

After Multilateralism:

North-South Development Solidarity in Resistance to the Global Trade Agenda

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1 Introduction

*Financial Times* correspondent Allen Beattie recently described the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Doha Round as hovering in 'a somewhat surreal state where it is in effect dead but the first person to call it so risks being accused of having killed it' (Beattie, 2011). In view of the increasing politicisation of the multilateral trade arena since the late-1990s, the traditional powers in the global trading system have gradually adopted Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA) as the preferred instrument for pursuing their trade policy goals. The trend suggests that they did not abandon their policy preferences in view of resistance from global South countries within the Round and activism in global and domestic politics. Instead, the big traders pursue them through channels outside of the multilateral realm.<sup>1</sup> Whether and how transnational resistance to the global trade agenda, as was directed against the WTO ten years ago, will organise around the multiple policy stages of PTA negotiations is therefore one central question in current trade politics.

In order to enhance our knowledge about the dynamics of bilateral trade talks, I focus on the politics of resistance towards the global trade agenda in the framework of PTA negotiations in this paper. On the face of it, a disintegration of the resistance movement accompanied the gradual shift from a quasi-exclusively multilateral global trading system towards an order that is reproduced through

both multilateralism and a growing web of overlapping PTAs. In PTAs, governments regularly expand the global trade rules beyond what was envisaged at the WTO. At the same time, activists have not systematically refocused their attention to these talks. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) in the global North have shown a tendency to celebrate the demise of the WTO, or move on to other topics. In the global South, much organisation against PTAs has come from local or regional movements, which rely on a history of resistance against economic reform processes (Choudry, 2010).

Nonetheless, evidence from global trade politics points to the possibility of organising resistance to the PTA-based pursuit of the global trade agenda. The evidence suggests that “development solidarity” is a useful concept for North-South campaigning in trade politics. In order to test this hypothesis, I present an empirical and theoretical analysis of development solidarity in transnational trade campaigning on the basis of data that I gathered as part of a larger study on Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations between West Africa and the European Union (EU).

Both in theory and practice, the term “development” is elusive and context-dependent. According to Gilbert Rist (2007), it has both a meaning and a political function in the world. In terms of meaning, ‘the term “development” remains vague, tending to refer to a set of beliefs and assumptions about the nature of social progress rather than to anything more precise’. In terms of its political function, development loosely ‘convey[s] the idea that tomorrow things will be better, or that more is necessarily better’ (Rist, 2007: 485).

Relying on data from the West African EPA process,<sup>ii</sup> I substantiate Rist’s claims in the next section of my paper. Thus, while West Africa features at the bottom of many development indices, a comparison of varying indices indicates that development is not an absolute concept. Instead, development rankings depend partly on the parameters chosen for making the determination,

indicating that development is an intrinsically political term. A scrutiny of the concept's inherent meaning, its definitions and their omissions confirms this hypothesis.

In the third section, I show that the looseness of the notion was instrumental for building solidarity in North-South trade campaigning and helped to politicise the West African and European EPA debate. However, development and underdevelopment are not disconnected social phenomena but economically, politically and socially related. In the fourth section, I argue that the term "development" has taken on its own meaning within trade discourse since global South countries first pointed to the global trading system's imbalances in the 1950s. Today, it comes with a relatively specific set of policy recommendations that fail to take important structural features of the global economy into account. Although there is room for further campaigning on development issues in trade policy, I argue that development solidarity will not be genuinely transformative as long as the inter-related nature of North-South economic, political and social conditions is not problematised in the debates.

Due to analytical drawbacks, I avoid using the terms "trade liberalisation" and "free trade" as far as possible throughout the paper and refer to "global trade agenda" instead. Free trade is today mainly understood as the government's abstention from or dismantling of tariff and non-tariff barriers to leave the management of cross-border trade flows to the market mechanism. Protectionism is resented because economic scholars since David Ricardo (2004 [1821]) have argued that political interference with trade negatively affects global welfare. However, the term "free trade" has shifted meaning historically several times (Trentman, 1998; Goode, 2007) and its theoretical and practical meanings do not converge. The *WTO Dictionary of Trade Policy Terms* defines free trade 'in principle, [as] the free movement across borders of goods, services, capital and people. In practice, national policy and regulatory objectives put greater or lesser constraints on the movement of each' (Goode, 2007). In addition, differences also exist between what theory holds to be the goal of trade liberalisation and what practitioners strive for. According to the dictionary, trade liberalisation is 'a

general term for the gradual or complete removal of existing impediments to trade in goods and services'. It goes on to highlight that 'free trade may be its ultimate aim, but more likely it is freer trade' (Goode, 2007).

It comes as no surprise that trade theory and trade politics diverge. Any economic activity is at the same time a social activity and as such requires a framework of norms and rules in order to be conducted successfully. As historical scholarship points out, long distance trade requires a particularly well spelled-out organisational framework due to cultural differences between trading partners and the risks attached to transport (Curtin, 1984). Thus, when the state withdraws from setting such rules, the idea that trade operates in a rules-free sphere is flawed. As can be observed in increasing regulatory and standard-setting activity by economic operators, the setting of the rules under which the trading system operates shifts from the visible hand of the state to the visible hand of corporate actors. Even today 'the road to the free market [is] opened and kept open by an enormous increase in continuous, centrally organised and controlled interventionism' (Polanyi [1944] 2001: 146).

Trade liberalisation and free trade are therefore short-hand expressions for a specific trade political outlook, including resulting policy recommendations for trade reform, at a given historical moment. The state retains a central role in free trade policies. Under what are currently termed trade liberalisation or free trade policies, regulation is typically shifted away from classical trade policy instruments that directly regulate trade flows at the border and towards so-called "trade-related" rules that open markets through interference with domestic regulation in other policy areas. This type of trade political reform factually establishes either new forms of monopoly or opportunities for monopolisation. Examples from the global trade agenda include harmonisation of customs procedures, market access in service sectors, intellectual property protection, health and safety standards, government procurement, competition, investment, etc., which are in particular pursued through PTAs. Like under protectionism, the type of intervention chosen to create a so-called "free"

market thus determines which economic operators gain over others. This is why both the US and the EU today promote, for example, intellectual property schemes that benefit domestic producers through trade agreements such as the EPA. <sup>iii</sup>

In order to avoid the conceptually incoherent and politically problematic free trade and trade liberalisation terminology, I use the term “global trade agenda” to refer to the set of policy recommendations that are today promoted by the main international institutions and global trading powers. Based on the Doha Ministerial Declaration, I understand the term to include the following policy lines: tariff reduction or elimination in trade in goods, market access in service sectors, universalisation of intellectual property protection, technical assistance to global South countries to facilitate foreign direct investment, competition policy and institutional capacity for trade facilitation, access to government procurement procedures and e-commerce (WTO, 2001). In line with DG Trade’s Global Europe strategy, the EU’s EPA agenda is inscribed in and furthers the global trade agenda (see European Commission, 2006).

