NEWSLETTER

GLAWCAL

Focus on:

Human Rights and Information Society : Africa's Digitiza–tion, Access to Information and Internet Rights in Africa

INDEX

Focus on

AFRICA'S DIGITIZATION

*T*his new issue of gLAWcal newsletter will give you a brief update about Africa's efforts of digitization.

The dark continent is catching more and more the attention of the world thanks to its initiatives aimed at bursting out its incredible potential so to finally be a decisive player in the fields of new technologies and innovation.

The increasing signals of this trend have already pushed well-known brands to generously invest in Africa. This is the case of giants such as IBM, SAP, Coca-Cola, BT telecom and Skrill; all of them are launching trainings, workshops and technologies that will provide Africa with the first tools to build a vibrant digital society.

Beyond these positive aspects, we will see how Africans still have to fight for their lives and fundamental rights and how internet and ICT in general only empower them and their nations.

We will give you evidence of how Ebola emergency pushed many to sharpen their wits and react against this tragedy by creating crowdsourcing project to map and monitor infections and by finding alternative ways to traditional classroom education; and we will then show you how african movements and initiatives are taking advantage from the internet to promote freedom of speech and gender equality and denounce their violations.

One thing is sure: Africa won't stand still with idle hands.

In today's world, paradoxically, it is the boldest action that is often the safest. Remaining where you are in a world that is changing so rapidly is in fact the most dangerous of all places to be in.

Hakeem Belo-Osagie

*NIGERIA PROMOTES INTERNET ACCESS FOR ALL
AFRICA HOSTING THE AfIGF*

3rd African Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF)

10-12 July 2014

Nicon Luxury Hotel, Garki - Abuja, Nigeria

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

*F*or the third year many institutions from the public and private sector actively helped co-organize and support this growing event: the Federal Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Nigerian Internet Registry Authority, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Local Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (LMAG) of the Nigerian Internet Governance Forum (NIGF), and the African Union Commission (AUC) together with the African sub-regional IGFs.

Between 2010 and 2014 Africa managed to grow over ten times mobile broadband penetration, allowing millions of people to experience web access. According to Ms. Fatima Denton - Director, Special Initiatives Division at the ECA - in order to sustain internet growth in Africa, each single nation has to foster private market and stimulate stake holding; many are the successful examples that seem to confirm this strategy, especially in the health sector such as the ABIYE safe motherhood programme.
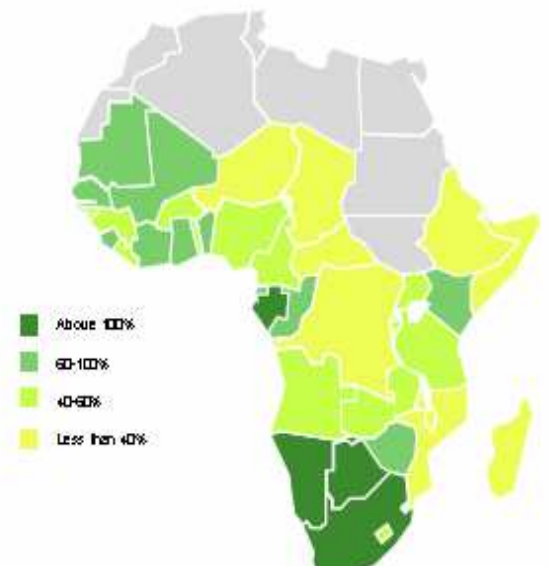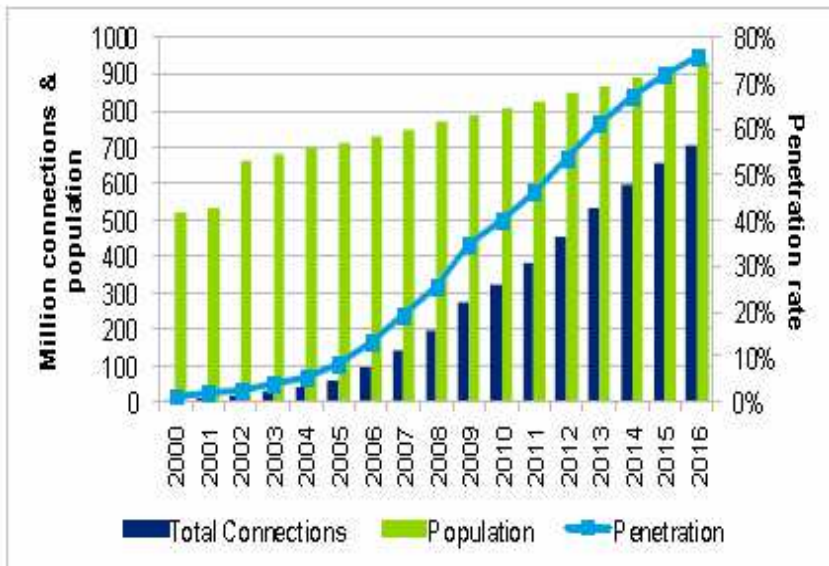
Africa's Digitization

