Trade Liberalization and Economic Dependency: The Role of World Trade Organization

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Abstract

This work examines the role of world trade organization in trade liberalization and economic dependency among nations of the world. It looks at the roles played by world trade organization to liberalize trade especially in Africa. This article explores the complex relationship between trade liberalization and economic dependency in the African context. The data used in carrying out this work is gotten basically from secondary sources, which includes textbooks, journals and reports from the WTO and other international organizations. It established that the activities and agreements of WTO have had both positive and negative impacts on African economies and one of the key benefits of the WTO and trade liberalization in Africa has been the expansion of export opportunities. On the other hand African countries suffer the effect of global crisis such as the Ukraine crisis which has brought about disruptions to major trade routes, and chaotic logistics networks which has resulted general surge in commodity prices. The study therefore recommends that WTO should Provide African countries with enhanced access to the WTO's dispute settlement system, including technical assistance and capacity-building to help them protect their trade interests effectively. Also the study Advocates for reforms within the WTO that enhance the participation and decision-making influence of African

countries and other developing nations. Among other recommendations. The study concluded that while trade liberalization is an important component of global economic integration and progress, its influence on African countries cannot be considered in a one-size-fits-all manner. Hence, the specific problems that African nations face when they engage with the global economy must be carefully considered

Keywords: Trade, Liberalization, Dependency, Integration, WTO

Introduction

Trade liberalization refers to the reduction or elimination of trade barriers, such as tariffs and quotas, to promote the free flow of goods and services between countries. However, it can lead to economic dependency, where countries become heavily reliant on international trade. The World Trade Organization (WTO) plays a significant role in managing and regulating this process. The World Trade Organization (WTO) plays a significant role in trade liberalization in Africa, as it does globally. Its role in the African context is multifaceted, focusing on trade negotiations, dispute resolution, technical assistance, and capacity-building. In Africa, the pursuit of trade liberalization has been both a promise of economic growth and a source of concern over economic dependency. This article explores the complex relationship between trade liberalization and economic dependency in the African context. Trade liberalization was primarily motivated by the belief that it would stimulate economic growth, reduce poverty, and integrate African economies into the global marketplace. By lowering tariffs, simplifying customs procedures, and fostering regional trade agreements, African nations aimed to attract foreign investment and increase exports. The hope was that this would lead to economic diversification and job creation, ultimately reducing dependency on a narrow range of commodities. Africa has historically been heavily reliant on the export of primary commodities, such as oil, minerals, and agricultural products. While trade liberalization sought to diversify economies, in many cases, it inadvertently reinforced the dependency on these commodities. The global demand for these resources has often dictated the economic fortunes of African nations. When commodity prices are high, countries may experience economic booms, but they are also vulnerable to price fluctuations and market volatility. Interestingly, one of the challenges of trade liberalization in Africa has been the

unequal distribution of benefits. Larger economies with more resources and infrastructure have often reaped greater rewards from trade liberalization, while smaller, less developed nations have struggled to compete. This imbalance can reinforce economic dependency, as weaker economies become increasingly reliant on the economic powerhouses in the region which becomes the basis for this study.

Methodology

The study primarily made use of secondary sources of data which entails the use written sources or documents which constitute an important part of historical reconstruction as they features textbooks, newspapers and journals, writer and published by several scholars in the field of history. Also inter-disciplinary approach was also adopted, which enabled us utilize information or knowledge from other related discipline in the humanities and social science. These models used, helped in generating the information with which this work was reconstructed and also made sure that the risk of distorment of content is drastically reduced.

Conceptual Review

- **Trade Liberalization**

According to Lee (2005), trade liberalization, loosely defi ned as a move towards freer trade through the reduction of tariff and other barriers, is generally perceived as the major driving force behind Globalization. He also noted that the most visible feature of the increasing global economic integration in recent decades has been the rapidly expanding movement of goods and services across national boundaries, hence bringing about cooperation among nations.However, it is note worthy that this has also become one of the most contentious aspects of globalization.

Trade liberalization is the removal or reduction of restrictions or barriers on the free exchange of goods between nations. This includes the removal or reduction of both tariff (duties and surcharges) and non-tariff obstacles (like licensing rules, quotas and other requirements). The easing or eradication of these restrictions is often referred to as promoting "free trade." (www.oxfordreference.com). The removal or reduction of trade barriers is an important element in a free trade agreement and increases the competition in the world market for goods and

services. Moreover, integration into the global economy is vital for nations to promote economic growth , industrialization, urbanization, and prosperity.

