SOUTH CENTRE

South Centre Publications
January 2025 - September 2026

BOOKS

Negotiating Global Health Policies
Tensions and Dilemmas (2025)

Description:

This book presents reflections and research that highlight tensions in the negotiations on pandemic preparedness treaties and revisions to the International Health Regulations, underscoring the geopolitical divide between developed and developing countries. It advocates regional health initiatives as a response to the multilateral impasse and reflects on the erosion of foundational public health concepts such as “essential medicines”.

New pandemics are inevitable. How can we best prepare for them and, above all, how can we avoid the mistakes and injustices made during the COVID-19 pandemic?

How can equitable access to medicines and diagnostics be guaranteed when they are produced in a small number of countries? How can we explain the fact that current funding for cooperation in the field of health is in the hands of a small group of Northern countries and foundations from the North? How can the role of the World Health Organization be strengthened? WHO now plays only a minor role in coordinating public health policies. How is it that the concept of “essential medicines”, a major advance in public health policy, is being replaced by that of “medical countermeasures”, a term more in line with the private sectors?

Preparing for future pandemics forces us to ask ourselves: how can we safeguard the general interest, the defense of human rights and public health?

Negotiating Global Health Policies: Tensions and Dilemmas is essential reading for negotiators from the 194 member countries of the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) who participate in international negotiations on health and development. Academics and students of medicine, health sciences, law, sociology and political science, as well as intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations who work on access to medicines and global health issues, also would find the book of interest.

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He obtained a Master’s degree in Economics and a PhD in Health Economics from Sorbonne University, Paris. In 2010, he received a Honoris Causa PhD on Public Health from the University of Caldas, Colombia and in 2015 he received another Honoris Causa PhD from the Faculty of Medicine of the Complutense University of Madrid, Spain.

https://www.southcentre.int/book-by-the-south-centre-2025/

RESEARCH PAPERS

International Regulation of Industrial Designs: The TRIPS Agreement in the Light of European Union Law (Research Paper 212, 9 January 2025)

By Adèle Sicot

This paper analyzes the provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) on industrial designs, and the manner in which the narrow aspects dealt with by the Agreement have been addressed by European Union (EU) legislation. The paper highlights the absence of a definition of protectable subject matter, and the considerable flexibility left to the member countries of the World Trade Organization to determine the framework of protection, notably on the basis of copyright. The paper also notes certain areas in which European legislation is more elaborate, and others which could be considered incompatible with the TRIPS Agreement.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-212-9-january-2025/

Application of the Bolar Exception: Different Approaches in the EU (Research Paper 214, 15 January 2025)

By Dmytro Doubinsky

This Research Paper addresses the growing problem of access to essential medicines, focusing on the role of intellectual property rights, particularly patent rights, in restricting access by enabling pharmaceutical market monopolies that keep drug prices high. The paper explores the Bolar exception, a legal mechanism designed to allow generic drug manufacturers to seek regulatory approval before a patent expires, thus preventing the de facto extension of patent monopolies. The study examines the transformation of the Bolar exception from a specific legal case into a significant tool of intellectual property, commercial, and pharmaceutical law. The paper analyzes key international legal frameworks and European directives related to the Bolar exception and highlights divergent interpretations of the Exception in German and Polish case law. Through this comparative analysis, the paper argues for the broader implementation of Bolar exceptions to improve access to affordable medicines and reduce healthcare costs.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-214-15-january-2025/

Assessing Five Years of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): Proposals on Potential Amendments (Research Paper 215, 23 January 2025)

By Kiiza Africa

On 30th May 2024, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) celebrated its fifth anniversary, which legally implied that the agreement is up for review for possible amendments. To kickstart this review, the Thirty-Seventh Ordinary Session of the African Union Summit (held in February 2024) directed the AfCFTA Secretariat to take necessary measures for the start of the review of the Agreement. This review comes at a moment when the AfCFTA implementation and its vehicle, the Guided Trade Initiative (GTI), have been fraught with challenges. Broadly, these challenges include the slow submission of tariff liberalization schedules by State Parties, infrastructure deficits, persistent non-tariff barriers and trade wars in regional economic communities, and overlapping regional trade commitments. Thus, the upcoming AfCFTA review provides an opportunity to assess progress, identify implementation bottlenecks, and propose actionable amendments. This paper examines these challenges through a comprehensive analysis of the AfCFTA's state of play, illuminating the progress while highlighting the slow momentum registered for the past five years of its operation. Proposals for the agreement's amendment revolve on accelerating infrastructure development, harmonizing rules of origin, integrating labor rights, and fostering industrial diversification. By moving beyond liberalization as its raison d'être and prioritizing the scaling up of State Parties' productive capacities, the AfCFTA can evolve from a mere trade liberalization agreement into a transformative driver of Africa's economic

renaissance. It is hoped that this timely assessment underscores the urgency of reorienting the AfCFTA to unlock its full potential for propelling intra-Africa trade.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-215-23-january-2025/

Will the Pact for the Future Advance a Common Global Agenda on the Challenges Facing Humanity? (Research Paper 216, 27 February 2025)

By Viviana Munoz Tellez, Danish, Abdul Muheet Chowdhary, Nirmalya Syam, Daniel Uribe

At a time when multilateralism is needed more than ever to address the global challenges and rising geopolitical tensions, paradoxically, the capacity and delegated power of the United Nations (UN) to uphold a rule-based order to keep peace and security is being weakened. Even in an increasingly multipolar world, a retreat towards unilateralism by world powers masked as national sovereignty is dangerous and highly unfavourable for developing countries. In this light, the United Nations Pact for the Future, a new forward-looking agenda of commitments adopted by consensus by UN Member States in September 2024, is a welcome initiative. The Pact for the Future, nonetheless, is short in delivering commitments on transformative changes in global governance and solutions to the most pressing global challenges. This document briefly examines some of the actions and high-level commitments in the Pact of the Future to strengthen multilateral cooperation and provides recommendations for their implementation.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-216-27-february-2025/

Application de l'Exception Bolar: Différentes approches dans le droit de l'UE (Document de Recherche 214, 20 mars 2025)

Par Dmytro Doubinsky

Ce Document de recherche aborde le problème toujours plus aigu de l'accès aux médicaments essentiels, en se concentrant sur le rôle des droits de propriété intellectuelle, en particulier les droits de brevet, qui restreignent l'accès en permettant des monopoles sur le marché pharmaceutique qui maintiennent les prix des médicaments à un niveau élevé. Le document explore l'exception Bolar, un mécanisme juridique conçu pour permettre aux fabricants de médicaments génériques de demander l'approbation réglementaire avant l'expiration d'un brevet, empêchant ainsi l'extension de facto des monopoles de brevets. L'étude examine la transformation de l'exception Bolar d'un cas juridique spécifique en un instrument important en matière de droit de la propriété intellectuelle, de droit commercial et de droit pharmaceutique. Elle analyse les principaux cadres juridiques internationaux et les directives européennes relatifs à l'exception Bolar et met en évidence les interprétations divergentes de l'exception dans les jurisprudences allemande et polonaise. Grâce à cette analyse comparative, le document encourage une mise en œuvre plus large des exceptions Bolar afin d'améliorer l'accès à des médicaments abordables et de réduire les coûts des soins de santé.

https://www.southcentre.int/document-de-recherche-214-20-mars-2025/

Cross-Border Enforcement of Copyright: A Special Emphasis on Court Decisions and Arbitral Awards (Research Paper 217, 20 May 2025)

By Hany Salem

In today's digitally interconnected world, copyright infringement frequently crosses national borders, presenting complex legal challenges for effective enforcement of intellectual property rights in general, and copyright in particular. This paper examines the challenges associated with cross-border copyright enforcement, particularly the critical role of Private International Law (PIL) in the recognition and enforcement of foreign court decisions and arbitral awards. Although foundational treaties such as the Berne Convention, the TRIPS Agreement, and the WIPO Copyright Treaty establish essential principles

of international copyright protection, they offer very limited guidance on resolving procedural and jurisdictional issues that arise in cross-border Copyright disputes.

The analysis contends that the territorial nature of copyright law, compounded by fragmented and insufficiently developed PIL frameworks, creates legal uncertainty and inefficiency for rightsholders to secure effective remedies. To address these shortcomings, the study underscores the need for a more coherent and harmonized international PIL approach. It further explores the potential of soft law instruments – particularly the 2020 Kyoto Guidelines – as a constructive step toward resolving PIL issues related to international copyright disputes. By narrowing the gap between domestic legal systems and international enforcement mechanisms, these developments could significantly enhance legal predictability and access to justice in the global digital environment.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-217-20-may-2025/

Winds of Change: The BRICS Club of Nations Chipping Away at Western Dominance – The Dawn of the New South (Research Paper 218, 12 June 2025)

By Len Ishmael, PhD

This era of polycrises, a global health pandemic coupled with wars in Europe and the Middle East, against the backdrop of Great Power rivalry and climate related emergencies, has profoundly affected all countries, rich and poor alike. Disproportionately affected have been those of the Global South for whom the World Bank has cautioned a 'decade of lost development.' As rising geopolitical tensions fuel security concerns, the nature of economic ties between countries is changing. Several countries – spearheaded by BRICS members – have started to consider alternatives to the Western financial institutional architecture in a bid to safeguard their own interests. These measures risk fragmenting the existing global financial infrastructure and derailing benefits derived from decades of economic integration in the face of new barriers to cross border investment, commerce, and trade. Recent research shows that trade restrictions have more than tripled since 2019, financial sanctions have expanded and the geopolitical risk index has also spiked, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. After decades of accepting the West's rules, there is a sense that the era of the Global South is dawning, and that Western interests are no longer *de facto* those of the rest of the world. It is in this milieu that the BRICS and their initiatives take on heightened economic and political significance.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-218-12-june-2025/