During the forum, several were the recommendations proposed to create sound basis for tomorrow's policies, among others: educational policies relating to content creation, development and distribution; the need of policies to enhance Human Rights protection and respect; policies to stimulate multi-stakeholder cooperation as a means to drive internet access, growth and development, as well as improving digital trust and many others.

The chart and map above shows the increasing use of mobile phones in Sub-Saharan

Source: Wireless Intelligence

VOLUNTEERS IN WEST-AFRICA FIGHT EBOLA EPIDEMIC OVER THE INTERNET

Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team

Hot logo

Online volunteers are helping humanitarian institutions to deliver aid and fight Ebola crisis. Instead of donating money, people from all over the world are providing critical information updating a crowd sourced cartography of infected countries such as Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

Thanks to the collaborative Ebola Project, Doctors without Borders, the American Red Cross and other humanitarian groups are able to track the likely vectors of transmission of this deadly virus, buildings that can be converted into temporary clinics and fields suitable for helicopter landings. In this way it is possible to better plan relief interventions.

Ebola project was created by the Humanitarian Open Street Map Team and it is based on voluntary GPS surveying, satellite and aerial imagery and other open sources of geographical data; the idea is to integrate poor countries' official maps with accurate and updated information for disaster and crisis management. By adding details, online volunteers support humanitarian organizations on the ground that can guarantee a fast-paced action.

Africa's Digitization

COCA-COLA VENDING MACHINES OFFER FREE INTERNET CONNECTION

China has recently established IP specialist courts in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong that are planned to be operative within the end of 2014. In the government blueprint is also stated that the outcomes of this establishment will be monitored by the Supreme People's Court and reported in detail to the National People's Congress in three years.

The creation of a Chinese Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) judicial body is not brand new; in the 90s judges and academics widely stood in favor of this idea. After years of heavy research the government decided to drop the project claiming that it would have brought excessive changes to the various court organisation legislations and it would have put political capital through the mill. Nonetheless, the past years have seen lively discussions intensify and the new bill passed. Specialists advocate that this is a strong sign of government pro-IP policy and they heartily hope this path will open the door to a general overhaul of Chinese judicial system.

These expectations might need to be reshaped in case some disappointing aspects of the current reform expand their impact. Indeed, Chinese IP courts have been introduced at the intermediate level with no power to pass final sentences. The possibility that (non-specialised) higher courts could reverse what was previously declared appears to contradict the same objective of establishing special courts with the aim of ensuring alignment on this complex topic.

In any event there's no doubt China has a growing interest to enforce IP policy; it has indeed launched pilot projects around the country in order to increase qualified support staff for judges, improve budgeting and effectively grant judges independence.

The establishment of IP specialist courts is consequently warmly welcomed, appearing to be the first sign of a large-scale implementation of these local programmes and the new litigation trends expected to take place are: considerably increased damages against IP infringers, more assertive preliminary injunctions and evidence preservation measures in trade secret cases.