Singh (1985) has argued that the value of free trade is limited for most developing countries since a vast segment of their productive resources are still unexploited and they generally have massive unemployment. A free trade regime therefore compounds their problems by weakening the domestic industries, especially those with inadequate competitive powers. In addition, the terms of trade for the non-oil exporting developing countries have deteriorated over the years.

Prebisch (1959) and Singer (1950) explored the implications of this in the 1950s.They contended that there would continue to be a secular decline in the terms of trade of primary commodity exports due to a combination of both low income and price elasticities of demand, which result in a long-term transfer of income from poor to rich countries.

World Trade Organization

The world trade organization (WTO) is an intergovernmental body that regulates as well as facilitates international trade (Thomas, 2019). He further argues that it is the body that governments use to establish, revise, and enforce the laws that govern international trade. The WTO is the world's largest international economic body, with 164 member states representing over 98 percent of global trade and global GDP (World trade organization, 2013)). The WTO facilitates trade in commodities, services, and intellectual property among participating countries by providing a framework for negotiating trade agreements, which usually aim to eliminate tariffs, quotas, and other barriers; these agreements are then signed by member governments and ratified by their legislatures (Malanczuk, 1999). The WTO also runs an independent dispute resolution service for enforcing participants' adhesion to trade agreements and settling trade-related disputes and does not permit discrimination between trading partners, but it does make exceptions for environmental, national security, and other important goals (Econofact, 2018).

Economic Dependency

Dependency has been defined as an explanation of the economic development of influences (political, economic, and cultural) on national development policies (Sunkel, 1969). Theotonio Dos Santos emphasizes the historical dimension of the dependency relationships in his definition when he wrote:

> economy such that it favours some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economics...a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which their own is subjected (Dos Santos 1970, p.226).

The concept of dependency as an explanation for economic underdevelopment has been developed most prominently by Frank (1966, 1979) and Samir Amin (1974). For Frank, the concepts of development and underdevelopment have meaning only when applied to nations within the capitalist world-economy. Frank envisions this world-economy as being divided into two major components, metropolis and satellite. These concepts are basically equivalent to Wallerstein's (1974) concepts of core and periphery. The flow of economic surplus in the world-economy is from the satellite (or periphery) to the metropolis (or core), and the worldeconomy is organized to make this happen.

Economic dependency is a concept that refers to a situation in which one individual, entity, or country relies heavily on another for financial support, resources, or trade. This dependence can be rooted in various factors, such as unequal economic power, limited access to opportunities, or structural imbalances. It often implies a lack of economic self-sufficiency and can result in vulnerabilities, as the dependent party may be susceptible to fluctuations in the supporting entity's economy or policies. Economic dependency can manifest in different forms, including foreign aid relationships, trade partnerships, or even within family dynamics where one member relies on another's income for livelihood. (Wikipedia.com)

Economic dependency is an unending situation in which countries, economies and economic agents depend on each other and a variety of different economic and

non-economic factors for economic and non-economic reasons.The functioning of the world economy is banked on many economic and non-economic factors which is caused by rising economic integration via international trade and domestic trade.

Origin of World Trade Organization

Following the formation of other new multilateral organizations dedicated to international economic cooperation, such as the world bank (founded 1944) and the International Monetary Fund (founded 1944 or 1945), the World trade organization's precursor general agreement on tariffs and trade (GATT) was signed by a multilateral agreement of 23 countries in 1947 (Ferguson, 2007). The international trade organization was not established as the united states and other signatories did not accept the establishment treaty, and so GATT slowly became a de facto International body (bossche, 1981). Its business lasted almost 40 years. However, GATT members came to the conclusion that the GATT system was failing to adapt to a globalized world economy before the 40th anniversary (WTO, 2007). In reaction to problems identified in the 1982 ministerial declaration (structural flaws, repercussions of some countries' policies on global trade) that GATT could not address, in september 1986, the eighth GATT round, or Uruguay round, was convened in punta del este (Peter, 2005) to resolve those issues.

