

**Verslag workshop D3: To a fair and ecological trade policy for food
Saturday 22 February 2014, 90 attendees**

Moderator and introduction: Roeline Knottnerus (TNI/SOMO); Speakers: Olivier de Schutter (UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food), Guus Geurts (Platform Aarde Boer Consument, coordinating agricultural text in ATM, report).

Roeline Knottnerus gave an introduction about the Alternative Trade Mandate, the organisations which are involved and the process in reaching agreement about the ATM in November 2013.

The Alternative Trade Mandate is the result of a process that was born 4 years ago out of a growing sense of unease and anger at the current neoliberal free trade and investment model, which increasingly shows that it is completely unsustainable. The core drivers are to put everyone and everything in competition with each other, which puts increasingly downward pressure on people's living and working conditions and the environment and creates rapidly rising inequality, the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few global elites and a worrying depletion of our planet's natural resources.

Civil society campaigners not only working on development and fair trade, but also people working on or example human rights, protecting the environment, people working on labour rights, on intellectual property rights and on protecting the interests of migrant workers, consumers and farmers, increasingly began to feel, in one way or another, the impact of unfair trade policies and trade relations. The ATM proposes a new model that does not focus on protecting the profits of transnational corporate industry, but that puts forward core principles relating to human and labour rights and environmental protection as the drivers of EU trade policy.

The Alternative Trade Mandate as it now is gives a concise analysis and recommendations for reform in ten key trade-related areas:

Issue #1: Food, and how we produce it

Issue #2: Jobs and labour rights – how we create and protect them

Issue #3: Preserving policy space to realise human rights

Issue #4: Money, and how we invest it

Issue #5: Banks and speculators, and how the financial industry behaves

Issue #6: Raw materials and how we share them

Issue #7: Climate change and how we equitably share the burden

Issue #8: Public services and how we protect them

Issue #9: Public procurement, a tool for social development not trade promotion

Issue #10: Intellectual property, and how to give it human values

In each of these areas the ATM outlines detailed proposals for change – underpinned by the key principle that we need to reclaim democratic control over trade and investment policy making, so that economic decisions subject to public scrutiny and we can end the corporate capture of the trade and investment agenda.

In a nutshell: The ATM wants human rights, social protection, a fair distribution of income, the protection of our environment, and universal access to not-for-profit public services such as water, education and health and food security to take priority over corporate and private interests.

Free trade must not get in the way of countries pursuing their own strategies for sustainable development. For the specifics, please refer to the ATM manifesto, which was officially launched at the European level in Brussels on 26 November 2013.

Guus Geurts gave an analysis of the agricultural and trade policy in the last decades, and its effects on markets and natural resources. Free trade in agricultural products leads to:

- Production below remunerative prices in agriculture in North and South because due to the disturbance of local and national markets.
- On a free world market: the purchasing power of rich meat eaters and car drivers wins from food security of the poorest, so natural resources are going to highest bidder.

He explained the elements of the Alternative Trade Mandate on agriculture:

- Based on Food sovereignty
- Stop new free trade agreements like TTIP, EPA's
- More regional¹ self-sufficiency in food, feed, energy, timber, textile by drastically changing FTAs.
- Reform of the European Trade & Common Agricultural Policy:
 - Increase import taxes and keep supply management, Increase safety stocks to prevent unstable prizes
 - Remunerative prices instead of subsidized exports and purchasing by agribusiness below the cost of production
 - Payment for green services such as nature, landscape, and the production of ecological food and sustainable energy
- Market protection leads e.g. to production of European proteins and oil crops in stead of imports of soy beans, palm oil
- Increase in environmental and animal welfare standards
- Agribusiness and retail shouldn't be allowed to buy products on world market
- 1, 2, 3 (combined with eco-taxes (not yet in ATM)) leads to internalizing of environmental and animal welfare costs in consumer price
- Abolish European agro fuel-directive, prohibition of import from developing countries
- Fair trade of tropical products, stop tariff escalation on processed products
- Stop land grabbing by binding rules
- Stimulate ecological agriculture in EU and Global South
- New EU seed law needs to protect breeders' rights and biodiversity, and protect against GM's

Olivier de Schutter agreed with the proposals made in ATM. They are very much in line with his vision which he explained in his publications during the last five or six years. For example in reports about the Common Agricultural Policy he warned against EU dumping in developing countries and the high dependency on imported proteins (soy beans). He also warned against the high consumption of meat and biofuels in the EU at the expense of natural resources in the Global South. However his proposals and the report written by MEP Haussling didn't get a majority in the European Parliament. He has also been very critical about the Agreement on Agriculture in the WTO and its push for market access, because of the negative effects on decent farmers income and food security.