Reducing the Cost of Remittances – A Priority for the Global South (Research Paper 219, 16 June 2025)

By Danish

Remittances are a lifeline for many households in low and middle income countries (LMICs), and have emerged as an important source of external financing for sustainable development. With over 800 million people dependent on remittances worldwide, their importance for developing and least developed countries is well established. However, the high cost of remittances remains a significant challenge, and despite global commitments to reduce these costs, progress has slowed down.
This paper thus provides an assessment of the current drivers of remittance costs and explores the relevant policy discussions and initiatives at the United Nations (UN) and Group of Twenty (G20). It further highlights the continuing challenges as well as the innovative solutions such as increasing digitalisation and development of cross-border fast payment systems in different regions of the global South. The upcoming Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) and G20 initiatives under South Africa's Presidency present important opportunities for the international community to redouble its efforts and make concrete, ambitious commitments to lower the cost of remittances. Finally, the paper provides some relevant policy considerations and recommendations, especially to accelerate the implementation of existing commitments, leverage digital public infrastructure and to discourage levying of taxes on remittance flows to developing countries.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-219-16-june-2025/

Harnessing Open Account Trade — A Major Enabler for Illicit Financial Flows from Developing Countries

***Can blockchain technology come to the rescue? Will the African Continental Free Trade Area leverage its Digital Trade Protocol?* (Research Paper 220, 25 June 2025)**

By Yuefen Li

The current geopolitical landscape has made domestic resource mobilization an even more important imperative for developing countries. In this context, it is more urgent than ever to combat illicit financial flows (IFFs) whose staggering amount from developing countries has outstripped the combined sum of official development assistance (ODA) and foreign direct investment (FDI) going into the developing world. The IFFs from the financial channel is significant, but the greater proportion of IFFs actually stems from trade channels rather than from financial channels. It is particularly concerning that the flexibility and legitimacy of international trade have been exploited to cover IFFs. Trade mis-invoicing is the largest component of IFFs from developing countries. A major reason for trade being used to undertake illicit, fraudulent or criminal activities is because 80%-85% of the more than US$ 24 trillion international trade is conducted via open account trade (OAT), which has minimum scrutiny as it is conducted on a bilateral basis between the importer and exporter, not transparent and with minimal involvement of the financial institutions and customs authorities. OAT payment does not require documents to prove quality, quantity and other information about the product being shipped and is made through automatic payment systems which lack the oversight provided by any third party. OAT gives trade mis-invoicing great ease, flexibility, minimal cost and minimal risk. Therefore, if the world is serious about combatting IFFs, it is urgent and imperative to close loopholes in the OAT for IFFs, making it transparent, trackable and involving third party monitoring and scrutiny. The functionalities and features of Blockchain technology (BCT), though its implementation is still nascent, can be a good candidate to make OAT more modern, transparent to regulators, traceable, more efficient and above all minimize IFFs. The goals of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)'s Digital Trade Protocol (DTP) include boosting intra-African trade through unifying and harmonizing regulatory framework for Africa's digital economy and regional trade, promoting cross-border data flows and paperless trade, and enhancing cybersecurity measures. The exploration of Blockchain adoption to reduce OAT's risks for IFFs and make trade more effective aligns well with DTP's goals.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-220-25-june-2025/

The AI Race: A Tightrope Walk Between Innovation, Inclusivity and Prosperity for All (Research Paper 221, 15 July 2025)

By Daniel Uribe Terán

The intensifying global race in Artificial Intelligence (AI) forces nations to walk a tightrope, balancing the drive for rapid innovation against the imperatives of fairness, safety and inclusivity. This tension is reflected in recent high-level international summits and the diverging regulatory paradigms emerging globally, most notably between the market-driven, largely deregulatory approach of the United States and the human-centric, risk-based model favoured by the European Union. Such divergence contributes to a fragmented governance landscape, posing significant challenges for developing countries, which face the risk of marginalisation due to disparities in infrastructure, resources, and technical capacity. Some of these countries have put in place proactive strategies as they endeavour to walk the tightrope between innovation and fairness in the unfolding AI era.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-221-15-july-2025/

Designing an Independent Panel on Evidence for Action on Antimicrobial Resistance: Lessons from Selected Bodies in Global Health, Climate Change and Biodiversity (Research Paper 222, 16 July 2025)

By Viviana Munoz Tellez and Francesca Chiara

This paper proposes a framework for designing an Independent Panel on Evidence for Action on Antimicrobial Resistance (IPEA), responding to the 2025 United Nations General Assembly mandate. Through a comparative analysis of selected international scientific advisory bodies, we identify the panel's mandate as the foundational element that will critically shape its composition, scope, deliverables, and governance structure. Our framework addresses key domains of credibility, scientific integrity, authority, policy relevance, and sustainability while establishing equity as a fundamental design principle—not merely ensuring low and middle-income country (LMIC) participation but designing the IPEA to address existing imbalances in antimicrobial resistance (AMR) evidence production and dissemination. We analyse potential mandate options, from evidence synthesis to policy recommendations, highlighting the importance of defining a unique and complementary role for IPEA within the existing AMR governance landscape to avoid duplication and maximize impact on global AMR response.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-222-16-july-2025/

Community Based Surveillance for AMR Monitoring: Significance, Requirements and Feasibility in LMICS Biodiversity (Research Paper 223, 22 July 2025)

By Afreenish Amir

Community based surveillance, in addition to clinical antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance, plays an essential role in AMR and antimicrobial use trend monitoring. Various community-based AMR surveillance studies to monitor trends in AMR and use of antimicrobials have been conducted and shown its potential to facilitate evidence-based interventions and policy making for control of AMR. Many low and middle income countries (LMICs) lack the necessary systems and resources to establish effective surveillance systems. Specifically, the surveillance capacity at hospitals and other health facilities is limited, and the overall human resource capacity for community-level data collection, analysis, and multi-sectoral coordination is severely constrained. Prior to planning for community based AMR surveillance, a country should have established mechanisms to run the system efficiently, including strong governance and regulations, surveillance infrastructure, laboratory capacities, skilled human resources, data collection and management, funding and sustainability.

The World Health Organization and quadripartite partners have recommended advancing community based AMR surveillance in LMICs, and integrated AMR surveillance combining information from humans, animals and ecosystems, which seems a challenge in the current situation. Considering the significant gaps in systems, resources, and capacities, it is important to prioritize strengthening the country's core capacities and addressing the underlying gaps in healthcare systems. Efforts should focus on enhancing the country's core capacities, systems, and technical requirements while exploring the potential of advancing selective community based AMR surveillance interventions and systems in the future.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-223-22-july-2025/

Reflections on Global Development in Times of Crisis: Arguments in Favour of an Alternate Development Paradigm (Research Paper 224, 18 August 2025)

By K. Seeta Prabhu

The multiple interlinked and interacting crises that the world faces today is of unprecedented range and magnitude, halting progress and causing even a reversal in crucial Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) relating to well-being. The current situation of an *unequal, unstable and unsustainable world* that is fragile and leaves people vulnerable on multiple counts, is due to the policy decisions taken

by national governments since the post second World War period that gave priority to economic growth and neglected both intra and inter-generational distributional issues. Economic growth was considered the end instead of the means it was meant to be and 'being well-off' was equated with 'well- being'. The tendency to adopt a 'Business as Usual' approach is not an option as empirical analysis indicates that such an approach would lead to *global warming that is 3–5 degrees Celsius above pre–industrial levels,* which threatens the very existence of the planet. Earlier attempts at reorienting the current development paradigm towards equity and sustainability have not been successful, as exemplified by vaccine distribution during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the limited success of concepts such as inclusive growth and green growth. *Often, the elements infusing equity have been add-ons to an inequitable growth process and are more in the nature of token gestures rather than serious efforts at change.*

The combined human development and Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) approach that is proposed in this paper is promising as it *has the ethical values of equity and sustainability at its core*, propagates *the notion of the 'common good'* and thereby fosters responsible consumption and production. It is also people-centric and builds on indigenous knowledge and agency. The ushering in of this transformational development paradigm will require the forging of a new social contract between the State and Society. Additionally, the developed countries must recognise their responsibility towards the environment and extend support and cooperation to developing countries in the pursuit of a common agenda of attaining a more equal and sustainable world. Increased flow of financial resources to developing countries as well as devising new financing mechanisms enhancing the equity and efficiency dimensions of financing for human development so as to accelerate progress on the SDGs will also be of paramount importance.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-224-18-august-2025/

Seven Decades After Bandung: The evolving landscape for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (Research Paper 225, 12 September 2025)

By Danish

Seven decades after the landmark Asian-African Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia, its outcomes and principles continue to guide South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC) among the nations of the global South. Despite the current challenges facing global governance, multilateralism and international development cooperation, the Bandung Principles or *Dasa sila* remain an effective framework for developing countries to work collectively towards achieving peace, economic growth and sustainable development, and creating a democratic and equitable global order fit for the current moment which ensures that no one is left behind. Highlighting the legacy and continued relevance of the Spirit of Bandung for developing countries, this paper looks at some of the important elements that are contributing to the changing landscape for SSTrC; its opportunities, challenges and future trajectories; and how SSTrC could be strengthened at the national, regional and multilateral level for realizing sustainable development in the global South.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-225-12-september-2025/

The Taxation of the Digital Economy in Practice: Digital Services Taxes and Other Measures (Research Paper 226, 12 November 2025)

By Natalia Quiñones, Anchal Khandelwal, Oluwole Olushola Oni, Maryam Maiyaki, Doris Malgwi, Ezekiel Swema, Nickson Omondi, Ivy Watti, Dinesh Thapa, Anne Wanyagathi Maina & Kolawole Omole