It is important to note that the Uruguay round was the most significant reform of the world's trading system since GATT was established at the end of the second world war. Despite its tumultuous progress, the Uruguay round did see some promising results. Participants reached an agreement on a package of tariff cuts on tropical products that are mainly exported by developing countries within two years. They also updated the rules for settling disputes, with some changes taken on the spot. They also demanded that regular reports be made on GATT member's trade practices, a step considered crucial for making global trade arrangements transparent.

The Uruguay round talks sought to extend the trading system to many new areas, including trade in services and intellectual property, and to modernize trade in the critical areas of agriculture and textiles, under the most significant negotiating mandate on trade ever agreed (WTO, 2007). During a ministerial meeting in

Marrakesh, Morocco , the final act terminating the Uruguay round and officially establishing the WTO system was signed on April 15, 1994, formally referred to as the Marrakesh agreement (WTO, 2010).

World Trade Organization and Trade liberalization

Trade liberalization means removing or reducing restrictions or impediments to the free movement or exchange of goods between and among countries. This includes removing or reducing tariff barriers such as surcharges and duties as well as non-tariff barriers which include quotas and licensing rules. Liberalization is a cardinal principle of the World Trade Organization (WTO). According to Iloh C. E, Nwokedi , M. , Onyebukwa, C. F and Ekeocha, Q (2019), On a bid to incorporate developing countries into the capitalist development paradigm. In order to hasten this process of incorporation, countries, especially from the developing world, were mandated to liberalize their economies, including their trade relations with the rest of the world. Thus, every member country of the world trade body, while acceding to the document that embodies the WTO agreement, undertakes to liberalize its trade.

Overview of World trade organization and trade liberalization policy

The idea behind the policy is to minimize the role of government in making decisions on the allocation of resources and to change the incentive structure in favour of exports through the liberalization of imports to follow the path of export promotion instead of traditional import substitution (Shafaeddin, 2012). The policy did not start with the WTO. It was part of a policy package of market-oriented reforms advocated by the International Financial Institutions (IFI), that is, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in response to the economic crisis in Africa, brought about by the global economic crisis that followed the two oil crises of 1973 and 1979 (UNCTAD, 2008). Then it was referred to as Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). It gained momentum with the establishment of the WTO in 1995, and became one of the major policies that guide international trade, especially in agriculture. The trade liberalization policy under the WTO regime has three fundamental components. They include:

- Expansion of market access by requiring the conversion of all non-tariff barriers to tariffs (tariffication) and the binding and reduction of these tariffs.

- Reduction of trade-distorting domestic subsidies or support.
- Reduction of both the volume of and expenditures on subsidized exports (WTO, 2001)

Accordingly, it has been noted that:

> Under the Agreement, countries agreed to substantially reduce agricultural support and protection by establishing disciplines in the areas of market access, domestic support, and export subsidies. Under market access, countries agreed to open markets by prohibiting non-tariff barriers (including quantitative import restrictions, variable import levies, discretionary import licensing, and voluntary export restraints), converting existing non-tariff barriers to tariffs, and reducing tariffs. …countries also agreed to reduce expenditures on export subsidies and the quantity of agricultural products exported with subsidies, and prohibits the introduction of new export subsidies for agricultural products. Domestic support reductions were realized through commitments to reduce an aggregate measure of support (AMS), a numerical measure of the value of most trade distorting domestic policies (Rena, 2012 Pp 77-88).

The WTO agreements allow WTO members to protect their markets, to the extent necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health. In practice, 'market access' indicates the means in which this protection can be implemented. In the context of the WTO, it is a legal term that indicates the conditions imposed by a government for a product to enter a country and be released for free circulation in that country under normal circumstances (UNCTAD 2003).