## 2 Development

### 2.1 Development in West Africa

Figure 1 ranks West African countries according to three development indices. The indices show that when compared with the rest of the world, socio-economic conditions in West Africa are under severe strain.

Figure 1. West Africa on Development Indices

Country	World Bank Income Classification*	United Nations Human Development Index **	Child Development Index***
Benin	Low Income	Low Human Development	107

		(161)	
Burkina-Faso	Low Income	Low Human Development (177)	134
Cape Verde	Lower Middle Income	Medium Human Development (121)	-/-
Côte d'Ivoire	Lower Middle Income	Low Human Development (163)	121
The Gambia	Low Income	Low Human Development (168)	113
Ghana	Low Income	Medium Human Development (152)	109
Guinea	Low Income	Low Human Development (170)	120
Guinea-Bissau	Low Income	Low Human Development (173)	128
Liberia	Low Income	Low Human Development (169)	-/-
Mali	Low Income	Low Human Development (178)	130
Mauritania	Low Income	Medium Human Development (154)	108
Niger	Low Income	Low Human Development (182)	137

Nigeria	Lower Middle Income	Medium Human Development (158)	126
Senegal	Lower Middle Income	Low Human Development (166)	103
Sierra Leone	Low Income	Low Human Development (180)	136
Togo	Low Income	Low Human Development (159)	96

\* According four categories in respect of data for 2009: High Income, Upper Middle Income, Lower Middle Income and Low Income.

\*\* According four categories in respect of data for 2007: Very High Human Development, High Human Development, Medium Human Development, Low Human Development 182 countries (individual ranking in brackets).

\*\*\* Ranking countries in respect of data for 2000-2006.

Source: Save the Children (2008), UNDP (2010), World Bank (2010).

World Bank income classification uses per capita Gross National Income to classify all one hundred eighty-seven World Bank members. It differentiates between high income (>\$12,196), upper middle income (\$3,946-12,195), lower middle income (\$996-3,945) and low income (<\$995) countries. Only four West African countries featured among the lower middle income countries, all other countries were ranked in the low income group in 2009. The UN Human Development Index mixes economic and social indicators and considers income, life expectancy and literacy rates to rank a total of one hundred eighty-two countries. While twelve West African countries exposed low human development according to the Human Development Index, four have reached medium human

development in 2007, although those four countries did not coincide entirely with the World Bank's income classifications.

Since 2008, the NGO Save the Children publishes the Child Development Index 'to monitor how individual countries are performing in relation to the wellbeing of their children' (Save the Children, 2008: 1). Arguing that economic policy-making analysis devotes too little attention to the distributional effects of economic growth, the organisation uses no economic indicators for its index. Instead, it ranks one hundred thirty-seven countries using under five-year old mortality rates, under five-year old malnutrition rates and primary school enrolment. Save the Children finds considerable variations with the UN Human Development Index, thus challenging the assumption that increases in overall household income improve wellbeing to the benefit of all family members. In the case of West Africa, for example, Nigeria featured three ranks above Benin on the Human Development Index, while scoring nineteen ranks below Benin on the Child Development Index. Similarly, both countries did better on the Human Development Index when compared to Senegal, but the relationship was inversed on the Child Development Index. This is compatible with Save the Children's hypothesis that the income component of the Human Development Index boosts the ranking of countries that are rich in resources (Save the Children, 2008). Together, the three indices point to the equivocal nature of the concept of development.

## 2.2 The Concept of Development

Development is a normative term (Seers, 1969) with multiple meanings that are contested and open to politicisation. Today, development is predominantly identified with an intentional social transformation towards a specific model of technological, political and social organisation of production and distribution, along the lines of the Western European and North American examples. According to Michael Todaro and Stephen Smith, development implies 'rapid structural and institutional transformations of entire societies in a manner that will most efficiently bring the fruits

of economic progress to the broadest segments of their populations'. The goal of development is to 'improve the material lives of the majority of the global populations' (Todaro and Smith, 2009: 8). In this meaning, development refers to a long-term social and economic process marked by a steady decline in agricultural shares in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and continuous increase in shares of industries, construction, trade and services, along with the spread of Western value-systems and political organisation. Such a shift is presumed to alleviate socio-economic hardship. A temporal connotation is implicit, whereby development refers to an evolution towards a presumed preferable form of social organisation, while underdevelopment denotes a lack of ability to transform.

While development traditionally denoted a transformation in the productive sphere that was expected to lead to a transformation of the social sphere, access to material goods is today not perceived as the sole indicator of development (Chang, 2009).<sup>iv</sup> Deepa Narayan, Raj Patel, Kai Schafft, Anne Rademacher and Sarah Koch Schulte present a multidimensional view incorporating individual and communal social, economic and political conditions by including hunger, illiteracy, illness and poor health, powerlessness, voicelessness, insecurity, humiliation, and a lack of access to basic infrastructure in their definitions of poverty and underdevelopment (Narayan, Patel et al., 2000). Nonetheless, causal beliefs in what brings development about vary dramatically (Fforde, 2009).<sup>v</sup>

Development discourse typically focuses on countries that are classified as underdeveloped. This has two interconnected consequences. On the one hand, the ability of Northern economic, political and social models to deliver on the promise of bringing the fruits of economic progress to the broadest segment of the population is not problematised. For lack of critical scrutiny, the notion of development postulates the superiority of Northern mechanisms of social reproduction and has failed to overcome the tendency of universalising Northern societal models, which scholars have criticised since the 1960s (Seers, 1963). On the other hand, the relevance of the creation of underdevelopment in some parts of the world for the historical process of creating development in others is neglected.<sup>vi</sup> Resulting from the failure to analyse both sides of the coin, the term

development adopts a political function in world politics. As Wolfgang Sachs argues: 'development is much more than just a socio-economic endeavour; it is a perception which models reality, a myth which comforts societies, and a fantasy which unleashes passions' (Sachs, 1992: 1).