Coca-Cola and BT offer FreeWi-Fi
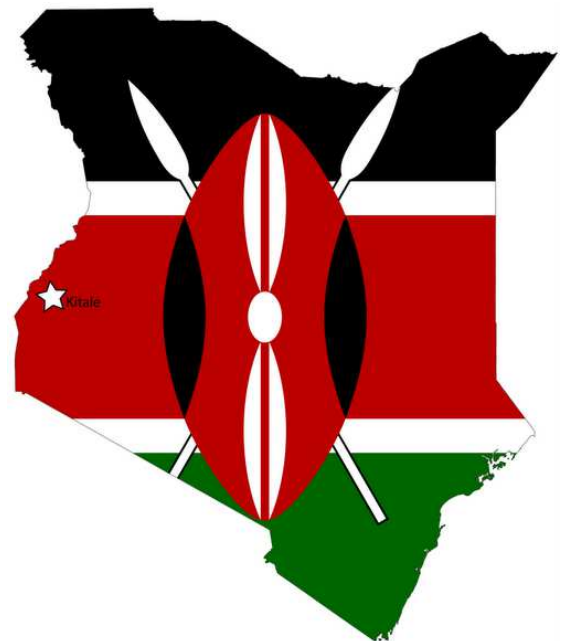
Africa's Digitization

IBM TO GUIDE DIGITIZATION IN KENYA

*T*o support Kenya digitization ,US tech giant IBM is partnering with the Information Communication Technology Authority (ICTA) to build a national ICT architectural model to be gradually implemented at all levels: from ministries to country governments. IBM strongly believes in Africa's potential and it is showing keen interest to invest in it.

This project is either part of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals, or of Kenyan development agenda "Vision 2030" and it has seen IBM experts side with NGO and government agencies to illustrate up-to-date best practices, especially related to automation of data, donor tracking websites, social media and marketing strategies in order to develop better health services; improve data mining, analysis and department processes; follow youngster through vocational training; refine inter-ministerial performances and revitalize international trade.

Thanks to these pro-bono activities IBM deploys teams of its most talented people on projects aimed at driving social and economic development. Recent initiatives of this kind also involve: a collaboration with Amref Health Africa, where they automated the existing manual process for data reporting that enabled the NGO to deliver higher quality clinical and diagnostic programmes; assistance to the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce (KNCCI), with the objective of enhancing its communication strategy with the establishment of a virtual information centre and the use of business analytics aiming at opening up traditional and new markets; at last, IBM joined the SOS Technical Training Institute (SOSTTI) realizing an ICT e-Learning platform to make students stand out in the marketplace.
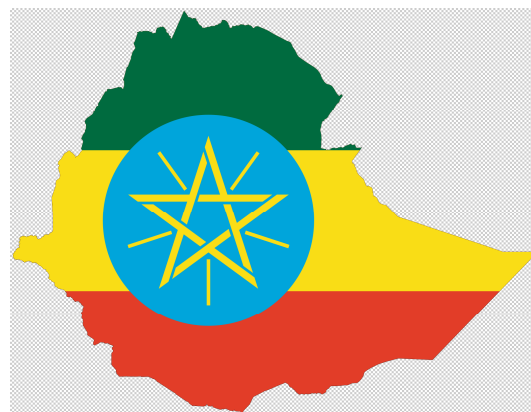

Map of Kenya and ICTA logo

Africa's Digitization

FREEDOM OF SPEECH CURTAILED IN ETHIOPIA

*T*hree years ago, Ethiopian writers and journalists launched a blog called Zone9 to denounce censorship practices in Ethiopia. The name refers to a jail in Addis Ababa where prisoners were divided depending on the crime committed; since zone8 was destined to political prisoners, bloggers created Zone9 to allude to their whole country as a virtual prison.

Zone9's nightmare started after its launch when, ironically, a blogger was arrested due to an article where he reported the government's habit of arresting journalists that criticized its conduct. After this event, other six Zone9 bloggers were charged with terrorism and related activities.

Unfortunately, they are not the only bloggers and journalists behind bars. All over the world, the number of nations with an authoritarian approach to internet issues is dangerously growing. They often overreact justifying their conduct with public order concerns while it is often an excuse to hide their fears of losing power. Recent examples are media convictions and policy developments in Syria, Egypt, North Korea, Cuba, China and, unexpectedly, even certain e-surveillance regulations of western countries such as the United Kingdom.

Ethiopia: flag map

Ethiopia is just an emblematic case. The government has amended the law so that it is easy to fall under provisions originally born to fight terrorism and be accused of illegal activities. Back to Zone9 situation, bloggers have been alleged with various crimes including attending technical trainings on how to use software to circumvent e-surveillance laws and accusations of having established a secretive organization - contradicted by the public nature of the blog.