One of the key elements of the Uruguay Round trade negotiations was the agreement by parties to convert these other types of border protection mechanisms into tariffs. The process of this conversion is known as ‘tariffication’. With respect to export subsidies, they are governments’ special incentives provided to promote more foreign sales. These subsidies, which depend on export performance, can take the following forms: divestment of government shares at lower market prices; cash payments; subsidies funded by producers or processors as a result of

government measures such as assessments; marketing subsidies; transport and freight subsidies; and subsidies for commodities based on their incorporation into export products (UNCTAD, 2003). Some of the specific provisions of the Uruguay Round which were meant to enhance and accelerate the process of trade liberalization have been articulated as follows:

- **Tariffs**: tariffs for industrial products were reduced on average from 4.7% to 3% and the share of zero-tariff products increased from 20% to 22% to 40–45%. Tariffs were completely removed on construction equipment, pharmaceutical products, medical equipment, steel and paper products.
- **Quotas**: countries replaced import quotas for agricultural products, textiles and clothing (under the multi-fiber agreement) with less restrictive tariffs over a 10-year period. Tariffs for agricultural goods were reduced at the rate of 24% in developing countries and by 36% in industrialized countries. Tariffs for textiles were reduced by 25%.
- **Subsidies**: the quantity of agricultural exports to be subsidized was reduced by 21% over a six-year period.
- **Anti-dumping**: antidumping procedures were made more rigorous, thereby ensuring that it became much more difficult to use them for protectionist purposes.
- **Safeguards**: voluntary export restraints, orderly marketing arrangements and similar trade-restrictive measures were prohibited. Existing schemes were removed in 4 or 5 years (Salvatore, 1996).

The Role of World Trade Organization in Trade liberalization in Economic Dependency in Africa

The World Trade Organization (WTO) plays a pivotal role in shaping the global trade landscape, and its impact on African economies cannot be overstated. Africa, with its diverse range of nations, has experienced both benefits and challenges as a result of its engagement with the WTO. We will examine the role of the WTO in trade liberalization and economic dependency in Africa, shedding light on the complexities and consequences of this relationship.

Trade Liberalization in Africa

Trade liberalization is the process of reducing barriers to international trade, such as tariffs and quotas, to facilitate the free flow of goods and services across borders.

The WTO, established in 1995, is a key institution driving this agenda. African nations have been active participants in WTO negotiations, with many seeing trade liberalization as a means to spur economic growth and development. One of the primary roles of the WTO in Africa is to provide a platform for trade negotiations and dispute resolution. African nations have been involved in numerous negotiations aimed at reducing trade barriers and increasing market access. These negotiations have led to trade agreements and commitments that, in theory, should benefit African economies (World Trade Organization, 2001). However, the reality is more complex. While trade liberalization can create opportunities for African nations to expand their exports, it can also expose them to economic vulnerabilities. For example, many African countries rely heavily on a narrow range of export commodities, making them susceptible to fluctuations in global commodity prices. This economic dependency on a limited number of products can be exacerbated by trade liberalization, as it may not address structural issues within these economies (World Trade Organization, 1995).

Economic Dependency in Africa

Economic dependency in Africa is a multifaceted issue. It arises from various factors, including historical legacies, unequal global trade relationships, and the impact of trade liberalization itself. While the WTO aims to create a level playing field, African nations often find themselves in a disadvantaged position due to their limited capacity to compete in global markets.

One significant aspect of economic dependency is related to agricultural subsidies in developed countries. These subsidies distort global agricultural markets, making it difficult for African farmers to compete. The WTO's efforts to address this issue have been met with limited success, leaving African agricultural sectors vulnerable to external shocks (Wto.Org). Moreover, African countries often lack the infrastructure, technology, and resources needed to diversify their economies and move away from dependency on primary commodities. Trade liberalization alone may not address these fundamental challenges, and African nations may become even more dependent on international trade for their economic survival.

Challenges of WTO and trade liberalization

It is important to acknowledge that challenges remain. Despite progress in trade liberalization, African countries still face constraints, some of which are specific to the African context and addressing these challenges requires sustained efforts, including investments in infrastructure development, skills enhancement, and institutional capacity building.

Infrastructure Deficiencies: Inadequate transportation, energy, and telecommunication infrastructure in many African countries hinder the efficient movement of goods and services. Infrastructure deficiency refers to the inadequate or subpar physical and organizational structures and facilities that are essential for the functioning and development of a region or country. Many African countries have poorly maintained road networks with insufficient road coverage, which hampers the movement of goods and people.Limited railway networks and outdated rail systems often result in inefficient transportation of goods, affecting trade. Inadequate port facilities and congestion at ports can lead to delays in the shipment of goods and increase transportation costs while some regions lack modern airports, hindering international connectivity and tourism development.