While the terms development and underdevelopment occurred on a regular basis in both my interviews and the general West African EPA debate, they were typically used as shorthand for the desire to better peoples' lives and to allow the region to escape from generalised socio-economic hardship. Similarly to Rist's definition, references to development therefore made allusion to a long-term policy goal, but typically left several questions as to the broader development debate unanswered. For example, what specific policy decisions development required and what developed West African societies would look like exactly was unclear and open to contestation. In my interview, an official at the Senegalese trade ministry highlighted the conceptual void from which the term development suffers with the following words: 'the way you Europeans stock yourselves up in little apartments like sardines in a can, without ever talking to your neighbours – that's not the development model for Africa'. Instead, the official argued, 'we will have to decide amongst ourselves what the best development path for us would be, while respecting the African way of life and peoples' traditions and customs'.<sup>vii</sup>

As the next section indicates, the politics of the connections between trade and development in West African-EU trade negotiations precisely unfolded in this normatively contested field. While actors fought over the question of what type of trade liberalisation would bring development, the historical role of trade in producing wealth in Europe and socio-economic and political decline in West Africa, was rarely directly discussed.<sup>viii</sup> Instead, in current trade politics, the term 'development' comes with its own meaning and sets of policy recommendations attached. The framework for North-South campaigning in trade agreements is set partly by this discourse.

### 3 Development Solidarity in Campaigns on the West African EPA

In a 2007 briefing paper on EPA negotiations, the NGO Oxfam International explained: 'while negotiating partners agree that development should be at the centre of EPAs, they differ fundamentally over the kind of trade agreement that could deliver development' (Oxfam, 2007: 1). In this section, I argue that the promises and expectations inherent in the term 'development' do not necessarily converge between North-South activists as well as public officials, but that it is precisely this looseness which makes it amenable for campaigning against the global trade agenda. On the one hand, development is a goal around which North-South campaigns can converge since it speaks to the desire to escape strained socio-economic conditions in the South. On the other hand, there is no blueprint for how development could be reached. The term therefore invariably politicises otherwise technocratic trade talks and can provide leverage for participation in trade politics from groups that are typically excluded – such as critics of the global trade agenda.

#### 3.1 Development Solidarity as the Basis of West African and European EPA Resistance

Anti-EPA campaigns converged on the basis of a criticism of the EPA development impact. On both continents, the main reason that civil society organisations cited for rejecting the European Commission's EPA approach lay in the development effects that critics expected the agreements to spark. Joint campaign efforts reflected this convergence.

##### *West African EPA Critics*

In West Africa, criticism of EPAs emerged from virtually all strands of society. Many civic organisations, associations, trade unions, social movements and even parts of the private sector criticised certain aspects of the EPA. West African civil society organisations could rely on pre-existing networks that they had built over several years around resistance against structural adjustment programs and WTO-based campaigns (Hazard, 2005).<sup>ix</sup> Africa Trade Network (ATN) which was created in 1998 is one example for such a network. ATN has twenty-five members from fifteen

African countries today and holds observer status with the African Union and the UN Economic Commission for Africa. It describes itself as 'a long standing network of civil society organisations, working on economic justice. The network covers African social, labour, women, faith-based, developmental, farmers, environmental, human rights, and other organisations working on the role and effects of international trade and trade agreements in relation to Africa's needs and aspirations at national, regional and continental level' (ATN, 2011).

West African civil society organisations framed the EPA as a threat to the region's development and built their resistance to the talks on these grounds. They implicitly built their discourse on the understanding that development was a shared policy goal of all actors involved in EPA talks, including the EU. The NGO Third World Network (TWN) Ghana, for example, warned in 2005: 'if EPAs continue to develop along their current course they are a clear threat to the development of ACP [African, Caribbean, Pacific] countries and the people living in these countries. They go against the international commitment of the EU to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction' (TWN, 2005). ATN, on the other hand, argued 'that as free-trade agreements between two unequal parties, the EPAs are fundamentally anti-developmental. This is especially so in the particular context of Africa's weak, fragmented economies, which have been ravaged and distorted by years of European and (other) external domination' (ATN, 2006). Instead, ATN members presented an alternative vision. They asked for a 'review of the EU's neo-liberal external trade policy, particularly with respect to developing countries' and demanded 'that EU-ACP trade cooperation should be founded on an approach that: is based on a principle of non-reciprocity, as instituted in the Generalised System of Preferences and special and differential treatment in the WTO; protects ACP producers, domestic and regional markets; excludes the pressure for trade and investment liberalisation; and is founded on the respect for and supports the space of ACP countries to formulate and pursue their own development strategies' (ATN, 2006).

West African civil society organisations also built their alternative policy recommendations on the basis of expected results for development. The West African peasant movement Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest<sup>x</sup> (ROPPA) declared in 2007: 'it is today necessary to guarantee the conditions for an effective and functional [regional] integration, which is the basis on which the development of the region can be built' (Ouédraogo, 2007). Giving industrial countries' agricultural policies as an example, ROPPA demanded supporting and protecting West African agriculture from importation and advocated that the region should focus on integrating its regional markets before any further liberalisation with Europe was sought. The movement explicitly referred to the example of China as a country that 'chose to protect its agriculture and its economy until it was competitive with the economies of developed countries before adhering to the WTO' (Ouédraogo, 2007).

#### *European EPA Critics*

Similarly, European EPA critics exposed what they perceived as the EU's hypocritical approach to the question of development. Oxfam International explained in 2008: 'the deals currently on the table will strip ACP countries of important policy tools they need in order to develop. They will fracture regional integration, exacerbate poverty and make it harder for countries to break away from commodity dependence. Despite massive pressure, many ACP countries are holding out for a fair deal. Europe needs to rethink, and agree to change course. Ultimately, it is in its own interests to do so' (Oxfam, 2008: 1).

The organisation Comité pour l'Annulation de la Dette du Tiers Monde (CADTM) exposed the EU's development rhetoric as a tool for achieving the EU's own agenda in EPA talks. In 2008, CADTM declared: 'according to the EU, EPAs will encourage sustainable development, contribute to the poverty reduction ... enhance economic regional integration processes ... and allow to develop a "post-colonial" relationship into a "strategic opportunity" anchored in the global. Beyond the EU's

rhetoric, the various agreements and “partnerships” have to be taken for what they are: instruments to facilitate the access of products, services and investments of European transnational corporations to certain strategic regions of the world’. The NGO pronounced a harsh verdict: ‘putting such unequal economies as the EU and the ACP into competition, the EPAs will only culminate in entirely unjust and severely unbalanced “agreements”. It is hence hard to see how the new trade regime, much acclaimed by the European Commission could give an impulse for any kind of development in the South’ (CADTM, 2008: 4-5).