De Schutter stressed that structural change is needed and that we need a different world view not based on access to world markets and competitiveness. But having good ideas is not enough. It is still very difficult to achieve them internationally, because of the political economy in the food system, for example the veto power of some countries. In trade policy negotiations much more transparency is needed, and issues like basic needs of citizens,

¹ A region could be a continent like the EU, or parts of continents, which could have a common trade policy.

conflicts and war (about natural resources), climate change and other environmental issues need to be taken into account. A challenge is also that reforms in the North need to go hand in hand with reforms in the South. Now 48 LDC's (Least Developed Countries) are dependent for 30 to 35% on imported cheap food. If agricultural subsidies in OECD-countries are cut down, this could lead to social chaos in developing countries. So we need a gradual development in which developing countries stimulate local production and processing of food, on the way to more self-sufficiency. However the import and export sectors both in OECD-countries as in the Global South won't support this radical change. Also employers in the GS are in favour of cheap food because that will prevent wages from rising, so they will also resist change.

So we need cooperation on the international level, but which international body is needed to fulfil these demands? Could it be the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), UNCTAD or maybe a body that is still to be established which has the power to overrule the WTO and current free trade agreements?

On the country and EU-level we need participatory *food policy* instead of EU *agricultural policy*. So also issues like public health, environment, purchasing power of the poorest and social protection need to be considered. In his plenary key note speech Olivier de Schutter gave more much details about this.

Conclusion:

Olivier de Schutter: *"In the end, we'll have no choice but to move towards the solutions ATM recommends. Let's hope it will not be too late by then."*

Campaign around the Alternative Trade Mandate

Roeline Knottnerus also toldus what the ATM-campaign is going to look like.

We have been, and will be campaigning for fairer trade for a long time still. But we can use the ATM to show our critics that there is an alternative. A viable alternative, that can be achieved – if there is the political will to change direction. And to begin to raise awareness and to rally that political will, the ATM Alliance will be campaigning and lobbying hard for the ATM in the run up to the EU elections this year in all the countries where it has active members and networks.

- Members and supporters of the ATM Alliance are free to use the ATM, either as the center of their campaign or as a supporting document in more issue-based advocacy.
- The idea is to ask candidate MEPs to subscribe to the principles of the ATM to put people and planet before profit. The ATM calls on MEP candidates to stand up for democratic trade and investment rules that serve people, the economy and the environment at large – not just the profit interests of a few. Candidates can also put their name to more specific pledges relating to the different policy areas highlighted in the ATM.
- The ATM website - www.alternativetrademandate.org - will keep a tally of who has pledged on what, so that we can call MEPs to account on their pledges when they are elected. The ATM will also keep a blacklist of MEPs refusing their support to our fair trade alternatives.
- The idea is that national organizations will use the ATM to persuade their national MEP candidates to pledge. So the ATM campaign will be a decentralized effort that will have many different faces across the EU member states. And the process is still open.
- 7 April 5 pm: launch of Pledge Campaign at TNI office in Amsterdam, before this from 3 pm a TTIP-strategy meeting will be organized (info: guusgeurts@yahoo.com)

- If you want to endorse the principles of the ATM and join the campaign to spread to core message of the ATM for an alternative to the current harmful free trade paradigm, you can go to the ATM website and sign up your organization. So increase the ATM's impact on EU trade practices, and sign on at <http://www.alternativetrademandate.org/>
- On **23 April from 7 until 10** pm at the Brakke Grond in Amsterdam, TNI, BothEnds and SOMO will be organizing a Fair Green and Global election debate, with candidate MEP's. The ATM and TTIP will take center stage.
- We will be approaching Dutch MEP candidates to persuade them to pledge - on the spot in the FGG debate, and beyond.
- In the beginning of May an election debate will be organized with candidate MEP's on TTIP and ATM around food and agriculture. (info: guusgeurts@yahoo.com)
- And of course, to spread the ATM message, ATM members will be happy to come and talk about the ATM in civil society EP campaign events. So if you want one of us to come and introduce the ATM, please contact Hilde Van der Pas TNI hildevanderpas@tni.org or Willemijn Rooijmans Both Ends wrooijmans@bothends.org .

More information around the Alternative Trade Mandate

- Download English docu.; sign up (organizations) if you endorse the principles of ATM; and join the EU-pledge campaign around candidate MEP's: www.alternativetrademandate.org
- Download English-language document: [http://www.alternativetrademandate.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Trade-time for a new vision-JAN14-PRINT.pdf](http://www.alternativetrademandate.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Trade-time%20for%20a%20new%20vision-JAN14-PRINT.pdf)
- Download Nederlandstalig document: [http://www.alternativetrademandate.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Time for a new vision-NL-PRINT.pdf](http://www.alternativetrademandate.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Time%20for%20a%20new%20vision-NL-PRINT.pdf).