To strictly control access to internet, the Ethiopian executive operates a state-monopoly on telecommunication networks so as to practice an efficient, pervasive and massive surveillance on its citizens. People who want internet access have to afford incredibly high fares or have to connect through controlled internet cafés; this has pushed an increasing number of people to buy technologies able to protect and anonymize their online traces.

Africa's Digitization

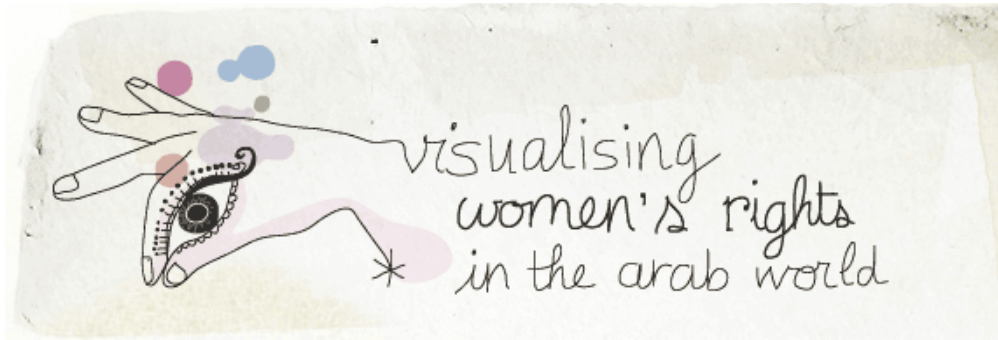## DIGITAL TOOLKIT SUPPORTS WOMEN'S RIGHTS CAMPAIGNS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

*T*he Dutch NGO Tactical Technology Collective has launched a new resource to help develop and promote campaigns in support of Women's rights. Toolkit's official name is "Women's Rights Campaigning Info-Activism Toolkit", it is available in different languages and has been released under creative common license in order to easily adapt content and adjust towards local area needs.

The project includes 20 women-specific campaign examples and other digital tools that can assist in jump starting new projects that aim at raising awareness on women-related issues, providing innovative strategies and effective ways to deliver messages and reach their objectives.

The toolkit currently supports English, Arabic, Bangla, Swahili, Hindi and counting; these languages have been chosen in collaboration with local partners that are already operating in critical areas and that will print and organize informative workshops to spread content created by Tactical Technology Collective. An example is CREA's "New Voices / New Leaders: Women Building Peace and Reshaping Democracy" project which is campaigning in the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

TANZANIA NEW SECURITY MEASURES TO FIGHT CYBERCRIME

*T*anzania government is setting up various measures to beef up internet security and effectively fight cyber-crimes which, according to a recent Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA) report, is costing the country circa 6 million USD.

Modern technologies have allowed countries worldwide to build networks that rapidly convey and exchange information and help boost their businesses. Unfortunately, parallel to their economic development, the rate and impact of cyber-crimes also increases.

Tanzania is one of the leading countries on mobile phone money transfer. The number of mobile phone users reaches 27 million, and the major challenges that the nation has to face are related to online piracy, card skimming and ATM thefts.

Starting from the fact that these criminals are technology-savvy, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Pereira Silima has recently declared that the government is trying to realize security measures that could place it miles ahead in technology advancement to effectively fight against cyber-criminals.

These topics have been the main focus of the 4th COMSATSISESCO-INIT Workshop on "Internet Security: Enhancing Information Exchange Safeguards" held in Dar es Salaam, that saw the participation of different country representatives from Africa and the Middle-East.

During the inauguration ceremony, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology Prof Patrick Makungu confirmed Mr Pereira Silima statement and declared that to successfully address these issues the government is using a multilateral approach: from developing cyber laws to the establishment of a Cyber-crime Unit in the Police force and of a computer emergency response team (CERT).

Other fundamental measures on which the Tanzanian executive is relying on are the launching of Internet security programmes. Training ICT experts from diverse business fields will help them develop up to date skills and thus reduce threats and their impact.

