



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trade Out of Poverty

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Trade Out of Poverty

Newsletter October 2017

About us

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Trade Out of Poverty (APPG-TOP) seeks to raise awareness of how trade can be used to foster poverty reduction in developing countries. It is supported by an independent UK registered charity (Trade Out of Poverty) and an external secretariat provided *pro bono* by the Saana Institute, the not-for-profit arm of Saana Consulting Ltd. APPG-TOP is chaired by Mr James Cleverly MP, co-chaired by Sarah Champion MP and vice-chaired by Lord Stephen Green, Lord Paul Boateng and Lord Michael Hastings.

APPG-TOP's medium term workplan is structured according to the five main priority themes below:

- 1) *Mainstreaming development in UK trade policy & WTO post Brexit*
- 2) *The role of the Commonwealth in reducing poverty through trade and investment*
- 3) *Integrating Africa*
- 4) *Delivering effective Aid for Trade*
- 5) *Creating jobs & empowering women through trade and investment*

This newsletter provides an overview of the APPG-TOP's activities over the past year and introduces some of its plans for the year ahead.

What we've been up to

Over the past 12 months, APPG-TOP has seen the publication of its first major Inquiry Report, organized or co-organized a series of events at Parliament, and helped parliamentarians and the wider development community track global developments in the area of international trade and development.

The 8th Annual General Meeting

The 8th AGM of the APPG-TOP was held on 11th September 2017 and saw the election of new officers. The Chair, Mr James Cleverly MP, Co-Chair Sarah Champion MP and Vice-chairs Lord Michael Hastings, Lord Stephen Green, and Lord Paul Boateng were elected unanimously. The attendees expressed their sincere thanks to the Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley for his hard work as former Chair of APPG-TOP and co-founder of TOP, and to the Rt. Hon Hillary Benn for his work as former co-chair of the APPG-TOP.

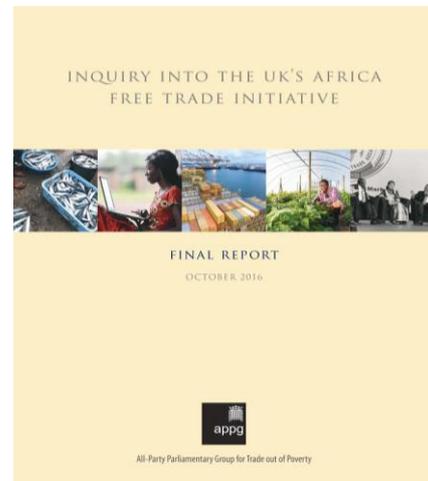
The delegates at the meeting discussed TOP's workplan going forward, including the series of dinner events on Brexit and UK-Africa relations and the newly launched Commonwealth Inquiry: "*Can the Commonwealth help developing countries trade out of poverty?*".



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Publication of Africa Free Trade Initiative (AFTi) Inquiry

The UK's Africa Free Trade Initiative was launched in 2011 to help African countries integrate into the global trading system. To mark the fifth anniversary of the scheme, in early 2016, APPG-TOP launched an Inquiry into AFTi, to review its achievements and assess whether a successor to the initiative should be championed.



The Inquiry centred around three main questions:

- 1) *What has been achieved in AFTi since 2011 and what lessons can be learned?*
- 2) *Is there a case for a successor to AFTi in the area of further facilitating trade and investment within Africa as a driver of growth and poverty reduction, and between African and the rest of the world, including the UK?*
- 3) *What should a future AFTi look like, what targets should it seek to achieve, and through which means and partnerships should it be delivered?*

In October 2016, APPG-TOP formally published the AFTi Inquiry Report. Following a series of public hearings and the collection of written evidence, in which over 60 experts provided inputs, the published report provided recommendations on what an 'AFTi 2' should look like, and the implications of the 'Brexit' vote for the future of UK-Africa relations. Overall, the report found that AFTi has contributed significantly in improving Africa's trading environment, in particular in Eastern and Southern Africa. Moreover, it has helped leverage investment into infrastructure on the continent and supported the negotiations for the Tripartite Free Trade Area and the Continental Free Trade Area.