Also inefficient energy distribution systems lead to power losses during transmission and distribution while frequent power outages and a lack of access to reliable electricity are common issues, affecting industrial productivity and economic growth among other infrastructural lacunas. Infrastructure deficiency in Africa poses significant challenges to economic development, trade, and overall quality of life. Addressing these deficiencies requires substantial investment, effective governance, and collaboration between governments, private sector entities, and international development organizations to build and maintain the necessary infrastructure for sustainable growth and development (World Bank report, 2008).

Trade Facilitation Barriers: With global output slowed by the Ukraine crisis and heightened uncertainties, forecasts indicate a slowdown in the growth of global merchandise trade in 2022, after the strong rebound in 2021, driven by the relaxation of lockdown measures and the increasing normalization of economic activities. Key factors impacting global merchandise trade include disruptions to

supply chains exacerbated by the Ukraine crisis, disruptions to major trade routes, and chaotic logistics networks. The resulting general surge in commodity prices is creating significant inflationary pressure and triggering a tightening of monetary policies and credit conditions, with knock-on effects on investments. (Africa trade report, 2022)

Lack of Diversification: Many African countries heavily rely on a few commodities for exports, leaving their economies vulnerable to price fluctuations. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) discusses the need for diversification stating that recent disruptions due to trade turbulence, economic uncertainty, a global pandemic and geopolitical events have compelled manufacturers worldwide to diversify their production locations and geographical footprint as this would present opportunities for African governments and businesses to position the continent as the new destination for global supply chains (Economic Development in Africa Report, 2023).

Capacity Constraints: Limited human and institutional capacity in trade negotiations and implementation of trade agreements hinder African countries' ability to fully participate in and benefit from trade liberalization. The African Union's "Boosting Intra-African Trade" initiative addresses capacity-building needs.

Political instability: Political instability and conflicts in some African regions disrupt trade and investment, inhibiting the potential gains from trade liberalization. These challenges are discussed in various reports by organizations like the United Nations and the African Union's Peace and Security Council.

Outbreak of Pandemics: The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges to global trade, including in Africa. Disruptions in global supply chains, reduced demand for African exports, and restrictions on movement and trade have highlighted the need for resilience and adaptability in the face of unforeseen shocks. Therefore, it is crucial for African countries to leverage the opportunities provided by the WTO and trade liberalization while simultaneously strengthening their domestic capacities to respond effectively to future crises. These challenges highlight the complex landscape of trade liberalization in Africa. Addressing them

requires concerted efforts from African governments, regional organizations, and international partners to unlock the potential benefits of trade for the continent's development. Researchers and policymakers continue to explore these challenges to find sustainable solutions for Africa's integration into the global economy.

Implications of trade liberalization in Africa

The implications of trade liberalization in Africa are significant. On one hand, it can lead to increased economic growth by promoting competition and allowing for more efficient allocation of resources. This could potentially attract foreign investment and create jobs. Trade liberalization can stimulate economic growth by increasing exports and fostering competition. For example, Ghana's cocoa exports have benefited from liberalized trade, leading to increased revenue and job creation in the cocoa industry. (Reference: UNCTAD, "Trade and Development Report 2020"). Also, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), initiated by the United States, has provided African countries with duty-free access to the U.S. market. This led to increased exports of products like textiles and apparel, benefiting countries like Lesotho and Kenya.

Again, trade liberalization can promote economic diversification. For example, Ghana has diversified its exports by embracing non-traditional products, such as cocoa-based cosmetics, through preferential access to international markets. This diversification can help reduce over-reliance on a single export, such as raw materials, which is common in many African economies. Also, open markets attract FDI, which can boost infrastructure development and industrialization. Open markets that have fewer restrictions tend to attract FDI, which can help boost infrastructure development and industrialization. Ethiopia's industrial parks are an excellent example of how foreign investors have contributed to their growth through FDI-driven development. With more investment coming into the country, Ethiopia was able to develop new industries that create jobs for its people while also improving their overall standard of living (UNCTAD, "World Investment Report 2020"**).**