Digital businesses continue to grow and generate substantial revenue in market jurisdictions without maintaining a physical presence. They mainly rely on intangibles, user data and user engagement. International tax rules have not kept pace with these developments, leaving many jurisdictions unable to tax digital economic activity effectively. In response, countries have introduced national measures, such as Digital Services Taxes (DSTs), equalisation levies, and Significant Economic Presence (SEP) taxes, while continuing to engage in multilateral efforts. This paper examines how countries have implemented such measures. The study applies structured case studies of Colombia, India, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, and Tanzania. It analyzes the countries' legal frameworks, administrative practices,

and revenue outcomes, while also identifying shared features and key differences in implementation approaches. The paper explores the conceptual foundations and theoretical justifications for taxing digital revenues at source, highlighting the limitations of current profit allocation rules that overlook the role of the market. Drawing from these country experiences, the study develops a peer learning framework based on emerging best practices while recognizing the challenges in implementation. The study then proposes pathways for harmonizing digital tax measures and outlines essential design elements to inform the development of the early protocol on the taxation of cross border services (which includes digital services) under the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-226-12-november-2025/

Participation of South Centre Member Countries in the WHO GLASS: Progress and Gaps in AMR Surveillance and Stewardship Efforts (Research Paper 227, 20 November 2025)

By Dr. Rasha Abdelsalam Elshenawy

This study highlights antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance challenges in LMICs, focusing on the 55 South Centre Member States' enrolment in the WHO Global Antimicrobial Resistance and Use Surveillance System (GLASS). Despite progress since its 2016 launch, significant gaps persist: only 60 percent of South Centre Member States report AMR surveillance to GLASS, and just 38 percent report antimicrobial use (AMU) data to GLASS. The COVID-19 pandemic substantially disrupted surveillance activities, with rates declining from 2020-2021 compared to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. Digital infrastructure, such as mobile reporting tools, cloud-based systems, and interactive dashboards, offers significant opportunities to strengthen AMR surveillance in resource-limited settings. The study recommends a holistic and phased approach for South Centre Member States, including developing integrated national AMR action plans with realistic implementation timelines, investing in laboratory and workforce development, establishing interoperable digital infrastructure, and strengthening regional collaboration mechanisms. By systematically addressing core surveillance challenges while strategically incorporating digital innovations where appropriate, countries can develop resilient monitoring systems that support effective stewardship, protect national populations, and contribute to global health security by preserving antimicrobial effectiveness for future generations.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-227-20-november-2025/

UN Human Rights Council Resolutions on Access to Medicines and the Use of TRIPS Flexibilities: A Review (Research Paper 228, 14 January 2026)

By Nirmalya Syam

This paper reviews almost twenty years of the United Nations Human Rights Council's (UNHRC) work on access to medicines. The UNHRC has repeatedly framed access to medicines as part of the right to health and has urged States to rely on flexibilities in the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to make essential treatments more affordable. Although the UNHRC has strengthened the human rights foundation for using such flexibilities, its resolutions have produced little change on the ground. The commitments embodied in the UNHRC resolutions stay broad and non-binding, leaving the deep structural barriers in place, including restrictive intellectual property (IP) clauses in trade deals, pressure from powerful States, limited technical and manufacturing capacity, and weak policy coordination within governments. Moreover, several recent resolutions reaffirm the value of IP protection, which creates tension that dilutes the Council's support for the wider use of TRIPS flexibilities. The paper finds that the main gap between global human rights commitments and national action on advancing access to medicines reflects political choices and structural barriers, and concludes by calling for stronger mandates for States to review access barriers during the Universal Periodic Review, increased technical assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, more civil society participation, national right-to-health action plans, and systematic monitoring of TRIPS implementation.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-228-14-january-2026/

Towards a Development-Oriented TRIPS Review Under Article 71.1 (Research Paper 229, 19 January 2026)

By Nirmalya Syam

This paper calls for a comprehensive, development-focused review of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) under Article 71.1, a process that has been mandated but never carried out. It critiques the narrow, compliance-driven approach favored by developed countries, which risks sidelining the broader developmental objectives enshrined in Articles 7 and 8 and reaffirmed by the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health. Through a detailed analysis of the political context, procedural history, and legal mandates, the paper argues that the TRIPS review should center on the real-world impact of the Agreement on developing countries—particularly in areas such as public health, access to medicines, technology transfer, and innovation capacity. It proposes an impact assessment framework grounded in empirical indicators to evaluate how TRIPS has influenced public welfare, policy space, and economic development. Ultimately, the paper urges the World Trade organization (WTO) to fulfill its long-overdue obligation to reassess TRIPS not as a compliance checklist but as a living instrument that must align with global equity and development goals.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-229-19-january-2026/

The Golden Flower and the Blue Diamond: From Patent Law to Biodiversity Regimes and Guidelines (Research Paper 230, 29 January 2026)

By Leïla Mamoni

In 2010, at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), an Intergovernmental Committee started its negotiations that notably aim at protecting traditional knowledge from fraudulent patents. On that same year, French company Chanel Parfums Beauté committed itself to combatting this monopolization that encroaches on the public domain. With a limited scope, this research paper examines this initiative and looks into two patent applications that the company withdrew. It also raises questions pertaining to the biodiversity regime or guidelines of the countries where the bioprospection was conducted, namely India and Madagascar. While the adoption of the WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge marks a significant step, both examples remind us of the difficulty of establishing a fraudulent intent, as provided for in the treaty. To address that difficult task, this paper suggests that countries with limited administrative capacities may consider the possibility of relying on South-South cooperation.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-230-29-january-2026/

AI and the Global South: Impacts, Opportunities, and Policy Approaches (Research Paper 231, 19 February 2026)

By Danish

Artificial intelligence (AI) is set to transform economies and societies worldwide, with significant implications for people and the planet. For developing nations, AI will bring both transformative benefits and risks, requiring a proactive approach to its regulation that builds safeguards while promoting innovation. This paper therefore provides an assessment of the potential multidimensional impacts of AI on the people and countries of the global South, particularly on their digital transformation, labour and industrial development.

The paper further emphasises the need for developing nations to consider flexible policy frameworks for AI governance, tailored to their own unique needs, priorities, and capacities. Emphasising the importance of multistakeholder engagement, such as through opportunities provided by the India-AI

Impact Summit, the paper underscores the need for effective international cooperation to build safe, trustworthy AI that promotes sustainable development.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-231-19-february-2026/

Addressing Barriers to Accessing Monoclonal Antibodies (mAbs) in Developing Countries: Challenges and Potential Solutions (Research Paper 232, 9 April 2026)

By Nirmalya Syam

Monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) have revolutionized treatment in oncology, autoimmune disorders, and infectious diseases due to their high specificity and efficacy. However, access to mAbs in developing countries remains severely limited due to high costs, market concentration in high-income regions, regulatory hurdles, and intellectual property barriers. Despite the potential of biosimilars to enhance affordability, their availability remains restricted due to expensive development processes, patent thickets, and complex regulatory requirements. The dominance of multinational pharmaceutical companies in the market further restricts competition, delaying biosimilar approvals and preventing price reductions. Additionally, regulatory agencies in developing countries often lack the resources to expedite biosimilar approvals, further exacerbating delays in access.

Policy interventions such as improved regulatory harmonization, stricter patent examination guidelines, and expanded public investment in mAb production are necessary to address these barriers. The adoption of the revised 2022 WHO Similar Biotherapeutic Products (SBP) Guidelines could streamline biosimilar approval by reducing unnecessary comparative clinical trials. Moreover, technology transfer initiatives and market-shaping incentives, including compulsory licensing, could help lower costs and accelerate the availability of mAbs in underserved regions.

By implementing these strategies, developing countries can bridge the access gap, ensuring that lifesaving mAb therapies reach the patients who need them most. A coordinated global effort involving policymakers, regulators, and industry stakeholders is essential to establishing a sustainable and equitable mAb supply chain.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-232-9-april-2026/

Access to Medicines and Intellectual Property: taking advantage of TRIPS flexibilities for post-COVID-19 resilience in Africa (Research Paper 233, 14 April 2026)

By Ismaelline Eba Nguema

The call by India and South Africa for the provisional lifting of patents on pharmaceutical products has had the merit of putting the issue of access to medicines and public health back on the agenda. However, the difficulty of reconciling access to medicines and intellectual property has many factors which cannot be reduced solely to the commitments of WTO member states. A more in-depth analysis reveals the intrinsic limitations of some of its members. These include the weakness of the legislative and regulatory framework in some countries, such as those on the African continent. Consequently, the aim of this article is to demonstrate that effective use of the flexibilities in the TRIPS Agreement is only possible if African countries equip themselves with an appropriate legal framework, in addition to the judicial institutions that are supposed to guarantee the effectiveness of the standards adopted. The methodology used consisted of an exegesis of various documents, including articles, working documents of the TRIPS Council, declarations and resolutions of various bodies, as well as the national case law of certain WTO members, etc. This method led us to conclude that the compatibility between access to medicines and intellectual property is caught between human rights and economic interests. However, for the TRIPS flexibilities to be fully utilized by African countries, they would benefit from reforming their legal frameworks to take advantage of the flexibilities in the TRIPS Agreement.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-233-14-april-2026/

The Digital Trade Data Heist: Trade Agreement Limits on Data Transfer and Storage Regulation Could Undercut Data Governance (Research Paper 234, 29 May 2026)

By Daniel Rangel, Jai Vipra, and Lori Wallach

Governments worldwide are increasingly regulating how data is collected, transferred and stored to advance public interest objectives, including privacy, national security, taxation of the digital economy, and competition in the emerging artificial intelligence (AI) field. However, recent "digital trade" rules in international agreements — particularly those modeled on the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) — restrict governments' ability to regulate cross-border data flows or to require local data storage. This paper analyzes the expanding divergence between domestic data-governance measures and binding trade commitments. It evaluates three major models of digital trade rules (USMCA, Mercosur (*Mercado Común del Sur*), and European Union–New Zealand) and demonstrates that the USMCA framework imposes the most sweeping constraints and the weakest exceptions. The analysis also shows that such trade rules may hinder broader regulatory efforts related to taxation and AI accountability.