In view of the threat that European civil society organisations expected EPAs to pose to their Southern partners’ development effort, they demanded solidarity from European citizens. The NGO Germanwatch, for example, launched a petitioning campaign in 2009 under the motto “Europe cannot overrun Africa! Prevent the setback for development, democracy and human rights in Africa!” Similarly to their West African partners’ diagnosis, the NGO explained: ‘Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) strip ACP countries of their right to do what industrialised countries have done for decades and continue to do today – namely to support their fragile markets and infant industries through tariffs. The result will be that European agricultural and industrial products will flood African markets more than ever. Millions of jobs, small farms and social human rights are acutely threatened ... It is important that social resistance grows now. Many people in Sub-Saharan Africa are mounting protest and demand the withdrawal of those agreements that have already be signed. Let’s show our solidarity with them!’ (Bertow, 2009: 5)

#### *Joint Campaign Efforts*

Unsurprisingly, common declarations of North-South EPA critics echoed these lines. In June 2006, West African and European civil society organisations adopted the Niamey Declaration under the umbrella of the francophone network Réseau des ONG de Développement et des Associations de Droits de l’Homme et de la Démocratie (RODDADH). It stated: ‘neither EPAs nor the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF as

presently conceived can realistically be favourable to Africa's development ... We reaffirm that development cannot come out of trade only' (RODDADH, 2006: 3). In a declaration entitled "Six Reasons to Oppose the EPA in their Current Form" published by TWN Ghana, ACP and European critics jointly explained: 'It is increasingly recognised that when countries apply trade liberalisation before they have consolidated strong economies and institutions, de-industrialisation often takes place ... the EC's own mid term report on Sustainability Impact Assessment warns that EPAs "might accelerate the collapse of the modern West African manufacturing sector" and could also "further discourage the development of processing and manufacturing capacity in the ACP countries in export oriented and other industries"' (TWN, 2005).

In their common campaigns, North-South EPA resistance networks also accused the European Commission of using West Africa's aid dependence in order to apply carrot-and-stick negotiating strategies. In 2006, thirty African and European civil society organisations adopted the Harare Declaration. They explained: 'two years since the adoption of the campaign, there is wide-spread recognition among governments, inter-governmental institutions, parliamentarians, civil society actors and a diverse range of social constituencies across the ACP, Europe and the rest of the world of the dangers posed by the EPAs to the economies and peoples of the ACP countries ... For its part, the European Commission ... has encouraged false hopes of increase in European development assistance to ACP countries, and used different forms of pressure, including aid conditionality, to continue to override the reluctance of ACP groups to yield to its interests. On the part of governments in the ACP countries, individual and collective public positions, which have effectively repudiated the EPAs in their current forms are not translated into policy and negotiating positions. Dependency on aid, and concern for the maintenance of preferences seem to have disproportionately influenced governments into accepting the ECs terms and parameters of negotiations. In some instances, secretariats of the regional groups and machineries whose role it is to facilitate the negotiations on behalf of the ACP groupings have abandoned the policy directions of

national governments which make up the region, and have tended to promote the perspectives of the EC' (TWN, 2006).

By highlighting how aid and trade dependence was used in order to reach policy goals, global North and South EPA critics showed that the EU's approach to trade negotiating was neither technical nor anchored in the world of Ricardian trade theory. Instead, the EU used its political power to impose its trade policy preferences. Thus, connecting trade and development issues invariably led to a politicisation of the trade talks.

### 3.2 Politicising Trade Negotiations

Connecting trade and development issues politicised EPA negotiations through two interconnected steps. First, the framing effort introduced uncertainty into negotiations, due to the fact that views of what trade policy choices support development efforts vary dramatically. Second, once all actors had adhered to the idea that the EPA needed to be development friendly, this provided a lever for civil society actors to introduce their own visions on trade and development into the EPA debate.

#### *Introducing Uncertainty*

Drawing from and contributing to criticisms of EU development policy, West African civil society organisations mounted resistance in the region to the EU's portrayal of EPAs as win-win deals in which the EU gained WTO-compatibility for its trade preferences to ACP countries and West Africa gained policy tools for economic development. 'A clear commitment to a belief that only through global liberalisation will poverty be eradicated' (Hurt, 2003: 174) marked the EU's development approach under the Cotonou Agreement.<sup>xi</sup> Then-Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson expressed this view when he told the European Parliament Development Committee in 2005: 'My overall philosophy is simple: I believe in progressive trade liberalisation. I believe that the opening of markets can deliver growth and the reduction of poverty' (Mandelson, 2005). As shown above, West

African and European critical actors, on the other hand, argued that Mandelson's philosophy would enhance poverty, social injustice and economic dependence in the region.

The European Commission initially envisaged EPAs as technical trade agreements under Article XXIV GATT and Article V GATS, which did not include a specific development component (Elgström, 2008a).<sup>xii</sup> The decision reflected the separation of trade and development policy instruments in the EU's external relations with the ACP under the Cotonou Agreement. Hence, DG Trade was charged with EPA negotiations, while development policy towards the ACP continued to be programmed under the EDF (Elgström, 2008b).<sup>xiii</sup> The coherence of EU external policies was hinging on Mandelson's philosophy which presented free trade as the engine of development. To the extent that the philosophy held true, EU trade and development policies could be seen as coherent. To the extent that it did not hold true, the EU's policy line presented internal tensions which could be used for successful advocacy against it.

At the heart of Mandelson's philosophy lay the conviction that opening its market to European companies would tie ACP countries into the world economy, which, in turn, would provide the key for economic growth.<sup>xiv</sup> However, the EU's notion of development encompasses not only economic growth but also political, social and environmental aspects. The objective of EU development policy is 'the eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development' with a specific focus on the UN's Millennium Development Goals (European Council et al., 2006: 2). Empirical evidence for Mandelson's philosophy from the world politics is mixed. Recent scholarship supports the view that the impact of so-called "trade liberalisation" is highly context-dependent and can produce negative results for development (Rodrik, 2001; UNDP, 2003; Stiglitz and Charlton, 2005; George, 2010).

Considering the criticism emanating through various national and regional channels, the appropriate path to development became a central controversy in all EPA debates during the first three years of negotiations. It ultimately led to an adjustment of the EU's discourse on EPA as the European

Commission gradually accepted that development questions needed to be addressed under EPAs. When the underlying goal of EPAs became development, rather than WTO compatibility, however, the content of EPAs became a question of what actors believed to be good for development, as opposed to what they knew that trade liberalisation required.