The launch of the report was accompanied by a panel session led by AFTi Inquiry committee member Rt. Hon Lord Paul Boateng in Addis on November 30th 2016, during the AU's Africa Trade Week. The session saw key stakeholders including African policymakers, representatives from ITC, UNECA, UNCTAD, AfDB, and think-tanks discuss the report's findings and how to implement the report's recommendations. A similar panel session was held at the WTO in Geneva in December 2016 with ICTSD, led by AFTi Inquiry Co-Chair, Lord Stephen Green.



The final version of the report is available for download [here](#).

Former Minister for Int. Development the Rt. Hon. Andrew Mitchell gives evidence



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High-level Roundtable on Africa and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement



The roundtable discussion in UK Parliament

On 8th March 2017, APPG-TOP organised a high-level roundtable discussion in the House of Commons. Chaired by the Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley MP, the roundtable heard introductory remarks by the Rt. Hon Lord Bates, Minister of State for International Development. An introductory speech on “the State of Play with the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in Africa” was given by Suja Rishikesh Mavroidis, Director, Market Access Division, WTO Secretariat.

The roundtable discussion was led by African trade Ministers from Rwanda, Lesotho, Nigeria and Ghana and included participants from DFID, the WTO, the World Customs Organisation, UNCTD, the World Bank, ODI, the Commonwealth Secretariat, DHL Express, WEF Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation as well as African diplomats.

The discussion focused on three main questions:

- 1) *Where are African countries with the TFA and what are their plans for ratification/implementation to cut trade costs and smooth trading across borders?*
- 2) *What are the main opportunities and challenges which stakeholders from African countries (in both the public and private sectors) see arising from TFA implementation?*
- 3) *What assistance is on offer, or in the pipeline, for African countries from development partners for implementing the TFA and what lessons have been learnt so far (e.g. for setting up national TFA committees, using information technology, and the role of business)?*

10 Commonwealth policy priorities for trade and development – Cocktail Reception celebrating the entry into force of the TFA

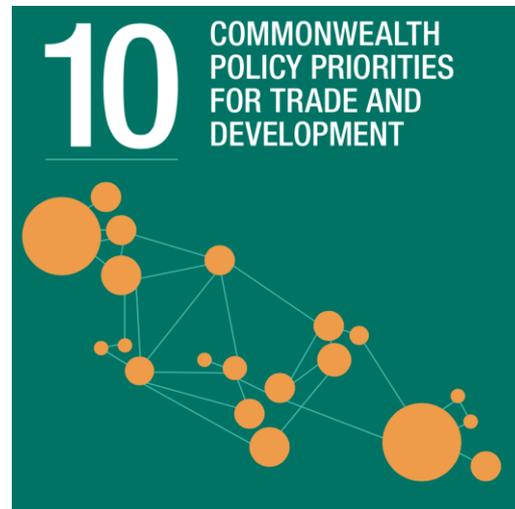
Early March 2017 also saw the launch of the “10 Commonwealth policy priorities for trade and development” jointly commissioned by ODI and APPG-TOP. The publication was launched at an APPG-TOP organised cocktail reception at the House of Commons, sponsored by AECOM, celebrating the entry into force of the TFA. Over 200 high-profile guests attended the reception including High Commissioners, Trade Ministers, Directors and Representatives from International Organisations as well as academia, civil society and the public and private sectors.



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The launch of the “10 Commonwealth priorities for trade and development” was timely with the first meeting of Commonwealth Trade Ministers taking place the following day and the Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) Summit taking place in the UK in April 2018.

The publication made actionable recommendations on how to achieve inclusive trade and investment policies across the Commonwealth. The Reception, jointly convened with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC) provided a unique opportunity for Ministers responsible for trade, industry and investment to consult with trade experts and business leaders. Ministers discussed “An Agenda for Growth” and how Commonwealth countries can work together to strengthen trade and investment links and develop a policy agenda ahead of CHOGM 2018.



The policy brief can be downloaded [here](#).

Wilton Park Conference – “A Consensus-based Commonwealth vision for trade negotiation, facilitation and finance”

In March 2017, ODI and APPG-TOP jointly convened and organised a conference at Wilton Park. The event explored the creation of a trade and development agenda for the Commonwealth and potential for developing a consensus-based framework in the Commonwealth for trade negotiations.