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-234-29-may-2026/

La fiscalité de l'économie numérique en pratique : les taxes sur les services numériques et autres mesures (Document de Recherche 226, 12 novembre 2025)

Par Natalia Quiñones, Anchal Khandelwal, Oluwole Olushola Oni, Maryam Maiyaki, Doris Malgwi, Ezekiel Swema, Nickson Omondi, Ivy Watti, Dinesh Thapa, Anne Wanyagathi Maina et Kolawole Omole

Les entreprises numériques continuent de se développer et de générer des revenus substantiels dans les juridictions du marché sans y maintenir de présence physique. Elles s'appuient principalement sur des actifs incorporels, les données des utilisateurs et leur engagement. Les règles fiscales internationales n'ont pas suivi le rythme de ces évolutions, laissant de nombreuses juridictions dans l'incapacité de taxer efficacement l'activité économique numérique. En réponse, certains pays ont mis en place des mesures nationales, telles que les taxes sur les services numériques (TSN), les prélèvements d'égalisation et les taxes sur la présence économique significative (SEP), tout en poursuivant leurs efforts multilatéraux. Le présent document examine la manière dont les pays ont mis en œuvre ces mesures. L'étude s'appuie sur des études de cas structurées portant sur la Colombie, l'Inde, le Kenya, le Népal, le Nigeria et la Tanzanie. Elle analyse les cadres juridiques, les pratiques administratives et les résultats en matière de recettes de ces pays, tout en identifiant les caractéristiques communes et les principales différences dans les approches de mise en œuvre. Le document explore les fondements conceptuels et les justifications théoriques de l'imposition des revenus numériques à la source, en soulignant les limites des règles actuelles de répartition des bénéfices qui négligent le rôle du marché. S'appuyant sur ces expériences nationales, l'étude élabore un cadre d'apprentissage par les pairs fondé sur les meilleures pratiques émergentes, tout en reconnaissant les défis liés à la mise en œuvre. L'étude propose ensuite des pistes pour harmoniser les mesures fiscales numériques et décrit les éléments de conception essentiels pour éclairer l'élaboration du premier protocole sur la fiscalité des services transfrontaliers (qui inclut les services numériques) dans le cadre de la Convention-cadre des Nations Unies sur la coopération fiscale internationale.

https://www.southcentre.int/document-de-recherche-226-12-novembre-2025/

La fiscalidad de la economía digital en la práctica: Impuestos sobre los servicios digitales y otras medidas (Documento de investigación 226, 12 de noviembre de 2025)

Por Natalia Quiñones, Anchal Khandelwal, Oluwole Olushola Oni, Maryam Maiyaki, Doris Malgwi, Ezekiel Swema, Nickson Omondi, Ivy Watti, Dinesh Thapa, Anne Wanyagathi Maina y Kolawole Omole

Las empresas digitales siguen creciendo y generando ingresos sustanciales en jurisdicciones de mercado sin mantener una presencia física. Dependen principalmente de los activos intangibles, los

datos de usuarios y la interacción de los usuarios. Las normas fiscales internacionales no han seguido el ritmo de estos avances, lo que ha dejado a muchas jurisdicciones sin la capacidad de gravar eficazmente la actividad económica digital. En respuesta, varios países han introducido medidas nacionales, como los Impuestos sobre Servicios Digitales (ISD), los gravámenes de compensación y los impuestos sobre Presencia Económica Significativa (PES), al tiempo que continúan participando en iniciativas multilaterales. Este documento examina cómo los países han aplicado estas medidas. El estudio abarca casos prácticos estructurados de Colombia, India, Kenia, Nepal, Nigeria y Tanzania. Analiza los marcos jurídicos, las prácticas administrativas y los resultados en materia de recaudación de estos países, además de identificar características comunes y principales diferencias en los enfoques de implementación. El documento explora los fundamentos conceptuales y las justificaciones teóricas para gravar los ingresos digitales en el país de la fuentela fuente, destacando las limitaciones de las normas actuales de asignación de beneficios que pasan por alto el papel del mercado. A partir de las experiencias de estos países, el estudio desarrolla un marco de aprendizaje entre pares basado en las mejores prácticas emergentes, reconociendo al mismo tiempo los desafíos en la implementación. Finalmente, el estudio propone vías para armonizar las medidas fiscales digitales y describe los elementos esenciales de diseño que deben tenerse en cuenta en la elaboración del protocolo inicial sobre la fiscalidad de los servicios transfronterizos (incluidos los servicios digitales) en el marco de la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre Cooperación Internacional en Materia Tributaria.

https://www.southcentre.int/documento-de-investigacion-226-12-de-noviembre-de-2025/

A tributação da economia digital na prática: Impostos sobre os serviços digitais e outras medidas (Artigo de investigação 226, 12 de novembro de 2025)

Por Natalia Quiñones, Anchal Khandelwal, Oluwole Olushola Oni, Maryam Maiyaki, Doris Malgwi, Ezekiel Swema, Nickson Omondi, Ivy Watti, Dinesh Thapa, Anne Wanyagathi Maina e Kolawole Omole

As empresas digitais continuam a crescer e a gerar receitas substanciais em jurisdições de mercado sem manter uma presença física. Baseiam-se principalmente em ativos intangíveis, dados de utilizadores e envolvimento dos utilizadores. As regras fiscais internacionais não acompanharam estes desenvolvimentos, deixando muitas jurisdições incapazes de tributar eficazmente a atividade económica digital. Em resposta, os países introduziram medidas nacionais, tais como os Impostos sobre Serviços Digitais (DST), as taxas de equalização e os impostos sobre a Presença Económica Significativa (SEP), continuando simultaneamente a envolver-se em esforços multilaterais. Este artigo examina a forma como os países implementaram tais medidas. O estudo aplica estudos de caso estruturados da Colômbia, Índia, Quénia, Nepal, Nigéria e Tanzânia. Analisa os quadros jurídicos, as práticas administrativas e os resultados em termos de receitas dos países, identificando simultaneamente características comuns e diferenças fundamentais nas abordagens de implementação. O artigo explora os fundamentos conceptuais e as justificações teóricas para tributar as receitas digitais na fonte, destacando as limitações das atuais regras de repartição de lucros que ignoram o papel do mercado. Com base nas experiências destes países, o estudo desenvolve um quadro de aprendizagem entre pares assente nas melhores práticas emergentes, reconhecendo simultaneamente os desafios da implementação. O estudo propõe, em seguida, vias para a harmonização das medidas fiscais digitais e delineia elementos essenciais de conceção para informar o desenvolvimento do protocolo preliminar sobre a tributação de serviços transfronteiriços (que inclui serviços digitais) ao abrigo da Convenção-Quadro das Nações Unidas sobre Cooperação Fiscal Internacional.

https://www.southcentre.int/artigo-de-investigacao-226-12-de-novembro-de-2025/

فرض الضرائب على الاقتصاد الرقمي في الممارسة العملية: ضرائب الخدمات الرقمية والتدابير الأخرى
(Research Paper 226 (Arabic), 12 November 2025)

إعداد: ناتاليا كينونيس، أنشال خاندلوال، أولوول أولوشولا أوني، مريم ماياكي، دوريس مالغوي، إيزيكيل سويما، نيكسون أوموندي، آيفي واتي، دينيش ثابا، آن وانياجاثي ماينا، وكولاوول أومولي

https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-226-arabic-12-november-2025/

POLICY BRIEFS

The WIPO Development Agenda: Progress and Challenges in 2025 (Policy Brief 134, 28 January 2025)

By Nirmalya Syam

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Development Agenda (DA), adopted in 2007, seeks to align intellectual property (IP) policies with the development priorities of member States. Enduring challenges persist despite some progress including the adoption of treaties to facilitate access to copyright protected works for visually impaired and print disabled persons, and the recent treaty on IP, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, and the adoption of several projects for implementing different DA recommendations. DA projects, however, have had limited impact on mainstreaming a development orientation in WIPO, there is limited promotion of use of IP flexibilities for development, and WIPO's technical assistance continues to lack a development orientation. There is also a sustained absence of consideration and reporting of development related issues across WIPO bodies. Divergent interpretations of "development", weak coordination and monitoring systems, and governance inequities have hindered the DA's transformative potential. This brief examines these issues and advances recommendations to address the challenges to establish an effective DA.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-134-28-january-2025/

The Riyadh Design Law Treaty: Harmonizing Global Design Procedures with Mixed Implications (Policy Brief 135, 20 February 2025)

By Nirmalya Syam

The Riyadh Design Law Treaty (DLT), adopted on November 22, 2024, aims to harmonize and simplify the global registration procedures for industrial designs. By standardizing procedural requirements across jurisdictions, the treaty seeks to create a more predictable and accessible system for designers, particularly benefiting small-scale designers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). However, the DLT can have implications for developing countries, as many lack significant design-intensive industries. Key provisions in the DLT include a 12-month grace period, deferred publication, divisional applications, and the option to require disclosures regarding traditional knowledge and cultural expressions used in a design. While the treaty enhances global design protection, concerns persist regarding its impact on local designers, market competition, and procedural fairness. The immediate advantages of the DLT for developing countries are limited, highlighting the need for continued technical assistance and capacity-building efforts.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-135-20-february-2025/

Lessons from COVID-19: Strengthening Antimicrobial Stewardship Prior and During Pandemics (Policy Brief 136, 25 February 2025)