### *Trade and Development Visions*

In its reaction to criticism, the EU held on to the view that trade liberalisation would lead to economic growth and therefore presented a viable policy choice for development. In declaring that it was pushing for trade reform in ACP countries in order to help, the European Commission locked itself into a negotiating position that became increasingly more difficult to reconcile with technocratic market-opening ambitions. Ole Elgström explains: 'in its efforts to defend its negotiation position, the Commission increasingly began to emphasize its positive attitude towards development-oriented agreements ... Picturing the EU policy in rosy colours, not only being instrumental to liberalisation and growth but also to social and human development and taking into consideration not only EU interests but also the interests of impoverished people in the ACP countries, opened the EU both to demands for negotiation concessions and to post-negotiation accusations of not living up to its promises. Proclaiming EPAs a tool for development made it more difficult to withstand ACP and Member States' demands for an unambiguous development profile in the agreement' (Elgström, 2008b: 18).

In West Africa, European Commission officials perceived civil society insistence on the development component as a vector for change in the EPA debate. Thus, the Head of Cooperation of the European Commission Delegation in Ghana stated in 2006: 'through the works of Civil Society Organisations ... we do understand the development concerns of ECOWAS states and the negative effects the EPAs will have on their economies. But we are hoping that before the EPAs are fully implemented, these concerns would have been addressed. We are working to ensure the

minimisation of the losses and the maximisation of the benefits' (Adabre, 2006). West African public negotiators confirmed in interviews that it was the merit of civil society to have insisted on the development dimension of EPAs since the start of negotiations.<sup>xv</sup> One West African official explained: 'If you had left [the development question] to government people, they would have talked about it superficially'.<sup>xvi</sup>

Instead, by 2008, West African public officials were openly defending the trade and development issue linkage in negotiations. As one Platform representative noted, by 2009, West African trade officials had 'a better appreciation of ... development requirements of ECOWAS'.<sup>xvii</sup> West African trade officials on the other hand explained in 2009 that the EU's negotiating position had gradually evolved towards their own stance on the development question. One official explained that 'today, the European side is aware of the fact that it cannot approach an EPA without having also dealt with the development dimension'.<sup>xviii</sup>

Overall, the European Commission gradually changed its perception of EPAs during the course of negotiations (Elgström, 2008a) and by 2009 saw them as 'partnership agreements founded on the shared goal of development that make trade the servant of this objective not the reverse' (Ashton, 2009). When compared to Mandelson's philosophy announced in 2005, the statement that then-Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton made to the European Parliament in 2009 captured the discourse shift that occurred within the Commission during this time. If according to the EU, trade liberalisation was an end in itself that had the beneficial side effect of bringing development in 2005, by 2009, development was the end and trade, not trade liberalisation, one means of achieving it. Its progressive opening towards the development question in turn made the Commission vulnerable to more severe criticism and helped to politicise negotiations further.

In sum, development solidarity changed the EPA discourse. On the basis of the more politicised debate, in which the appropriate policy line seemed less obvious than under relatively technocratic

trade negotiations, West African civil society organisations could use their expertise in order to influence the negotiating position of the region more concretely (see Trommer, 2011). The evidence thus suggests that development is a useful concept for transnational campaigning against the global trade agenda due to its two characteristics highlighted by Rist: there is quasi-unanimity on the necessity of development; and at the same time there is high divergence on what development exactly is and on the policy choices that lead to it.

In the next section, I screen the notion of development in contemporary trade discourse. I argue that due to the way the concept is understood in trade politics, including its omissions, there is currently much room for transnational campaigning based on development solidarity, although the concept will ultimately not be transformative unless the deeper connections between development and underdevelopment are brought to the centre of the debate.

#### 4 The Political Economy of Trade and Development Discourse

Although development is a concept that enables trade advocacy, it is also constrains campaigns in several ways. The term “development” has acquired a specific meaning within trade political circles that typically comes with a given set of policy recommendations. The common conceptualisation leaves certain features of the relationship between global South countries and the international trading system untouched and as such contributes to the reproduction of the existing global economic order. In this section, I first discuss the accession of West African countries to the international trading system and the institutional culture that evolved around the term “development” in the system since the 1950s. Second, I highlight general trade theory and politics’ inability to take important features of developing countries’ economies into account when devising economic policies for global South countries.

#### 4.1 The Historical Origin of Trade and Development Discourse

The trade and development literature typically begins its analysis with the remark that global South countries started adhering to the GATT system in the 1950s and 1960s. This portrayal omits addressing the inherent power structures built into the multilateral trading system since its inception. To substantiate this claim, I first expose the mechanisms through which West Africa integrated into the GATT/WTO. Second, I show how the term “development” became tied into trade politics in a way that constrains the policy field politically and discursively today.

##### *West African Accession to the GATT/WTO*

When the majority of West African countries gained independence in the early 1960s, the GATT was in its fifth round of trade negotiations. From the start, the organisation was tilted towards the economic interests of the global North (Knorr, 1948; Hudec, 1990; Ikenberry, 1992; Gabilondo, 2001; Weiss, 2005; Wilkinson, 2006). As ‘a club that was primarily of relevance to OECD countries’ (Hoekman and Kostecki, 2001: 385), the GATT regime initially dealt mainly with industrial goods and adopted procedural arrangements that suited the dominant economies in these markets.<sup>xix</sup> As Paul Collier notes, it ‘was not a *global* institution. It was basically a marketplace for OECD countries to strike deals for reciprocal trade liberalisation’ (Collier, 2006: 1425, italics in original). Despite the clear bias, the integration of West African countries into the multilateral trading system predated their political independence.

It is an often-overlooked fact that the adhesion of many industrialised countries brought vast colonial empires under the umbrella of the multilateral system, in line with Article XXVI:5(a) GATT:

Each government accepting this Agreement does so in respect of its metropolitan territory and of the other territories for which it has international responsibility, except such separate

customs territories as it shall notify to the Executive Secretary  
to the Contracting Parties at the time of its own acceptance.

The entire West African region except Liberia joined the GATT system in this way.<sup>xx</sup> At independence, governments faced three legal options in terms of future relationships with the multilateral trading system. They could withdraw from the organisation, join according to Article XXVI:5(c) GATT on the terms and conditions that their metropolis had previously negotiated on their behalf, or join under Article XXXIII GATT as a new contracting party through the ordinary accession procedure. GATT contracting parties had further established a fourth political option at the start of the decolonisation process. In 1958, they recommended that contracting parties 'should continue to apply *de facto* the General Agreement in their relations with any territory which has acquired full autonomy in the conduct of its external commercial relations and of other matters provided for in the General Agreement, provided that the territory continues to apply *de facto* the General Agreement to them' (GATT, 1958 cited in GATT, 1984: 2).