Delegates at the Wilton Park Conference

Participants discussed the role that Commonwealth member countries can play within the WTO. This focused around leveraging the extensive Commonwealth membership (48 member states) within the WTO to promote the provisions of the



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Trade Facilitation Agreement, particularly through regional and technical cooperation amongst Commonwealth countries. Moreover, the conference looked at the potential for the Commonwealth should to promote the benefits of intra-Commonwealth trade – e.g. that trade costs amongst Commonwealth countries are 19% lower than non-Commonwealth countries.

The following “plan of action” was developed:

- 1) *Develop, enhance and invest in existing Commonwealth trade networks*
- 2) *Create a centre of best practice to learn from successes and failure to promote and disseminate lesson learning, as well as provide technical assistance to Commonwealth members on trade negotiations, trade facilitation and trade finance.*
- 3) *Establish a Commonwealth Trusted Trader Scheme to speed-up trading times.*
- 4) *Develop a Commonwealth trade finance brokering service that links lenders to potential borrowers.*

Wilton Park Conference – “Boosting trade and investment in Sub-Saharan Africa”

At the end of June 2017, the APPG-TOP secretariat attended a second conference at Wilton Park on sustainable and inclusive trade and investment opportunities between the UK and Sub-Saharan Africa in the context of Brexit.

The conference aimed to identify and develop channels that can boost intra-regional and inter-regional trade and investment. The conference discussed what the main barriers are to building the attractiveness of the investment environment, and ideas for how these barriers can be overcome. There was a specific focus on how African countries can collaborate with regional partners to share best practices for trade and investment policy.

Trade out of Poverty at the Party Conferences

Trade Out of Poverty, the UK registered charity, which supports the APPG-TOP, organised or participated in side-events at the autumn conferences in September/October of the Liberal Democrats, Labour Party and the Conservatives. The events aimed to re-engage (new and old) parliamentarians and party members with the work of TOP and discuss important topics relating to trade and development.

Conservatives Party Conference

Trade Out of Poverty hosted a fringe event on Monday 2nd October entitled *Trading & Investing into Prosperity in the Commonwealth*. The event featured:

- **Mr Daniel Hannan MEP** – Member of European Parliament for South East England
- **Senator Ian Gorst** – Chief Minister, Jersey,
- **Dr Dirk Willem te Velde** – Head, Economic Development Group, ODI
- **James Cleverly MP** – Conservative MP for Braintree
- **Linda Aaslien** – Head, International Development, AECOM



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The reception provided an opportunity for MPs, Ministers, Peers, Party Members, and other attendees of the Conference to engage in a reception and discuss the benefits of trade and investment between the 52 developing and developed nations within the Commonwealth. The fringe event was sponsored by AECOM.

APPG-TOP Chair James Cleverly at MEP Daniel Hannah at CPC

Labour Party Conference

On Monday 25th September, Trade Out of Poverty and ODI jointly hosted a fringe event at the Labour Party Conference focused on the theme “*Trading & Investing with Africa after Brexit*”. Speakers included:

- **Chi Onwurah MP** - Chair of APPG Africa & Royal Africa Society, Member of Parliament for Newcastle Central (Labour)
- **Barry Gardiner MP** - Labour MP for Brent North and Shadow Secretary of State for International Trade
- **Maximiliano Mendez-Parra** - Trade Economist, ODI
- **Patrick Obah** – Board Member, TMEA

The event aimed to kick-start dialogue within the Labour Party about trade and investment opportunities with Africa after Britain’s exit from the European Union. The event provided an opportunity for MPs, Ministers, Peers, Party Members, and other attendees of the Conference to engage in a reception and discuss the benefits of trade and investment between the UK and Africa. The speakers highlighted the importance that the future trading relations between the UK and Africa be underpinned by mutual respect and mutual benefits, where market access to exports are at least under the same terms (duty free, quota free) as under Britain’s EU membership.



Barry Gardiner, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development speaks at the APPG-TOP fringe event



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Liberal Democrat Party Conference

One of the Trade Out of Poverty charity trustees, Tom Pengelly, attended the Liberal Democrat Party Conference on 17th September. Tom spoke at a fringe event panel discussion about the future of aid, and arranging bilateral meetings with Liberal Democrat MPs and Peers to foster support and interest in the work of TOP.

The Year Ahead

The APPG-TOP has a busy calendar over the coming year, centred around trade and development issues and the future of UK trading relations post-Brexit. The APPG-TOP will continue to promote inclusive trade for developing countries and aim to ensure that Aid for Trade is at the forefront of UK government policy. Here's what the APPG-TOP has coming up.

