



## **Statement to the G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Meeting (TIMM)**

**Gqeberha, South Africa | 10 October 2025**

### **On Priority 3: Trade and Investment Framework to address Green Industrialisation and Sustainable Development**

The South Centre thanks the Government of South Africa for inviting the South Centre to participate as a Knowledge Partner in this important process.

We commend the Government of South Africa for its leadership and for prioritising the link between trade, investment and green industrialisation as a key pillar of this process.

International trade and investment flows remain vital drivers of industrialisation and structural transformation in developing countries. For these flows to deliver on their full potential, industrialisation must promote economic growth, job creation, natural resource beneficiation and greater value addition, enabling developing countries to integrate into and move up global supply chains.

Industrialisation should also focus on future-oriented sectors that harness digital technologies and the potential of youthful populations to enhance productivity and innovation. Building resilient, competitive and sustainable industries is essential for long-term economic transformation.

Inclusivity and sustainability must guide this process. New and emerging industries should create viable pathways to development while advancing national commitments on climate change and biodiversity, consistent with each country's specific needs and circumstances.

Coherent policy frameworks at national, regional and multilateral levels are essential to align trade, investment and industrial objectives. Such coherence will allow countries to pursue green industrialisation that is both development-oriented and environmentally responsible.

The South Centre continues to support its Member States and other developing countries through technical assistance, research and policy advice aimed at strengthening trade and investment frameworks for industrialisation. We remain ready to work with all partners to advance sustainable, inclusive and future-oriented industrial development that contributes to shared prosperity and a balanced global economy.



## **On Priority 4: WTO Reform and Development Dimension**

The South Centre thanks the Government of South Africa for its leadership in guiding G20 Members through a particularly challenging period for global trade and for its continued commitment to a rules-based, inclusive and development-oriented multilateral trading system.

As an intergovernmental organisation of developing countries, the South Centre supports a trading system that is inclusive, rules-based and grounded in the foundational principles of the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization. Our Members agree that reform is necessary.

WTO reform should aim to restore balance between rights and obligations and reaffirm development as a central pillar of the system. Special and Differential Treatment remains a key legal entitlement for developing and least developed countries and is essential for strengthening their implementation capacity, and supporting their integration in the global economy.

A core element of reform is the restoration of a fully functioning, two-tier dispute settlement system that is accessible to all Members. The credibility of a rules-based multilateral system depends on confidence that rules are applied fairly and consistently. The broader question facing Members is how to advance new rulemaking when existing rules are being implemented unevenly.

The reform process must remain Member-driven and uphold the principle of consensus as a safeguard of inclusiveness and equality.

In the view of our Member States, diluting consensus itself is not the solution. The focus should be on strengthening engagement across all mandates and avoiding the gradual erosion of attention to gateway issues such as Agriculture and Development, which are vital to a balanced and inclusive WTO.

It is also important that these discussions take place in Geneva among all Members, in plenary, within the institutional framework of the WTO, to ensure transparency, inclusiveness and full participation.

The South Centre will continue to work closely with its Member States and other developing countries to provide analytical and technical support for a balanced and development-oriented reform process.

The ultimate test of success will not be the number of rules or agreements entered into, but whether reform strengthens accountability and upholds the WTO's founding purpose of making trade an instrument for shared prosperity, fairness and sustainable development.