While former British colonies all joined GATT at independence under the Article XXVI:5(c) procedure, former French and Portuguese colonies typically went through a period of *de facto* application after which they also joined on the basis of the provision. Figure 2 indicates *de facto* application periods and GATT accession for West African countries.

Figure 2. GATT *de facto* Application and Accession<sup>xxi</sup>

	<i>de facto</i> Application	Accession
Benin (Dahomey)	1960-1965	1965
Burkina-Faso (Upper Volta)	1960-1963	1963
Côte d'Ivoire	1960-1963	1963

Cape Verde	1976-1994	--
Gambia	--	1965
Ghana	--	1957
Guinea	1960-1994	1994
Guinea-Bissau	1974-1994	1994
Liberia	--	--
Mali	1960-1993	1993
Mauritania	1960-1963	1963
Niger	1960-1963	1963
Nigeria	--	1960
Senegal	1960-1963	1963
Sierra Leone	--	1961
Togo	1960-1964	1964

Source: GATT (1953), GATT (1957) , GATT (1960), GATT (1961), GATT (1963a), GATT (1963b), GATT (1963c), GATT (1963d), GATT (1964), GATT (1965a), GATT (1965b), GATT (1965c), GATT (1993), GATT (1994a), GATT (1994b), GATT (1994c).

As a GATT Panel clarified in 1971, a contracting party that had acceded under Article XXVI:5(c) assumed all rights and obligations which had previously been accepted on its behalf.<sup>xxii</sup> Under *de*

*facto* application, the territory was expected to follow the substantive provisions of the GATT, although procedural and organisational rules were not applied (GATT, 1987: 6).

The arrangement had two immediate repercussions. Economically, the pattern of integration into the global trading system reproduced the colonial pattern and thus cemented the place that colonial policy had foreseen for West Africa in the global economy. Politically, *de facto* application meant that the governments of the countries applying the GATT under this status had no possibility of participating in the system's decision-making organs.

Many studies diagnose a spike in developing country GATT membership in the 1960s. While it is true that full membership came with procedural and organisational rights that lifted the quality of participation in the GATT, the organisation's substantial rules had already applied to these countries since 1947. Thus, decolonisation together with subsequent formal accession of former colonial territories to the GATT raised the number of official contracting parties without expanding the geographical scope of GATT application.

By the time the Uruguay Round started, only six West African countries had established schedules of tariff concessions under Article II GATT.<sup>xxiii</sup> All six applied the section that France had previously negotiated for them under its own GATT schedule.<sup>xxiv</sup> When West African states, along with other global South countries, attempted to improve their position in the global trading system following independence, their efforts lead to a specific understanding of the term "development" in trade circles.

### *Development as Opt-Out*

As newly independent countries began expressing their concerns about the way in which the GATT functioned, opt-out of the systems' rules for global South countries rather than a redress of the system for all became the dominant policy recommendation in multilateral trade and development discourse. The push for a New International Economic Order included criticism and reform attempts

of the global trading order during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1958, a commission of economic experts lead by Gottfried Haberler confirmed failure of the GATT to generate benefits for developing countries (GATT, 1958). Nigeria and Ghana were among the group of twenty-one global South countries that took an initiative in the GATT to draw contracting parties' attention to their trade concerns in 1963 (GATT, 1963e). The initiative led to the adoption of a resolution which helped to build the political momentum that culminated in the adoption of a 'Trade and Development' section in the GATT<sup>xv</sup> and the creation of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964.

The main remedy for underdeveloped countries in the global trading system since the 1960s is anchored in the idea of non-reciprocity. Non-reciprocity implies that developing country members do not have to reciprocate concessions in multilateral trade negotiations and enjoy leeway in the application of multilateral rules under so-called "Special and Differential Treatment" (SDT). While non-reciprocity factually limits the number of WTO obligations for developing countries, it does not redress the system's imbalances as such, but rather functions as an opt-out from specific aspects of the system. Rorden Wilkinson notes that major commercial powers conceived GATT as an instrument for increasing trade flows amongst them, rather than a global institution (Wilkinson, 2006). He argues that the WTO procedural and institutional framework locks in existing power asymmetries of the global trading order and reproduces the structure of the global economy, and therefore (West) African countries' place within it, due to its logic of exchange of trade concessions through connected trade rounds. This results in a mechanism that forces developing country members to make new unfavourable concessions to industrialised members in order to remedy previous negotiating outcomes (Wilkinson, 2009).

The adjustments made to the multilateral trading system under SDT since the 1960s have not borne fruit (Hudec, 1987; Hoekman, 2005). In general, because market size is an important element of political leverage in multilateral trade talks, (West) African countries have routinely failed to impact

negotiating outcomes (Finger, 2002; Hoekman, Michalopolous and Winters, 2004). West African governments, like developing country governments in general, by and large have not participated in the making of pre-Doha Round multilateral trade rules (Hoekman and Kostecki, 2001; Srinivasan, 1998). Instead, in trade circles, development friendly policy-making is largely understood as providing opt-outs from the existing system, rather than redressing the core imbalance inherent in the system. An additional feature of trade and development discourse is that it is ill-equipped to take important structural specificities of West African socio-economic reproduction into account.

#### 4.2 West African Socio-Economic Reproduction

One specificity of West African socio-economic reproduction lies in the phenomenon of so-called “informal economic activity”, which is partly the result of the way in which the region has integrated into the long historical process of globalisation. At the same time, this specificity escapes the typical analytical frameworks of trade policy-making, thus creating a dramatic distance between theory and reality that hinders efforts to redress the global economic order.

In West Africa, informal economic activity constitutes a mechanism to avoid economic hardship that increased in response to the social cost of structural adjustment. Trans-border exchanges, for example, played a role of social regulation since economic policy reforms carried out under adjustment programs eradicated social services from public spending (Bach, 1994). In addition, during the 1980s and 1990s, incomes fell to levels where regular employment, including in the public sector, could no longer sustain livelihoods (Charmes, 1992; Bangura, 1994; Gboyega, 2003). Informal economic activity thus increased as a coping strategy to economic distress, often supplying formal economy activities, such as raising start up capital to a small business or simply supporting household income.