By Dr Rasha Abdelsalam Elshenawy

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a complex impact on the silent pandemic of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). While increased antibiotic misuse and disrupted antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) programs exacerbated AMR in some settings, heightened awareness and improved infection prevention measures implemented to control COVID-19 provided valuable lessons on sustaining these practices in the fight against AMR. This brief highlights lessons learned from the pandemic, such as the importance of access to antimicrobials and the urgent need for resilient and sustainable AMS integrated into pandemic preparedness, strengthening infection prevention and surveillance systems, enhancing access and use of diagnostics, and promoting a One Health approach. By leveraging these lessons, policymakers can build more resilient health systems, maintain the effectiveness of antimicrobials and be better prepared for future pandemics, particularly in developing countries. Immediate action is essential to protect public health and combat AMR effectively.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-136-25-february-2025/

Leveraging the Antimicrobial Resistance Declarations of 2024 to Reduce the Burden of Drug-Resistant Infections (Policy Brief 137, 14 March 2025)

By Afreenish Amir & Viviana Munoz Tellez

In 2024, two significant events highlighted the global concern about antimicrobial resistance (AMR). AMR is a pressing global health issue, imperiling public health, economic stability, and societal well-being. The 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in its special session on AMR and the 4th Ministerial Meeting on AMR have emphasized the need for collective action and international cooperation to mitigate the impact of AMR. The UNGA Declaration has set some targets including reducing global deaths associated with bacterial AMR by 10% by 2030 and enhancing the antimicrobial usage from the World Health Organization (WHO) AWaRe (Access, Watch, Reserve) Access category to 70% by 2030. Accomplishing these targets requires enhancing the inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral collaboration within countries, and the development of strategies reflected in national action plans (NAPs) tailored to each country's unique dynamics. There are several important commitments made that now need to be implemented, including increased support to countries to develop funded NAPs, the establishment of an Independent Panel on Evidence for Action against AMR, capacity building for local manufacturing of vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and essential supplies, developing a new Global Action Plan on AMR by 2026 with a focus on a people centered approach, and advancing cross-sectoral behavioral change interventions. However, these fell short of ambition, particularly in key areas such as financing, reduction of misuse and overuse of antimicrobials in human and animal health and the environment as a vector for AMR. This Policy Brief reviews the new commitments on AMR made in 2024 under the light of current challenges in developing countries and advances recommendations to accelerate progress on AMR.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-137-14-march-2025/

Will the Global Digital Compact ensure an equitable future for Developing Countries? (Policy Brief 138, 27 March 2025)

By Daniel Uribe

The Global Digital Compact (GDC), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2024, aims to establish a framework for equitable digital transformation, particularly for developing countries. While the GDC acknowledges the importance of human rights, bridging the digital divide, and ensuring a just transition, it faces significant challenges in addressing structural inequalities and implementing robust accountability mechanisms. This paper examines the GDC's potential to foster an inclusive digital future, highlighting the necessity of addressing fundamental rights, promoting business accountability through a legally binding instrument, and recognising the interconnectedness of digital inclusion with access to essential resources like energy, education, and healthcare.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-138-27-march-2025/

Advancing Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health and Inequalities in Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health: Highlights from the 156th Meeting of the World Health Organization's Executive Board (Policy Brief 139, 23 April 2025)

By Bianca Carvalho, Viviana Munoz Tellez

This policy brief examines discussions from the WHO's 156th Executive Board meeting (February 2025) on the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health. The Director-General reported many countries falling behind on SDG targets for maternal and child mortality, with persistent inequalities in healthcare access. Member States emphasized the urgent need to accelerate progress through universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and rights,

including the right to make informed decisions about reproduction free from discrimination, coercion, and violence. Recommendations focused on priorities for updating the Global Strategy and increasing investments. Two resolutions were advanced: one on regulating digital marketing of breast-milk substitutes (proposed by Brazil and Mexico) and another on World Prematurity Day (proposed by Tanzania). These will be considered for adoption by the World Health Assembly in May 2025.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-139-23-april-2025/

Global Digital Compact: Charting a New Era in Digital Governance? (Policy Brief 140, 30 April 2025)

By Aishwarya Narayanan

The Global Digital Compact, adopted during the Summit of the Future in September 2024, is the first truly multilateral instrument which addresses issues relating to global digital governance in a comprehensive and systematic manner. While this is a remarkable step forward in terms of increasing representation, enhancing coordination and addressing fragmentation in digital governance, consensus was difficult to achieve and there remains considerable confusion around its interplay with existing initiatives and mechanisms within the United Nations system. Despite implementation efforts already being underway, its true impact and potential to bridge digital divides will only be revealed in the time to come.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-140-30-april-2025/

Scaling Up the Health Response to Climate Change: Highlights from the World Health Organization Executive Board's 156th Meeting on the Global Action Plan on Climate Change and Health (Policy Brief 141, 15 May 2025)

By Bianca Carvalho

The Executive Board of the World Health Organization (WHO), during its 156th meeting held from 3-11 February 2025, discussed a draft Global Action Plan on Climate Change and Health (2025 – 2028) (EB156/40). This policy brief explains the content of the draft Global Action Plan and summarises the feedback provided by Member States during the Executive Board meeting.

Member States at the 156th WHO Executive Board meeting made recommendations for the Global Action Plan, including to ensure that equity remains central, to foster collaboration across sectors, and to enhance support mechanisms—both technical and financial—for developing countries addressing the intersection of climate change and health challenges. Member States also called for more consultations before the draft Global Action Plan is considered for adoption at the 78th World Health Assembly in May 2025.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-141-15-may-2025/

Education & Learning and the Global Digital Compact (Policy Brief 142, 22 May 2025)

By Kishore Singh

The Global Digital Compact, annexed to the Pact for the Future, adopted by the international community at the United Nations Summit of the Future in September 2024, is an ambitious move by the international community to leverage digital technologies for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It embodies a series of decisions with political commitments for action, with a cautious approach, which relate *ipso facto* to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, with a focus on skills development.

Salient features of the Global Digital Compact, notably, a human-centric approach to the life cycle of digital and emerging technologies, along with human oversight of technology, treating digital as a

common good, the importance accorded to “equitable digital environment for all” and the need for common frameworks and standards for digital public infrastructure and services, etc., have far reaching implications for education and learning.

As a follow up to the Global Digital Compact, it is incumbent upon governments to recalibrate education and learning. This can stimulate policy measures for National Skills Development Strategies. In tune with the principles and policy directions in the Global Digital Compact, this can go a long way in tackling some key issues and challenges with which the education system is beset today. The creation of an equitable learning environment, envisaged by the Global Digital Compact, can be pivotal for bridging a deeply entrenched digital divide. The principle of making the digital subservient to a public good can be a bulwark against forces of privatisation and reverse the trend of flourishing ‘edu-business’, reinforced by ‘edu-tech’. This is invaluable for preserving education and learning as a public good. Similarly, it would be salutary if pursuant to the human-centric approach to technologies embraced by the Global Digital Compact, the risks that digital technologies carry, their pitfalls and perils and their dehumanizing consequences in education are fully addressed. While fostering a humanistic mission of education and learning, such action measures necessitate setting limits to digital technologies which are supplanting the education system.

High expectations placed by governments on international cooperation and multistate partnerships, especially for financial and technical support to developing countries, call for a prudent stance, bearing in mind a rather discouraging experience in this respect.

The challenges in operationalizing the Global Digital Compact are formidable. They require resolute action by governments for living up to their commitments, supported by necessary resources and robust public policies based upon the norms and principles established by the Compact.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-142-22-may-2025/

Impact of Global Trade Tensions on Developing Countries: How to respond to a reset of the global economic system (Policy Brief 143, 28 May 2025)

By Yuefen Li

The recent unilateral, significant and broad-ranging tariff hikes by the new United States administration have triggered unprecedented trade tension in the world and led to significant downward revisions of the world’s economic and trade growth projections for 2025 and beyond. The main aims of the U.S.’ trade policies are complex and strategic, not only about reducing the trade and fiscal deficits, but also addressing the dollar overvaluation problem, “reconfigur(ing) the global trading and financial systems to America’s benefit”, promoting economic “fairness” and “making America great again”. As what has frequently happened before, the poor countries are disproportionally affected by the negative repercussions of these policies, owing to their financial and capacity constraints and weaknesses to absorb the impact. This short paper analyses through which channels and to what degree trade tension would introduce economic, financial and political stability risks for developing countries, particularly in financially distressed developing countries. A few policy recommendations are also briefly mentioned.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-143-28-may-2025/

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the Context of International Human Rights (Policy Brief 144, 18 June 2025)

By Carlos Correa and Daniel Uribe

This policy brief examines the growing recognition of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) within the framework of international human rights law. It traces the evolution of this consensus through key United Nations (UN) General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions, foundational documents like the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action, and the interpretative work of human rights treaty bodies.

These instruments increasingly affirm that SRHR are an integral component of the right to health and are essential for gender equality. However, this brief also highlights the challenges these common efforts face in line with other views, which prioritise national sovereignty in determining policies on reproductive health. The analysis highlights the tension between the evolving international human rights framework and state-centric approaches, concluding with the imperative for ongoing dialogue to solidify and implement SRHR as universal, inalienable human rights.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-144-18-june-2025/

History of the Negotiations of the TRIPS Agreement Rights (Policy Brief 145, 5 September 2025)

By Carlos Correa

When the currently developed countries started their industrialization process, the intellectual property system was very flexible and allowed them to industrialize based on imitation, as it was notably the case of the United States. The international intellectual property system evolved since the end of the XIX Century based on a number of conventions on which the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) was later built on. Developing countries resisted the incorporation into the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of broad disciplines on intellectual property, as they were conscious that they were disadvantaged in terms of science and technology and that a new agreement, with a mechanism to enforce its rules, would freeze the comparative advantages that developed countries enjoyed. Faced with the threat of not getting concessions in agriculture and textiles -that were crucial for their economies- they were finally forced to enter into negotiations of an Agreement, the terms of which were essentially dictated by developed countries. Coercion rather than negotiations among equal partners seems to explain the final adoption of this Agreement.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-145-5-september-2025/

Taking Forward Digital Public Infrastructure for the Global South (Policy Brief 146, 29 September 2025)

By Danish

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) has received significant attention for its role in promoting inclusive and effective digital transformation, particularly in the countries of the global South. Elevated onto the global agenda under India's Group of Twenty (G20) Presidency in 2023, DPIs are now considered as key digital solutions for providing essential services like digital identity, financial inclusion, and access to e-governance platforms. Yet, realizing the full potential of DPI in developing countries requires building a policy and regulatory framework that fosters trust, protects rights and addresses persistent digital divides. Robust institutions and governance mechanisms are equally essential to ensure that DPI adoption is inclusive, equitable and aligned to national priorities.