On the other hand, trade liberalization can also have negative consequences for African economies. As mentioned earlier, it can exacerbate economic dependency on a narrow range of commodities and leave smaller, less developed nations at a

disadvantage. African economies can become more susceptible to global economic fluctuations. With trade liberalization, countries becomes heavily reliant on international markets, making it vulnerable to changes in global demand and commodity prices. For instance, if the global price of oil, a major Nigerian export, falls, it can lead to economic instability and reduced government revenue (OPEC, "Annual Statistical Bulletin 2020")

Additionally, trade liberalization may lead to job losses in certain sectors that are unable to compete with cheaper imports. This is particularly true for the agricultural sector, which is often dominated by small-scale farmers who lack the resources to compete with larger, more efficient producers in other countries. When tariffs are reduced or removed, sectors that were previously protected may struggle to compete with cheaper imports. For example, farmers find it difficult to compete with lower-priced agricultural products from other countries. Furthermore, trade liberalization leads to environmental degradation as increased exports result in overexploitation of natural resources. According to Numbere, A.O., Gbarakoro, T.N., Babatunde, B.B. (2023), exploration and production of oil and gas are centered in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria as she is the main source of crude oil production in the country, which generates foreign exchange revenues for the nation, through exploratory activities. But the careless behavior of the oil industry has significantly increased the amount of pollutants in the Niger Delta's soil, air, and water. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the environment is significantly polluted, contaminating human food and water supplies. In certain areas, this has resulted in land use wars, armed agitations over resource allocation between communities and companies. As a result, there has been turmoil and the loss of lives and property in the area.

Trade liberalization has the potential to erode domestic industry. This is because African countries' reliance on imported commodities hurts native industries, particularly in sectors where they have a lower competitive advantage. Also Imported food goods destabilize local agriculture, and as foreign products flood the market, local industries may struggle to compete, resulting in closures or downsizing (World Bank report 2020). For example, the textile industry in Nigeria has suffered as a result of the influx of cheaper foreign textiles. It is also worth noting that as local sectors falter and jobs are lost, social instability and unrest

might result. Unemployment can contribute to higher crime rates and other social problems.

Similarly, increased trade liberalization may put pressure on African currencies. As imports rise, so does demand for foreign exchange, keeping in mind that transactions are conducted in foreign currency. This frequently results in currency depreciation, which raises the cost of imported commodities and contributes to inflation. Overall, the repercussions of African trade liberalization are complex and multifaceted. While it has the ability to boost economic growth and development, it must be applied with caution and due regard for the unique constraints that African nations Face.

Conclusion

While trade liberalization is an important component of global economic integration and progress, its influence on African countries cannot be considered in a one-size-fits-all manner. The specific problems that African nations face when they engage with the global economy must be carefully considered. The World Trade Organization (WTO) must continue to play an active role in promoting fair and equitable trade policies that benefit all parties. African nations on the other hand must navigate a complex landscape of negotiations, structural constraints, and global economic dynamics to harness the benefits of trade liberalization effectively. In all, addressing trade liberalization and economic dependency in Africa requires a multi-faceted approach that combines domestic policy reforms, regional cooperation, and active participation in international trade negotiations. African nations must be proactive in shaping their economic destiny and reducing vulnerability to external shocks.

Recommendations

i. Diversify the Economy: African nations should prioritize diversification of their economies away from heavy dependence on primary commodities. This includes investing in sectors such as manufacturing, technology, and services to reduce vulnerability to fluctuations in commodity prices.
ii. Improve infrastructure, including transportation, energy, and telecommunications, to enhance competitiveness and facilitate trade

within and outside the continent. This will reduce logistical barriers that hinder economic growth.

iii. Promote regional economic integration and intra-Africa trade by reducing trade barriers among African nations. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a significant step in this direction, and its implementation should be prioritized.

iv. Address issues of corruption, bureaucracy, and weak governance structures that can hinder economic development. Strong institutions are crucial for creating an enabling environment for businesses and trade.

v. Actively engage in international forums, including the WTO, to advocate for reforms that address the unique challenges faced by African nations and promote a fairer global trading system.

vi. African nations must continue to invest in trade-related capacity building, including customs procedures, trade negotiation skills, and trade policy analysis, to ensure that governments can effectively engage in international trade negotiations and implement trade agreements.

vii. Ensure that domestic legal frameworks are aligned with international trade agreements and are conducive to attracting foreign investment and foster an environment conducive to innovation and research to develop high-value-added products and services for export markets.

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