



INTO THIS ISSUE

TRADE & DEVELOPMENT DESK

ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE DESK

CUTS celebrates 40 years globally and 25 years in Zambia. From right to left: Mr. Simon Ngona, Director – Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry; Mr. Pradeep Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International; Dr. Caleb Fundanga, former Governor Bank of Zambia; and Mr. Zali Chikuba, Executive Director, ZIPAR

CUTS celebrates 40 years globally, 25 years in Zambia

CUTS International celebrated 40 years of global impact and 25 years of operations in Zambia with a high-level event, the CUTS@40 Dialogue Forum. Held in Lusaka, the forum brought together policymakers, civil society, researchers, and development partners to reflect on CUTS' achievements and future direction under its Vision 2034 – CUTS@50 strategic roadmap.

Founded in 1983 and headquartered in Jaipur, India, CUTS has grown into a global leader in trade, economic development, consumer protection, and governance, with offices across India and six international centres, including Lusaka.

The event highlighted key publications showcasing CUTS' grassroots-driven, evidence-based advocacy and its impact in India and Africa. As it looks toward its 50th anniversary in 2034, CUTS reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive, sustainable development through regional and global collaboration.

For more information about CUTS International and its initiatives, visit www.cuts-international.org.

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Developing countries must unite for fair trade-PS Bwalya



By Nancy Mwape

Developing countries continue to face significant challenges in voicing their collective interests in global trade discussions, despite active participation since the Uruguay Round said Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Permanent Secretary Mrs. Lillian Bwalya.

Speaking at the CUTS@40 dialogue forum themed “Aligning Economic, Trade and Regulatory Policies for Sustainable Development,” Mrs. Bwalya highlighted the crucial role played by CUTS International and other partners in equipping developing nations with vital information to engage effectively and constructively in multilateral trade negotiations.

“The ongoing discussions to reform the World Trade Organisation demand that developing countries articulate clear and evidence-based positions,” Mrs. Bwalya emphasized.

She called for a reformed trading system that is more inclusive and responsive to the unique development challenges faced by least-developed countries (LDCs), ensuring they gain equitable access to global trade opportunities.

Mrs. Bwalya also cautioned against the growing use of unilateral and bilateral trade measures, which threaten to undermine the multilateral, rules-based global trading framework. She stressed the need for economic integration to be driven by practical collaboration between governments, private sector players, and civil society. “In Zambia, deepening partnerships with regional bodies, development partners, and research institutions is essential to generating evidence-based policies,” she said, adding that CUTS’ role in convening multi-stakeholder dialogues, commissioning research, and championing consumer-focused approaches is vital in this effort.

As the forum participants prepared to explore the theme through various subtopics, Mrs. Bwalya urged a collective focus on how trade policy could be harnessed to drive inclusive economic growth. She challenged attendees to consider ways to ensure trade facilitation effectively promotes intra-regional and continental trade while safeguarding the social and human foundations of commerce.

CUTS calls for rethinking global trade policies



By Nancy Mwape

CUTS International has launched a new publication titled **“The Innovative Route to Development: The Indo-Pacific Perspective and the Future of G20 and Africa”** during its 40th anniversary and 25 years of operations in Zambia. The compendium focuses on trade and economic cooperation, defence and security, energy and climate issues, and technological advancement.

Speaking at the launch, CUTS Secretary General Pradeep S. Mehta emphasized the African Union’s inclusion in the G20 as a key opportunity for Africa to drive inclusive and sustainable development. He called for a rethinking of global trade facilitation policies to ensure they are fair and support Africa’s growth goals.

Other prominent speakers included Mr. Alok Ranjan Jha, Indian High Commissioner to Zambia; Dr. Caleb Fundanga, former Bank of Zambia Governor; Mr. Zali Chikuba, Director of the Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research; Dr. Herrick Mpuku, Founder of the Economic & Social Leadership Foundation; and Dr. Simon Ng’ona, Trade Director at the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry.

The full publication is available at:

<https://cuts-global.org/pdf/indo-pacific-compendium-the-innovative-route-to-development.pdf>

CUTS @40 dialogue forum held at Protea hotel in Lusaka



COMESA, SADC membership not yielding trade benefits for Zambia

Economist Dr Trevor Hambayi says Zambia's membership in regional trade blocs like COMESA and SADC have failed to yield tangible benefits, particularly in terms of trade growth.

Dr Hambayi argues that most member countries within these blocs are at similar levels of economic development as Zambia, which limits the effectiveness of trade agreements. He suggests that Zambia should instead focus on strengthening bilateral ties with industrialized nations, such as China, which recently extended a zero-tariff offer to Zambia.

He cited the failed attempts to establish a common currency within COMESA and SADC—known as the OCA—as an example of how structural and economic disparities among member states have hampered progress.

Dr Hambayi also referenced Zambia's bilateral trade agreements with the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly around tariff exemptions, which he said have not been effective in boosting trade. **Source News Diggers**



Dr Trevor Hambayi

...As SADC Ministers renew push for intra-regional trade, Industrialisation

Ministers attending the 34th SADC Committee of Ministers of Trade and the 24th Ministerial Taskforce on Regional Economic Integration in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 5th June 2025, called for accelerated intra-regional trade, industrialisation, and deeper economic integration.

The Committee of Ministers oversees implementation of the SADC Protocol on Trade, while the Ministerial Taskforce guides the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015–2063), which aims to harness the region's natural resources for sustainable development and economic growth.

Chairperson of both meetings, Zimbabwe's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Professor Amon Murwira, urged member states to ratify outstanding protocols on trade, industry, and services to eliminate trade barriers and boost cooperation.

"The basis of SADC is that together we have a prosperous common future. We must move away from constructing barriers among ourselves," Prof. Murwira said, stressing the importance of regional unity.

He also noted that the fragile global trade environment—characterised by unilateral actions and threats to multilateralism—makes regional self-reliance and integration more critical than ever.

Prof. Murwira emphasised that full implementation of the Industrialisation Strategy could transform SADC's industrial base, improve productivity, and shift economies toward higher value-added goods. **Source SADC**



CUTS to host inter-university debate in Ndola

CUTS International Lusaka will host an Inter-University Debate in Ndola to engage students on how Zambia’s rising debt affects funding for essential sectors like health and education. Part of a project supported by Open Society Foundations, the debate aims to promote sustainable debt management and stronger public finance oversight. It also provides a platform for youth to discuss legal reforms such as the Public Debt Management Act of 2022 and advocate for transparency ahead of the 2025 national budget.

“The Price of Silence” – A Powerful New Documentary!

Journey with us from Zambia’s rural villages to bustling cities and even inside Parliament as “The Price of Silence” uncovers the real impact of rising national debt. See how everyday lives are affected—and how citizens are rising to demand transparency, equity, and change.

“The Cost of Debt” – A Bold New Cartoon Series!

What does debt mean for classrooms without desks or hospitals without medicine? “The Cost of Debt” breaks it down in a fun, relatable way for all ages. “With transparency and the right priorities, debt doesn’t have to rob us of our tomorrow.”

We sincerely thank you, our valued partners, for your continued support this quarter. The stories were compiled, edited, and the newsletter designed by Nancy Mwape.

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