

**COMMITTEE**: World Trade Organization (WTO)

**COUNTRY**: The Republic of South Africa

**Agenda**: Reconstructing the Rules-Based Trading Order: Reforming WTO Dispute Settlement and Trade Rules in an Era of Unilateral Tariffs, Strategic Subsidies and Geoeconomic Fragmentation.

The Republic of South Africa believes that international trade should be fair for every country, not just the countries with stronger economies. The WTO was created to make global trade more equal and organised. However, today, unilateral tariffs, unfair subsidies and disagreements between powerful economies are making international trade more difficult, especially for developing countries.

South Africa believes that developing countries should get equal opportunities to grow their industries, create jobs and compete in the global market. Countries with stronger economies often have more money and resources to support their industries. This creates an imbalance for developing nations. South Africa does not believe that development support should be treated as unfair competition when it is used to improve local industries and people's lives.

The issue of unilateral tariffs is also a major concern. In 2025, the United States announced a 30% tariff on South African goods. Such decisions create uncertainty for businesses and affect trade relations. South Africa supports dialogue and negotiations instead of allowing trade disagreements to turn into larger conflicts.

South Africa also believes that the WTO dispute settlement system needs to be strengthened. Every country, whether developed or developing, should have the opportunity to raise concerns and receive fair treatment. No country should feel that its voice matters less because it has a smaller economy.

**To address these challenges, South Africa proposes the following solutions:**

1. **Fair Trade Rules**: WTO rules should provide equal opportunities to all countries and consider the challenges faced by developing economies.

2. **Transparent Subsidies**: Countries should share clear information about their subsidies so that unfair advantages can be identified without restricting genuine development programmes.

3. **Stronger Dispute Settlement**: The WTO should work towards restoring an effective dispute settlement system where every member can receive fair and timely decisions.

4. **Support for Developing Countries**: Developing economies should receive technical assistance and reasonable time to follow new trade rules.

5. **Dialogue Before Tariffs:** Countries should be encouraged to resolve trade disagreements through consultations and negotiations before imposing unilateral trade restrictions.

South Africa is ready to work with other member states to find practical solutions. We believe that global trade should not become a competition where only the strongest countries succeed. The purpose of the WTO should be to create opportunities for everyone. South Africa strongly supports a fair, transparent and development-focused trading system where every country's voice is respected.