Africa's Digitization

SAP LAUNCHES $500M STRATEGY FOR TRAINING AND INNOVATION IN AFRICA

Software giant SAP has launched a 7-year plan to accelerate innovation and growth in Africa. In Africa, the German company counts more than 1,300 customers and manages operations in almost all the African nations.

Robert Enslin, SAP spokesman and member of the executive board, has declared the company aims at unravelling the enormous potential of the whole continent. For this reason, most of the investment will be focused on countries with recent astonishing performance such as Nigeria, Kenya, Angola and Morocco. The plan consists in supporting training initiatives to help young talents in the development of IT and business skills as well as assisting customers and partners in the creation of new employment opportunities.

SAP Africa CEO Pfungwa Serima echoed this vision and added that the company successfully operates in the area for over 20 years, thus, it will use its experience and knowledge of the territory to achieve this ambitious plan and make the best use of its USD 500 million investment.

The main sectors where SAP will drive change and make an impact will be: energy, natural resources, utilities, public sector, financial services and telecommunications; it will also promote small and medium enterprises enhancement, and launch the so-called Skills for Africa Scholarship Programme to realise an open business ecosystem able to train the executives of tomorrow.

SAP Africa CEO Pfungwa Serima

Africa's Digitization

SKRILL WILL BRING AFRICA'S ECONOMIES ONLINE

> *Skrill guarantees instant, cost-effective and secure payments via mobile wallets and promotes business digitization*

Microsoft 4Afrika partners with Skrill

technologyafrique.com

A memorable partnership between mobile payment systems, network operators and merchants will drive economic outburst in Africa. The European online payments and digital wallet provider Skrill has joined forces with Microsoft and local mobile network operators in order to start an ecommerce portal and shift Africa's emerging economies online.

The region's double digit growth and the extremely youthful population with their natural talent for new technologies constitute the perfect conditions to invest in digital payment systems and ecommerce.

> *A memorable partnership between mobile payment systems, network operators and merchants will drive economic outburst in Africa.*

Through this portal, customers will be able to operate online transactions keeping their personal and financial data safe. Furthermore, they will enjoy free access to educational content and Microsoft software, as well as global internet brands for online-shopping.

Skrill guarantees instant, cost-effective and secure payments via mobile wallets and promotes business digitization through its extensive global network of merchants. The company is aware of bank services' penetration of low rates and that these markets are marked by intensely perceived fraud risks, but it is positive in serving one of the fastest growing regions in the world.

Microsoft will take part in the joint venture by providing Africa with the means to realise a digital revolution which will bring innovation, inclusion, trade and skills.
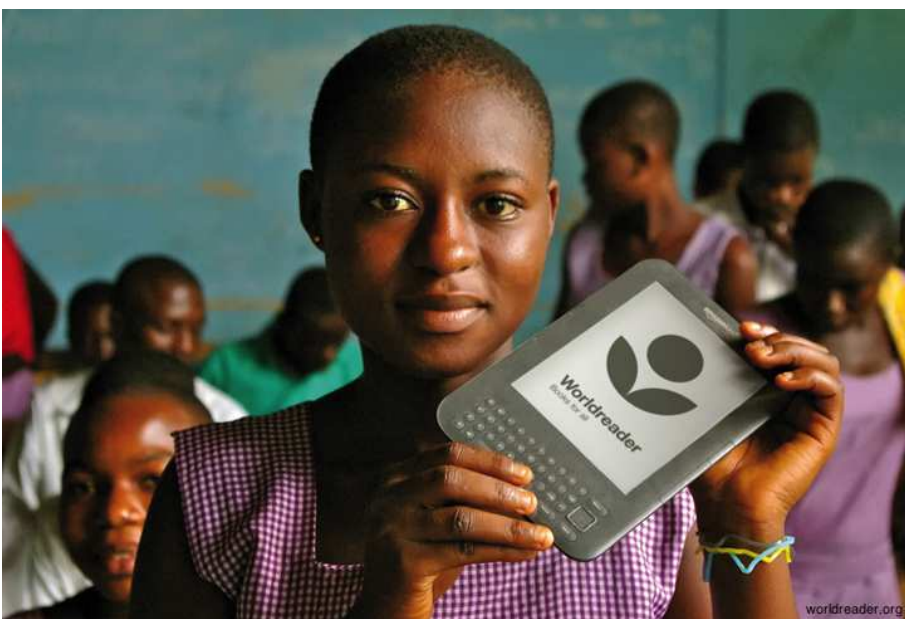
LIBERIA'S SCHOOLS GO DIGITAL TO AVOID EBOLA

*E*bola-related risks forced Liberia to close its schools, but digital technologies have not prevented children to keep on learning. Traditional classroom education has been compelled to stop to limit disease-spreading, but for 1.2 million of Liberian children lessons continue at home broadcasted by radio and available by mobile phones.