This paper provides a snapshot of the recent policy and regulatory developments on DPI, as well as the relevant stakeholders at the national and international levels. It then considers the challenges of the digital divide for developing countries and briefly presents some national experiences on the use of DPIs for increasing financial inclusion and promoting e-governance. The paper concludes by offering some recommendations to fully harness the benefits of DPI for accelerating sustainable development and digital transformation in the countries of the global South.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-146-29-september-2025/

Advancing Responsible Foreign Investment through a Legally Binding Instrument on Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises (Investment Policy Brief 27, 23 October 2025)

By Daniel Uribe Terán

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) presents a complex dynamic, offering potential economic growth while posing significant risks of human rights abuses and environmental degradation. This policy brief considers that current voluntary frameworks, such as Economic, Social, and Governance (ESG) and voluntary due diligence standards, are insufficient to protect human rights, as they primarily focus on mitigating investor financial risk rather than preventing actual harm. Furthermore, the international investment regime, particularly the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism, systemically undermines States' sovereign right to regulate in the public interest. ISDS cases often penalise governments for enacting environmental, labour, and human rights protections, creating a "regulatory chill" that prioritises corporate profits over social welfare. The proposed Legally Binding Instrument (LBI) on business and human rights is presented as a necessary response to establish mandatory, enforceable obligations for corporations. This includes robust Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) and legal liability mechanisms, thereby rebalancing the system to ensure corporate accountability and align investment with sustainable development goals.

https://www.southcentre.int/investment-policy-brief-27-23-october-2025/

Reeling Towards Termination: Assessing the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and the Future of Fisheries Disciplines South (Policy Brief 147, 24 October 2025)

By Vahini Naidu

The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS, "Fish 1") entered into force on 15 September 2025, introducing new disciplines on subsidies linked to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, overfished stocks, and certain high seas activities. While celebrated as a landmark achievement, the Agreement is partial in scope, omitting the broader category of capacity-enhancing subsidies that drive overcapacity and fish stock depletion. Its obligations rely on national determinations and extensive notifications that may prove burdensome for developing Members while allowing major subsidisers to retain flexibility. The unprecedented termination clause in Article 12 ties the Agreement's survival to the adoption of additional "comprehensive disciplines," underscoring both the fragility of the current outcome and the need for continued negotiations. The experience of Fish 1 reveals significant lessons for the proposed WTO reform, including the importance of reviewable and time-bound rules, the risks of imbalanced sustainability provisions, and the institutional weaknesses of restricted negotiating processes.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-147-24-october-2025/

The Constitutional Shield: How Colombia's Judiciary Shapes Investment Treaties Through Joint Interpretation Enterprises (Investment Policy Brief 28, 6 November 2025)

By Daniel Uribe Teran

This policy brief examines an innovative judicial approach by the Colombian Constitutional Court in response to an increase in investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) claims. The Court introduced a doctrine called 'conditional constitutionality' (*exequibilidad condicionada*), which mandates the executive to negotiate binding joint interpretative declarations prior to ratifying an International Investment Agreement (IIA). This process aims to clarify ambiguous language and ensure that IIA provisions align with constitutional principles, particularly concerning the sovereign right to regulate and the protection of human and environmental rights.

The analysis examines the "constitutional shield" doctrine established by this domestic mechanism, emphasising its legal basis in Article 31.3(a) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. However, it highlights a significant discrepancy: the uncertain acknowledgement of these subsequent agreements within the international investment arbitration framework. The brief notes that arbitral tribunals, which often function as autonomous legal systems, may not consistently respect such domestic constitutional provisions. This creates ongoing tension between national sovereignty and arbitral independence. The policy brief concludes by addressing the limitations of relying solely on domestic solutions and calls for systemic reforms at the international level, such as within the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Working Group III.

https://www.southcentre.int/investment-policy-brief-28-6-november-2025/

Leveraging the ICJ Opinion to Secure a Just Climate Future for the South during COP30 (Climate Policy Brief 29, 14 November 2025)

By Daniel Uribe Terán

The 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30) in Belém converges with the recent International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion on Climate Change, creating a critical inflexion point for global climate action. This policy brief analyses how the ICJ Opinion has the potential to reframe climate commitments, transforming them from political aspirations into legally binding obligations. The Opinion establishes objective standards for 'due diligence', integrates the CBDR-RC principle as a legal criterion for ambition, and inextricably links climate action with human rights. The ICJ Opinion confirms that a breach of these obligations triggers a duty of 'full reparation.' This policy brief recommends a strategy for developing countries to leverage this new legal framework at COP30.

https://www.southcentre.int/climate-policy-brief-29-14-november-2025/

From Fragmentation to Impact: Strengthening Southern Agency in Global AI Governance (Policy Brief 148, 17 November 2025)

By Vahini Naidu and Danish

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming production, trade and governance systems, yet global regulatory efforts remain fragmented and uneven. The multiplicity of forums, frameworks and initiatives, from UN processes to plurilateral and trade-centred mechanisms, has produced overlapping agendas and resulted in diminished participation from global South stakeholders. For developing countries, the challenge is to engage meaningfully in global AI governance while preserving national policy space and advancing sustainable development priorities.

This policy brief examines the evolving landscape of AI governance, focusing on its institutional fragmentation and the competing conceptions of regulation advanced through the UN, G20, BRICS, and other fora. It argues that coherent, development-oriented AI governance requires strengthening UN-anchored processes and linking AI regulation to industrial policy, innovation systems and data sovereignty. The brief concludes that inclusive, sustainable and responsible AI governance should support governments in enhancing their capacities to harness AI and emerging technologies to shape their digital transformation.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-148-17-november-2025/

The Role of Advisory Opinions in Shaping International Climate Change Law (Climate Policy Brief 30, 18 November 2025)

By Daniel Uribe Terán

This policy brief analyses how advisory opinions (AOs) from the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) are fundamentally reshaping international climate law. These AOs are crystallising States' climate commitments, transforming them from voluntary political pledges into binding legal obligations grounded in customary international law and human rights. This judicial shift establishes stringent, science-based due diligence standards, confirms State responsibility for harm, and provides a powerful legal foundation for accountability and reparation.

https://www.southcentre.int/climate-policy-brief-30-18-november-2025/

Independent Panel on Evidence for Action against Antimicrobial Resistance (IPEA): Reflections on the Foundational Documents (Policy Brief 149, 5 December 2025)

By Dr. Viviana Munoz Tellez

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) invited the Quadripartite Organizations to establish an Independent Panel on Evidence for Action against Antimicrobial Resistance (IPEA) in 2025. The launch of the IPEA is planned for 10 December 2025 during the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). The Quadripartite organizations (the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)) released in November 2025 updated draft documents for the IPEA for additional consultation with Member States and stakeholders. The IPEA will constitute a welcome addition to global Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) governance, and should be established, starting small and building gradually. Several concerns on the proposed model remain concerning the governance structure, equity in participation, and the independence of the panel. This policy brief provides analysis and recommendations on key issues concerning the draft foundational documents for the IPEA requiring attention.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-149-5-december-2025/

The US Bilateral Specimen Sharing Agreement in the Proposed PEPFAR MOUs Would Leave African Countries More Vulnerable in the Next Pandemic (Policy Brief 150, 12 December 2025)

By Nirmalya Syam, Viviana Munoz Tellez

This Policy Brief examines the implications of the United States' (US) PEPFAR Memorandum of Understanding (PEPFAR MOU) proposed to African countries on the negotiations for a multilateral system for access to pathogens and benefit sharing (PABS) as part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Pandemic Agreement. It recommends that African countries do not accept the MOU provisions on specimen sharing and data access that undermine national sovereignty and calls for a coordinated regional response.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-150-12-december-2025/

Health Equity in Global Governance: growing recognition in need of concrete actions (Policy Brief 151, 23 December 2025)

By Carlos M. Correa

Health equity is a foundational principle of global health governance that should ensure all individuals have fair and just opportunities to achieve optimal health, regardless of social, economic, or geographical disparities. The right to health is recognized as a fundamental human right in Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). This document explores the concept of health equity drawing on United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions and key instruments from the World Health Organization (WHO). It discusses the challenges and opportunities for developing countries in pursuing equitable health outcomes, including advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-151-23-december-2025/

Decisiones judiciales y sostenibilidad del sistema de salud: tensiones y desafíos. El caso de Argentina (Informe Sobre Políticas 152, 26 de enero de 2026)

Por José Luis Cassinerio y *Silvina Andrea Bracamonte*

En las últimas décadas, la judicialización de la salud en Argentina ha adquirido dimensiones crecientes tanto en términos cuantitativos como cualitativos. No solo ha aumentado el número de causas

judiciales, sino también la complejidad de las tecnologías sanitarias reclamadas, muchas de ellas de alto costo, eficacia limitada o con escasa evidencia científica. Este fenómeno desafía los marcos institucionales, jurídicos y sanitarios, y obliga al Poder Judicial a resolver conflictos que tensan la frontera entre derechos individuales, racionalidad médico-científica, equidad en el acceso y sostenibilidad del sistema. En este trabajo se analiza la estructura del sistema de salud argentino, las características de las decisiones judiciales en materia sanitaria y la necesidad de construir un enfoque interdisciplinario que incorpore dimensiones jurídicas, clínicas, económicas y bioéticas. Se propone avanzar hacia estándares judiciales más previsibles que protejan derechos individuales sin erosionar los principios éticos de distribución de recursos en salud.