UK-Africa Brexit Dinner Series

Over the next 18 months, alongside the ongoing article 50 negotiations, APPG-TOP hopes to organise a series of dinner events bringing together senior business leaders and policymakers to discuss the opportunities and challenges from the UK's exit from the EU for trade and investment between the UK and African countries. The kick-off dinner will be held on the 22nd November 2017 in the House of Lords. The event will be hosted by Rt. Hon Lord Paul Boateng and will focus on HMG's two new white papers on trade and customs.

New Inquiry "Can the Commonwealth help countries trade out of poverty?"

Following the success of the AFTi Inquiry, APPG-TOP launched a new Inquiry, in partnership with ODI, titled: "[Can the Commonwealth help developing countries trade out of poverty?](#)". Given that the Commonwealth includes a significant number of developing countries, thirty of which are classified as small states (many of these being islands), it is crucial that trade is harnessed to promote sustainable development and make progress against the Global Goals. This Inquiry will help ensure that this message is amplified in the lead up to CHOGM 2018. Through engaging stakeholders and developing concrete proposals and recommendations, the Inquiry can play a key role in shaping the Commonwealth's trade and development agenda and driving it forward.

The Inquiry is led by a committee of Eminent Persons and experts, including senior policy makers, and business and civil society leaders from Commonwealth member states. As with the AFTI Inquiry, a "[call for evidence](#)" has been launched and a day of hearings will be held in Parliament on the 16th November 2017. Engagement of this sort will ensure that the Inquiry consultation process is as in-depth as possible, and inclusive of the widest possible range of Commonwealth members.

The Inquiry Committee members are as follows:

- **Co-Chair: Lord Jeremy Purvis** – House of Lords (Liberal Democrat Party) and Member, Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
- **Co-Chair: Hon Okey Enelamah** - Nigerian Minister for Trade and Vice Chair of the WTO 11th Ministerial Conference in December 2017



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- **Harsha Singh** – Executive Director, Brookings India and former Deputy Director General, WTO
- **Catherine Clarke** – Director International Relations, Prudential and Member of Advisory Board, Commonwealth Enterprise & Investment Council
- **Phil Rourke** – Executive Director, Centre for Trade Policy and Law (CTPL)
- **Patricia Francis** – Chairman, Jamaica Trade Facilitation Task Force; ex Executive Director, UN-WTO International Trade Centre, member of the 2011 Eminent Person Group on The Future of The Commonwealth
- **Steven Pope** - Vice President Customs & Regulatory Affairs, DHL Express Europe
- **Chi Atanga** – African Entrepreneur and Director, Walls of Benin
- **Trudi Hartzenberg** - Executive Director – Tralac Southern Africa
- **Angela Strachan** –former Chief, Business Environment Section at ITC
- **Lisa McAuley** – CEO, Export Council of Australia
- **Dirk Willem Te Velde** – Head, Economic Development Group, ODI

During the Hearings policymakers as well as business and civil society leaders will provide evidence to inform the Inquiry. Witnesses from these organisations will ensure that the full breadth of the extensive Commonwealth network will have their views represented in the Inquiry's findings.

APPG-TOP at 11th WTO Ministerial

Based on the evidence gathered for the Inquiry, a draft report and recommendations will be developed and presented to the Commonwealth Trade Ministers at an event in the side-lines of the WTO Ministerial, which is taking place in Buenos Aires from 10th-13th December 2017. The meeting will act as a valuable feedback mechanism for the Inquiry Committee, enabling them to produce a high quality Final Report grounded in solid evidence. This will help ensure that the recommendations from the Inquiry are widely supported by Commonwealth member states in the lead up to CHOGM 2018.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, April 2018, London

The Inquiry provides a unique opportunity to engage a wider group of stakeholders, and make a powerful case for an ambitious new trade and development agenda for the Commonwealth as a whole. The final Inquiry report will be launched at the Commonwealth Business Forum taking place along side CHOGM in London in April 2018.

Trade and Customs Bills

APPG-TOP will engage with the Department for International Development and Department for International Trade to discuss the forthcoming twin Trade and Customs Bills, which will be put to the UK Parliament in Autumn 2017. APPG-TOP will discuss the future of the UK's customs arrangements and the UK's independent trade policy, promoting an arrangement that works for both the UK and developing countries.