This incredible achievement is possible especially thanks to the noble action of Cellcom and Worldreader. The first one is a Liberian well-established wireless carrier that is providing families with free access to certain educational content; while Worldreader is a US-based NGO that has developed a mobile app allowing students to download course readings free of charge.

The non-profit has been founded with the purpose of promoting literacy in poor countries; it currently operates in 39 countries and special focus has been given to Kenya and Ghana.

Chinese citizen is sueing China Unicom to arise the problem of who is responsible for blocking western internet platforms. The fact that several overseas internet services - such as Google and Facebook - are not accessible to people situated in China is something of common knowledge; what is unclear though, is who is the competent authority and what specific law allows the legitimacy of this censorship. These are the reasons why Wang Long, an ordinary chinese citizen, has decided to stimulate a reaction by taking legal action against his Internet Service Provider claiming his right to demand answers for discrepancies in the services.

Ebola-related risks forced Liberia to close its schools, but digital technologies have not prevented children to

Africa's Digitization

When Ebola started spreading in Liberia, Worldreader's creator David Risher began collaborating with the government and other businessmen in order to integrate a national education system with tools.

Risher and his team also contacted various London-based school publishers asking for partnership; though there is no agreement yet, Worldreader spokesman declared conversations have been promising.

What makes Liberia's case different from other countries, where the NGO has taken action, is that it has not been possible to provide students with book readers and related training on how to use them. Thus, the only way to solve this problem so far has been relying on the estimated 50% of Liberians who have internet access.

Map of Liberia

Africa's Digitization

AFRICA'S DIGITAL ECONOMY TO LEARN FROM INTERNET GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

*I*f African nations want to become significant powers in the emerging global digital economy, they have to take the cue from other regulators and governments. Alex Salter, CEO of SamKnows, is recently supporting this argument to illustrate various aspects that are influencing African digital market development.

Deloitte reports that 160 million people living below the poverty line could see their status changed by simply providing them with internet access. Online connection would allow people to benefit from a great variety of resources from education to healthcare and business-related support which, if executed properly, would automatically result into a social boost.

Several companies have stepped up launching supporting campaigns and in a recent article, Forbes legitimately questions if these initiatives are purely noble or internet companies have just found a new channel to promote their business. Whatever the answer, it is important to bind these large corporations to social responsibilities while pushing governments and internet providers to develop policies and services able to grant affordable internet access.

An emblematic case showing these dynamics is the successful Facebook's Internet.org, rapidly expanding in more and more countries. Taking Kenya as an example, investments in ICT sector have allowed national GDP to increase at an impressive rate, reaching 63% of broadband penetration that goes up to 76% if we include mobile connection.

Africa will enormously benefit from connecting its people. Beyond encouraging entrepreneurship and education, internet could help Africa's sustainable development conveying the values of democracy, transparency, political accountability and minorities' protection.

If during their path African nations are able to monitor and learn from foreign telecom regulators and governments, they will surely play a fundamental role in driving global digital economy.

Alex Salter, CEO of SamKnows

GLAWCAL

GLOBAL LAW INITIATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

WHO ARE WE

gLAWcal is an independent non-profit research organization (think tank) that aims at providing a new focus on issues related to economic law, globalization and development, namely the relationship between international economy and trade, with special attention to a number of non-trade-related values and concerns.

Through research and policy analysis, gLAWcal sheds a new light on issues such as good governance, human rights, right to water, rights to food, social, economic and cultural rights, labour rights, access to knowledge, public health, social welfare, consumer interests and animal welfare, climate change, energy, environmental protection and sustainable development, product safety, food safety and security.

All these values are directly affected by the global expansion of world trade and should be upheld to balance the excesses of globalization.