https://www.southcentre.int/informe-sobre-politicas-152-26-de-enero-de-2026/

Unlocking Innovation Traps: A Systems Thinking Approach to University–SME Collaboration (Policy Brief 153, 3 February 2026)

By Dr. Ufuk Türen and Syed Ibrahim Bilal Majid

Despite growing institutional interest, university–small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) collaborations often underperform, stalling before generating sustainable innovation. This study adopts a systems thinking perspective to diagnose such persistent failures as structural—rather than individual—challenges. Using OSTİM Technical University (OSTİMTECH) as a case study, the research employs participatory causal loop diagrams (CLDs) to visualize key feedback dynamics affecting trust, incentives, and knowledge flows. Central to the analysis is the "Success to the Successful" archetype, which explains how dominant academic incentives reinforce publication-oriented behaviors while marginalizing collaboration and applied innovation. The resulting model reveals why certain loops—like academic reputation—gain momentum while others—such as ecosystem learning—remain underdeveloped without intentional redesign. By identifying leverage points for institutional reform, including incentive recalibration and long-term partnership support, the paper offers actionable insights for third-generation universities. Ultimately, reframing collaboration through a systemic lens enhances understanding of complex innovation ecosystems and guides more credible, sustainable approaches to university–industry engagement.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-153-3-february-2026/

Analysis of Intellectual Property Issues Ahead of the WTO 14th Ministerial Conference (Policy Brief 154, 25 February 2026)

By Nirmalya Syam, Viviana Munoz Tellez

This policy brief analyses the issues pertaining to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) that were discussed in the General Council meeting on 16-17 December 2025. Despite the strategic importance of these issues, the divergence on TRIPS issues and on the priorities for the future work of WTO among Members did not allow the General Council to decide on any of these matters. None of the issues were noted for decision in the 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14), which is scheduled to be hosted in Yaoundé, Cameroon in March 2026. This reluctance of some Members to engage substantively on intellectual property (IP) issues has become a regular dynamic in the TRIPS Council. However, the MC14 should, at the least, decide to extend the moratorium on TRIPS Non-Violation and Situation Complaints and extend the period for acceptances by Members of the Protocol Amending the TRIPS Agreement. Moreover, there is an understanding that all issues remain on the table, regardless of whether they are taken up at the Conference.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-154-25-february-2026/

OECD Two Pillar Solution: Designed to Prevent the Offshoring of High Tech Production to the Global South (Tax Cooperation Policy Brief 41, 27 February 2026)

By Abdul Muheet Chowdhary

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Two Pillar solution is a tool of the developed countries designed to: a) prevent Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) in frontier technologies like clean energy, computing, semiconductors, etc. from offshoring production to developing countries, and b) minimize Global North MNEs' taxable profits in developing countries. The recent exemption of the United States' MNEs from certain aspects of the OECD Global Minimum Tax further strengthens these objectives. South Centre Member States and other developing countries should resist pressures to adopt the Two Pillar solution and make informed, evidence-based decisions, while considering the benefits of other simpler and more beneficial alternatives.

https://www.southcentre.int/tax-cooperation-policy-brief-no-41-27-february-2026/

WTO arbitration on China's standard patents policy threatens TRIPS balance and national autonomy (Policy Brief 155, 17 March 2026)

By Nirmalya Syam

This article critically examines the WTO arbitration award in China – Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (WT/DS611/ARB25), which marks a significant departure from established interpretations of Article 1.1 of the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The arbitrators endorsed a broad "anti-frustration" reading of the provision, effectively imposing cross-border obligations on WTO Members and challenging the autonomy of national courts. Although Article 1.1 of TRIPS was relied upon by the European Union only in conjunction with Article 28, the arbitrators treated it as an autonomous normative foundation for imposing cross-border constraints on members' judicial measures. The article contends that this expansion of Article 1.1 goes beyond its text and structure, risks undermining legitimate public-interest measures, and opens the door to non-violation type complaints that are excluded from TRIPS. The analysis underscores the need to preserve the balance between IP enforcement and national policy space, especially in disputes involving public policy considerations.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-155-17-march-2026/

Balancing the Global Copyright System in the Public Interest: An Analysis of the African Group's Proposed Instrument on Limitations and Exceptions (Policy Brief 156, 31 March 2026)

By Faith O. Majekolagbe

The establishment of an international instrument on copyright limitations and exceptions (L&Es) is essential to achieve an appropriate balance between exclusive rights and the overarching public interest in access to copyrighted works and related subject matter. Current international copyright instruments, including the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, fail to adequately address L&Es for education, research, equitable access for persons with disabilities, and the operations of educational, research, and cultural heritage institutions such as libraries, archives, and museums. The proposed instrument on L&Es by the African Group seeks to establish mandatory minimum L&Es to support education, research, and access to information within the international copyright system, thereby promoting global harmonization and ensuring that copyright law supports, not impedes, development objectives and human rights obligations. This policy brief offers a thorough analysis of the proposed instrument, examining its substantive provisions and potential benefits, and proposes some improvements.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-156-31-march-2026/

Pending the Moratorium: the Status of Non-Violation and Situation Complaints Under the TRIPS Agreement Following MC14 (Policy Brief 157, 15 April 2026)

By Viviana Munoz Tellez, Nirmalya Syam

The 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14), held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, concluded on 30 March 2026 without extending the moratorium on non-violation and situation complaints (NVSCs) under the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement). This policy brief argues that the expiry of the moratorium does not render NVSCs automatically applicable to disputes under the Agreement. The requirement under Article 64.3 for the TRIPS Council to examine the scope and modalities of NVSCs and for the WTO Ministerial Conference to adopt a consensus decision thereon, has not been fulfilled.

Until such a decision is taken, NVSCs remain inapplicable to TRIPS disputes. However, unless the implications of the non-extension are addressed, it may discourage the adoption of measures in the public interest by developing countries and least developed countries (LDCs) which would be fully legitimate under the TRIPS Agreement. Any attempt to suggest that NVSCs are now applicable to the obligations under this Agreement in the interim should be firmly contested. Resolving this issue through continued discussions in the TRIPS Council must be prioritized.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-157-15-april-2026/

Towards an Operative Pathogen ABS System: Implementing the Equal Footing Requirement of Article 12 of the WHO Pandemic Agreement (Policy Brief 158, 17 April 2026)

By Viviana Munoz Tellez, Nirmalya Syam

Multilateral negotiations on the Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS) system remain deadlocked. As required by Article 12 of the World Health Organization (WHO) Pandemic Agreement, the annex operationalizing the PABS system must place on *equal footing* the rapid and timely sharing of PABS Materials and Sequence Information with the rapid, timely, fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from their sharing and utilization. The Annex cannot impose binding sharing obligations on State Parties while making it optional for users of PABS Materials to opt in to the PABS system voluntarily, without legally binding obligations on benefit sharing arising from the utilization of PABS Materials and Sequence Information. The Annex also cannot create a hybrid system providing alternative routes for access, either “open” or “restricted”. This would be inconsistent with Article 12 of the Pandemic Agreement and with the obligations of parties under the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization. The Annex must include a standardized contractual framework binding all actors in the PABS chain, a minimum manufacturer participation threshold before country obligations become active, and ensure benefit-sharing is not confined to pandemic emergencies.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-158-17-april-2026/

UK–India CETA: Patents and International Intellectual Property Governance (Policy Brief 159, 30 April 2026)

By Pratyush Nath Upreti & Virender Chandel

This policy brief locates the United Kingdom-India Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement’s (CETA) intellectual property rights (IPRs) rules in the midst of trade-offs. It succinctly provides an overview of the IPR Chapter, analyses the specific provisions on patents and contextualises IP in the broader context of international IP governance. The analysis of the IPR Chapter shows the parties’ objective to establish meaningful commitments on intellectual property protection and enforcement while preserving regulatory flexibility on development-centric and public health priorities. All in all, the IPR Chapter reflects a compromise between a country with an established, strong IP regime and a country seeking greater policy space and advancing IP norms in areas such as traditional knowledge. As India continues integrating into the global trade architecture through bilateral agreements, the CETA

IPR Chapter will serve as a critical test case for whether strategic policy space can be meaningfully preserved within contemporary trade frameworks.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-159-30-april-2026/

Leading Global Artificial Intelligence Governance from Outcomes to Impact (Policy Brief 160, 15 May 2026)

By Aishwarya Narayanan and Danish

The proliferation of high-level events on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recent years has contributed to a global AI governance framework that marginalises many developing countries' priorities. The India-AI Impact Summit, as the first AI summit of its kind to be held in the Global South, has shown how the views, needs and concerns of the developing and least developed nations can be placed at the heart of the global AI agenda.