On the one hand, as a form of societal economic self-organisation, informal West African sectors are in a conceptually paradoxical, yet factually symbiotic relationship with the state. The state’s legal

and administrative structures not only provide the niches in which informal activity takes place. The informal sector has also become indispensable in order to maintain the involvement of the middle classes, including state officials, with the formal economy and the state and thus helps to prevent the latter's collapse (Charmes, 1992). In addition, the informal economy is not an abnormality in West African social organisation, but largely animated through some of the traditional trading diasporas that have organised economic exchanges across the region since the eighth century.

Public statistics, economic theories and policy recommendations that inform trade policy recommendations towards global South countries struggle to take this reality into account. The informal economy was once presumed to melt away as economic development was expected to unfold. Instead, it flourished in temporal correlation with the experience of socio-economic decline following trade policy reform (Olukoshi, 1997; Kobou, 2003).

This is particularly obvious in regional alternative trading networks. Bruno Stary describes an "integration from below" that has taken place in West Africa since the 1980s via networks engaging in commercial activity that evades or infringes state regulation. On the one hand, products are transferred across borders to benefit from price difference, like in the case of cocoa along the Ghana - Côte d'Ivoire and the Nigeria - Benin borders. On the other hand, agents engage in re-exportation from low-tax to high-tax countries, such as in the case of rice along the Gambia - Guinea or the Senegal - Mali borders. The goal of the operations is not only to derive a gain from price-differences in the different markets, but also to acquire convertible foreign exchange due to the West African Franc's connection to formerly the French Franc and now the Euro (Stary, 1996).

At the same time, the formal economy and the state do not exist independently from the informal sector.<sup>xxvi</sup> On the one hand, case studies from Nigeria and Senegal show that alternative activities help individuals not only to better their incomes and thus increase consumption in the formal economy. Crucially, West Africans also engage in alternative activity to raise revenue for setting up

small businesses or to put themselves or family members through education. Although hard to quantify, alternative activity is thus an important element in generating start-up capital, be it financial or intellectual, in order to participate in the formal sector. Individuals associated with the state benefit from alternative activities in the same way as formal sector employees (Kobou, 2003).

The informal sector, despite being an expression of the inability of the state and the formal economy to care for society, has thus at the same time become a condition for the reproduction of both, due to the fact that it provides affordable goods and services and the possibility to generate income in the face of steadily dropping purchasing power (Charmes, 1992). The informal economies are implicitly an acknowledgement of the state's incapacity to provide society with the means of its subsistence. Nonetheless, public authorities in African countries have gradually accepted the alternative sector as a tool to offset the negative social impacts of job-losses and dwindling growth rates in the formal sector (Charmes, 1992; Marfaing and Sow, 1999).

Although the informal sector develops and prospers outside of state regulation, it remains an economic institution that is deeply embedded in society. In order to attract and regulate labour and capital outside of state-guaranteed rules, the informal sector relies on social relations (Weiss, 1987). In particular, informal activity uses social structures such as family, village community, ethnicity or religion and organises through networks (Stary, 1996; Marfaing and Sow, 1999; Kobou, 2003; Meagher, 2009). As in the pre-colonial and colonial eras, ethnicity and religion provide norms and codes of conduct that help to maintain reliable economic networks that contribute 'to processes of accumulation and social cohesion in a context of intense hardship and social disruption' (Meagher, 2009: 402). The Dioula and the Hausa, for example, are ethnic groups that have functioned as trading diasporas in West Africa for at least 1000 years and still play a prominent role in West African alternative arrangements (Ebin, 1993; Babou, 2002; Meagher, 2009).

Laurence Marfaing and Miriam Sow (1999) show that the informal sector constitutes the continuation of marginalised activities that West African traders engaged in when European traders first spread into West African markets and the colonial state imposed its economic regime. In this sense, the tensions in the relations between state-based political authority, state-registered economic activity and society' strategies for providing its material basis are not peculiar to the post-colonial era. Instead, these tensions have been an element of West African political, economic and social organisation since at least the nineteenth century. Similarly, in an edited volume on the future of West African regional trade, Cheikh Tidiane Dièye writes: 'in West Africa, integration and commercial exchanges have a profound history that is well documented. Many old and recent studies show that trade flows in goods and services between its people have always passed through West Africa. These trade flows and the cultural mix that they provoked throughout the centuries have partly crafted the current image of West Africa and have contributed to drawing the spaces and territories beyond existing borders, the aspiration of the people of moving towards integration, as well as their ideas of the future of the integration. This historical dimension is a fundamental basis for West African integration. In fact, it is the matrix or the foundation on which the institutional and material frameworks that give life to regional integration are destined to be built' (Dièye, 2010: 13).

The analytical categories of conventional trade theory do not capture these historical and socio-economic configurations. First, West African economies are at odds with the economic indicators that are commonly expected to represent them. As the case studies on informal trans-border activity suggest, even official statistics on external trade do not account for significant amounts of economic activity (Norro, 1994; Kobou, 2003). Second, informalisation has severe repercussions for trade policy recommendations. Economic models concerned with the effects of trade liberalisation on domestic market structures distinguish whether the state does or does not interfere with international trade flows (see Viner 1937; Helpman and Krugman 1987; Rodrik 1988; Evans 1989). Some scholars highlight the importance of effective domestic institutions for successful trade

liberalisation (Winters, 2004). However, in West Africa, the roots of problems with trade policy recommendations are arguably deeper than trade facilitation or market access in the global economy. Even if problems of quantification of informal activity and of enforceability of state regulations could be solved, the unresolved question, as Charmes (1992) highlights, is how public policies can interfere with activities that fundamentally rely on state-based political authority's inability to reach all aspects of communal life.

The extent to which realities differ between EPA negotiating parties became apparent when the EU offered to provide technical assistance for fiscal adjustment so that West African governments could offset public revenue losses due to lowering duties on European trade. There clearly is considerable untaxed economic activity in West Africa. However, even if enforceability problems could be overcome, there are evident difficulties in creating state interference with an economic sector that is thriving on the basis of absent or poorly-enforced state regulation, without slowing down economic activity in that sector. The fact that the state apparatus is intermingled with the informal economy exacerbates these problems.

However, West African socio-economic realities cannot be factored into the trade theoretical approaches to which policy recommendations typically refer for the simple reason that informal economies are not supposed to exist in the models underlying these recommendations. Gerrie ter Haar and Stephen Ellis equally point out that the EU's development policy approach systematically discards the importance of religion and religion-based economic organisation from its policy planning (ter Haar and Ellis, 2006). Thus, trade and development policy recommendations for (West) African economic policy-making regularly misrepresent West African social and political realities.

