxxciodi1-2000-3.html](http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/sela/eng_docs/spclxxciodi1-2000-3.html)

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 70

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 70

<sup>73</sup> For more on the women leaders inaugural "Breakfast" and the February 2000 Final Report see IFES/CIDA Delegation to the ABF and Women Leaders Breakfast, Toronto Ontario November 1-3, 1999. See [www.abfcanada.com/english/womenleaders.html](http://www.abfcanada.com/english/womenleaders.html).

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<sup>74</sup> Heather Gibb. *Gender Front and Centre: An APEC Primer*. North-South Institute. Ottawa, p. 38.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>76</sup> APEC Secretariat 2000. "Gender-related developments in APEC 1995-2000."

<sup>77</sup> Vancouver Status of Women. 1997. "Engendering the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC Forum). Document produced for Session 2 of the Women Leaders' Network meeting, Ottawa-Hull, September 13-16. Ottawa: Status of Women, Canada, p. 7.

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# Comments

We welcome your comments. Please detach this form and return it to the following address:

**Status of Women Canada (SWC)  
Policy Analysis and Development Directorate  
123 Slater Street – 10<sup>th</sup> floor  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1P 1H9  
Fax: (613) 947-0530**

**1) Tell us about yourself** *(Check one as appropriate)*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women's organization                          | <input type="checkbox"/> College, CEGEP                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal organization                       | <input type="checkbox"/> University                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethno-cultural organization/group             | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal government/national institution       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth organization                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial/Territorial government/institution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors' organization                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional association or corporation       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Men's organization                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Private sector/business                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health centre, medical clinic, hospital, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Labour organization                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School (elementary, high school)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____                         |

**2) Where do you live?** *(Check one)*

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newfoundland         | <input type="checkbox"/> Ontario          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yukon                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prince Edward Island | <input type="checkbox"/> Manitoba         | <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Territories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Brunswick        | <input type="checkbox"/> Saskatchewan     | <input type="checkbox"/> Nunavut               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nova Scotia          | <input type="checkbox"/> Alberta          | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside Canada        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quebec               | <input type="checkbox"/> British Columbia |  |

**3) What is your or your organization's interest in policy issues related to international trade?**

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**4) Are you currently working on specific trade and gender issues?**

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
- If yes, please elaborate** *(Check as many as applicable)*
- |                                   |  |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research | <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic literacy | _____                          |

**5) If you are currently not working on these issues, have the papers stimulated your interest in finding out more about gender and trade?**

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

**If not, why?** \_\_\_\_\_

6) Were these papers useful to you or your organization? (Check one)

Yes

No

Please elaborate \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7) How did you use these papers?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8) Which paper/s or parts of these papers were most useful (user-friendly language, content, details etc.)?

*Women and Trade in Canada: An Overview of Key Issues*

*International Trade Policy: A Primer*

*Putting Gender Into the Process: Initiatives and Lessons Learned*

Comments

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9) Do you think further research is required in any of the areas covered by these papers? Please explain

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10) What additional topics related to gender and trade would you like to see addressed in new research? Please explain

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11) We would also appreciate any other comments that you may have on the papers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you!

Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Note that all personal information collected on this form is protected under the Privacy Act.