#### 4 Conclusion

In this paper, I have tested the hypothesis that development solidarity is a useful concept for transnational resistance to the global trade agenda. My study has shown that due to the elusiveness

of the term “development” and the great variety in normative beliefs about its causes, development solidarity can help to focus and structure transnational campaigns against the global trade agenda and provide leverage for introducing uncertainty into trade talks. Since uncertainty can foster politicisation and politicisation is a prerequisite for democratisation, framing trade agreements as development agreements can provide leverage for critics to influence the course of trade decision-making (see Trommer, 2011).

On the other hand, development has been a topic of the trade debate for many decades. Within trade circles, the trade and development nexus comes with a set of policy recommendations that does not take two important aspects of the relationship between global South countries and the international trading system into account: on the one hand, the international trading system has since the beginning been tilted towards the interests of global North countries. On the other hand, important aspects of socio-economic reproduction in global South countries cannot be taken into account by both the mechanisms of current trade politics and its theoretical foundations.

While there is a considerable political space for campaigning on the basis of development solidarity in global trade politics under PTA negotiations, the concept will not be genuine transformative as long as the political, economic and social interconnections of development and underdevelopment are not addressed. In this sense, global trade politics after multilateralism have not significantly deviated from the global trade agenda.

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<sup>i</sup> PTAs have to be compatible with Article XXIV GATT (and Article V GATS, where applicable) and often replicate many of the trade in goods provisions covered under the WTO Agreements. There is thus overlap between the multilateral system and the emerging net of PTAs. Nonetheless, PTAs go beyond what is envisaged multilaterally in domains such as trade in services, intellectual property, investment and other areas. This new regulation hovers outside of multilateralism and one open debate in the literature is whether these rules can, will or should be multilateralised.

<sup>ii</sup> I construe my data on the basis of official and media sources as well as interviews with EPA actors that I conducted in 2009 as part of a larger research project on West African trade politics.

<sup>iii</sup> The US primarily pursues tightened international patent standards while the EU strives for the recognition of geographical indicators.

<sup>iv</sup> Ha-Joon Chang (2009) argues that it never was. Using post-World War II Germany and oil-rich countries with high average incomes as examples, he points out that we do not instinctively accord the stigma 'underdeveloped' and 'developed' on the basis of income levels alone. Rather, 'these examples show that we are implicitly saying that in order to qualify as 'developed' an economy's high income should be based on superior knowledge, embodied in technologies and institutions, rather than simple command over resources' (Chang, 2009: 2).

<sup>v</sup> An alternative approach may ask what long-term, global social, economic and political developments have created "underdevelopment" in the global South, whereby underdevelopment is not understood as the absence of economic and social progress through industrialisation, but as the symptom of an increasingly asymmetrical distribution of constantly growing global economic wealth. It would consist in highlighting the interconnectedness of social, economic and political evolutions in the global North and the global South, in line with a research agenda inspired by the literature on connected histories (see e.g. Bhambra, 2010; Barkawi, 2004).

<sup>vi</sup> For an analysis of how trade and warfare interacted to create modern economic growth see Tarak Barkawi (2004).

<sup>vii</sup> Interview with West African public official Aminata Sy, 15 July 2009, Dakar.

<sup>viii</sup> For a broader discussion of the role of trade (and warfare) in the creation of modern economic growth since the European Middle Ages see Ronald Findlay and Kevin H. O'Rourke (2007).

<sup>ix</sup> Interview with West African civil society representative Tetteh Hormekuh, 4 August 2009, Dakar.

<sup>x</sup> Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organisations of West Africa.

<sup>xi</sup> Gibb argues that the EU strove to replace the Lomé Convention, which contained certain elements that reflected the New International Economic Order proposed by Southern countries during the 1970s, because it was "seen to operate according to principles and philosophies at odds with a neo-liberal growth philosophy" (Gibb, 2000: 469).

<sup>xii</sup> This is contrary to WTO practice, where developing country members receive Special and Differential Treatment that provides them with flexibility in the application of multilateral trade rules.

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<sup>xiii</sup> In this sense, EPAs are embedded in a broader shift in the EU's external policies. Since the 1990s, EU development policy has gradually moved away from unilateral trade preferences and towards aid conditionality based on human rights and structural adjustment (Lister, 1997; Holland, 2002).

<sup>xiv</sup> European markets have been open to West Africa under the various Lomé Conventions and are also accessible for the LDCs under the EU's Everything But Arms initiative.

<sup>xv</sup> Interview with ECOWAS and WAEMU public officials, 20-23 July 2009, Dakar.

<sup>xvi</sup> Interview with West African public official Gbenga Grg. Obideyi, 21 July 2009, Dakar.

<sup>xvii</sup> Interview with West African civil society representative Edwin Ikhuoria, 3 August 2009, Dakar.

<sup>xviii</sup> Interview with West African public official Kola Sofola, 21 July 2009, Dakar.

<sup>xix</sup> Notably the "principal supplier rule" under which liberalisation commitments are made on the basis of bilateral negotiations among the principle suppliers of that good.

<sup>xx</sup> See GATT documents GATT/CP/22, L/1809 and BISD 11<sup>th</sup> Supplement. See Michael Tomz, Judith Goldstein et al. (2007) for an analysis of how this misjudgement of the geographical applicability of the GATT impacts on studies of the effects of multilateral trade policies.

<sup>xxi</sup> Cape Verde applied the GATT provisionally from 1976 to 1994 and joined the WTO in 2008. Liberia withdrew from the GATT in 1953 and currently holds observer status with the WTO.

<sup>xxii</sup> Jamaica - Margins of Preferences, Report of the Panel adopted on 2 February 1971 (L/3485 – 18S/183), para. 13.

<sup>xxiii</sup> They are: Benin, Burkina-Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal (GATT, 1987: 4).

<sup>xxiv</sup> See GATT documents L/2035 (Benin), L/2005 (Burkina-Faso), L/2095 (Côte d'Ivoire), L/2067 (Mauritania), L/2102 (Niger), L/2065 (Senegal).

<sup>xxv</sup> Namely Part IV on Trade and Development.

<sup>xxvi</sup> One of the first international studies from the International Labour Organisation on the informal economy in the early 1970s missed this point. The study saw the informal sector as a marginal activity that provided income or safety nets for the poor (ILO, 1972). Instead, recent studies show that the middle classes pursue informal activity alongside their engagement with the formal economy and the state (Kobou, 2003; UNECA 2010).