Through the lens of the India-AI Impact Summit, this policy brief underscores the need to build synergies between AI summit outcomes, UN-based discussions and multistakeholder initiatives. It posits how coherence among these diverse processes can be advanced through the work of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance under the UN. The brief concludes with recommendations for building greater convergence on global AI governance that supports sustainable development in the Global South.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-160-15-may-2026/

Meeting the 2030 Target on Reducing the Global Burden of AMR: Pathways for Strengthening and Leveraging Surveillance in Developing Countries (Policy Brief 161, 22 May 2026)

By Prateek Sharma and Viviana Munoz Tellez

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) poses a major and growing threat to global health, yet low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) face significant challenges in implementing AMR surveillance –collection and analysis of data on AMR. Global AMR targets, including the United Nations' goal of reducing AMR-associated deaths by 10 percent by 2030 and achieving diagnostic capacity in 80 percent of countries, rely on surveillance data that are often incomplete, hospital-centered, and unrepresentative of community infections in LMICs. While the Global Antimicrobial Resistance and Use Surveillance System (GLASS) of the World Health Organization (WHO) provides a standardized framework, in LMICs limited access to diagnostics, high laboratory costs, and reliance on data from specialized hospitals constrain participation and data comparability. Modeling studies have helped quantify the global burden of AMR, yet their reliance on sparse LMIC data underscores the need for improved primary surveillance. Achieving the United Nations' 2030 target—where 80 per cent of countries can test resistance in all GLASS pathogens—will require substantial investment, technical support, and sustained political commitment. Embedding AMR surveillance within health systems and strengthening pandemic prevention and preparedness can help unlock external funding for eligible LMICs through the Pandemic Fund and the Global Fund.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-161-22-may-2026/

Charting Green Industrial Futures: Advancing Global South Cooperation for a Just Transition (Climate Policy Brief 31, 5 June 2025)

By Danish

Accelerating green industrialisation is essential for Global South countries to align their national climate action with job creation, economic growth and sustainable development. However, they face persistent barriers in access to finance, clean technologies, and policy space needed to implement green industrial policies. This policy brief argues that these constraints can be effectively addressed by developing

countries through expanding their international cooperation in climate, trade and industry. Through the analysis of three institutional mechanisms emerging from the Global South – the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative (AGII), the International Solar Alliance (ISA), and the Integrated Forum on Climate Change and Trade (IFCCT), the brief highlights some ways for developing countries to shape their own green industrial futures and advance a just transition.

https://www.southcentre.int/climate-policy-brief-31-5-june-2026/

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water: Making Wealth Taxes Work in Developing Countries (Tax Cooperation Policy Brief 42, 23 June 2026)

By Anne Wanyagathi Maina

As debt burdens rise, fiscal space narrows, and inequality rises, developing countries continue to struggle to finance development needs without resorting to regressive taxation or triggering social unrest. In this context, wealth taxation is gaining renewed attention as an alternative. This policy brief explores the relevance and feasibility of net wealth taxes in developing countries, reviewing the implementation experiences in Latin America and Africa, as well as key criticisms and objections, which range from efficiency concerns, administrative challenges, limited revenue yield, to political resistance. The brief argues that these challenges can be overcome through a well-designed wealth tax supported by international cooperation and domestic reforms to improve capacity and transparency. It calls for more research from a developing-country perspective on the effectiveness of such taxes and urges governments to pursue carefully designed wealth taxes aligned with national priorities to support progressive and sustainable revenue mobilization.

https://www.southcentre.int/tax-cooperation-policy-brief-no-42-23-june-2026/

Intellectual property and the green technology divide: barriers, policy spaces and collective options for developing countries (Policy Brief 162, 2 September 2026)

By Paulo Esteves

Developing countries are expected to industrialise, decarbonise, and adapt to climate change simultaneously. Yet, many crucial climate technologies remain inaccessible because key knowledge is protected by patents and trade secrets held by multinational companies in a few countries. Drawing on the intellectual property (IP) and climate literature, the paper maps this green technology IP landscape and synthesises four interacting barrier clusters – access costs, transaction costs, legal and institutional constraints (including TRIPS and "TRIPS plus"), and information and absorptive capacity gaps – that hinder diffusion and reinforce dependence. It concludes that closing the green technology divide requires a combined strategy: using and defending TRIPS flexibilities (e.g., compulsory licensing and tighter patentability standards), building collective licensing and transparency mechanisms (such as patent pools), mobilising finance, and investing in domestic capability and competition policy so access translates into real deployment and learning.

https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-162-2-september-2026/

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Combatting overcompliance with unilateral coercive measures – Discussions from South Centre Consultation (South Centre Report, January 2025)

By Yuefen Li and Danish

In view of the severe negative impacts of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) on targeted countries and the international community, and at the request of South Centre Member States, the South Centre organized a meeting on 18 November 2024 with the participation of senior diplomats from a number of developing countries, several of whom have been targeted by UCMs. The meeting focused on the trends and main drivers of overcompliance with UCMs among multinational firms and financial institutions, and the strategies that can be employed to mitigate overcompliance, especially in relation to humanitarian exemptions.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-report-ucms-overcompliance-consultation-january-2025/

Submission by the South Centre to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Inputs for the comprehensive report on ensuring access to medicines, vaccines and other health products (HRC resolution 50/13) (January 2025)

The South Centre has provided input for the OHCHR report on new developments and challenges in ensuring access to medicines, vaccines and other health products.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-submission-to-ohchr-for-hrc-resolution-50-13-january-2025/

Report on Antimicrobial Stewardship and AMR Surveillance: Insights from The South Centre WAAW 2024 Webinar (South Centre WAAW 2024 Webinar Report, February 2025)

By Dr Rasha Abdelsalam Elshenawy

How can we enhance antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance and antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) in resource-limited settings?

The South Centre World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week (WAAW) 2024 Webinar Report highlights barriers, innovative digital tools, and global strategies to combat AMR effectively.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-waaw-2024-webinar-report-february-2025/

South Centre Input on the update to the technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity pursuant to HRC resolution 54/16 (February 2025)

Maternal mortality is a global crisis. The South Centre input calls for urgent action: addressing intersectional discrimination, improving the quality of care, and tackling root causes like poverty, and to guarantee that every woman has access to a safe childbirth.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-input-on-update-to-technical-guidance-pursuant-to-hrc-resolution-54-16-february-2025/

South Centre Inputs to the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development Study on Climate Justice, Sustainability, and the Right to Development (February 2025)

The South Centre inputs to the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development Study on Climate Justice, Sustainability, and the Right to Development makes a call for upholding Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDRRC) in ensuring a just transition,

protecting the human rights of the most affected populations and reforming Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms that threaten climate action.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-inputs-to-the-expert-mechanism-on-the-rtd-study-february-2025/

Fossil Fuel-based Economy and Human Rights
South Centre Inputs to Inform the Thematic Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Context of Climate Change to the Human Rights Council 59th session (February 2025)

The South Centre calls for a Just Transition away from fossil fuels, centering the rights of marginalized communities & the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-submission-to-the-sr-on-climate-change-fossil-fuel-based-economy-human-rights-february-2025/

Unifying Efforts against Antimicrobial Resistance: Supporting Collective Efforts During WAAW 2024 (South Centre Report, March 2025)

By Francesca Chiara

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is an escalating global health challenge, demanding urgent and coordinated efforts. During World AMR Awareness Week (WAAW) 2024, 27 impactful projects targeting more than 20 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America amplified the theme "Educate, Advocate, Act Now." The projects were selected by the South Centre for funding, with support of the United Kingdom Fleming Fund. This is the third year this financial support is offered to selected Civil Society Organization (CSO) projects, based on a call for applications.

These initiatives directly reached over 3000 individuals through training sessions, workshops, and targeted advocacy campaigns. Many more were engaged through social media and grassroots activities. This overview highlights the transformative impact of these campaigns.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-report-march-2025/

Contribución del Centro Sur al Informe del Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas sobre la aplicación de la Resolución A/RES/79/7 de la Asamblea General sobre la "Necesidad de poner fin al bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los Estados Unidos de América contra Cuba" (South Centre Input to UNSG Report on Implementation of UNGA Resolution A/RES/79/7, March 2025)

Esta contribución del Centro Sur se presenta en respuesta a la solicitud del Secretario General como un aporte al informe del Secretario General de acuerdo a la resolución ***A/RES/79/7***, con respecto a la imposición de medidas económicas, financieras y comerciales unilaterales por parte de los Estados Unidos de América, contra Cuba, en violación de los principios básicos de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y el Derecho Internacional.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-input-to-unsg-report-on-implementation-of-unga-resolution-a-res-79-7-march-2025/

Advancing National Action Plans on Antimicrobial Resistance amidst Health Financing Challenges (South Centre Webinar Report, April 2025)

By Afreenish Amir

The South Centre held a webinar on advancing national action plans (NAPs) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) amidst health financial challenges, on 20 March 2025. The webinar brought together various national focal point leads for NAPs on AMR and international experts.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-report-amr-naps-health-financing-april-2025/

Advancing Antimicrobial Stewardship Policies: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic and Priorities for Future Health Emergencies (South Centre Webinar Report, May 2025)

By Dr Rasha Abdelsalam Elshenawy

Our recent South Centre webinar examined how the pandemic created a dual challenge for global health:

– MISUSE: 35-75% of hospitalized COVID-19 patients received antibiotics despite low bacterial co-infection rates.
– ACCESS BARRIERS: The pandemic disrupted supply chains and healthcare access, limiting antimicrobial availability in many regions.

This paradox—overuse alongside access challenges—must inform future pandemic preparedness.

Our experts call for:

– Integrating antimicrobial stewardship into emergency response
– AMS frameworks must be established BEFORE health emergencies
– Strengthening surveillance systems and diagnostic capacity
– Ensuring sustainable and equitable access to antimicrobials

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-webinar-report-ams-covid-19-pandemic-preparedness-may-2025/

Scope of Compulsory License and Government Use of Patented Medicines (Compulsory License & Government Use Table, June 2025)

To meet public health needs governments can use compulsory licenses and government use as a tool for procurement and import of patented medicines. These mechanisms are provided for in most laws worldwide. The WTO TRIPS Agreement, as reaffirmed by the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health, recognises the right of WTO members to grant compulsory licenses and their freedom to determine the grounds upon which such licenses may be granted.

This table provides information of instances of their use.

https://www.southcentre.int/compulsory-license-government-use-table-june-2025/

Advancing Women and Girls' Health in a Time of Converging Crises (South Centre Briefing Report, June 2025)

The South Centre hosted a high-level briefing session aimed at advancing the health rights of women and girls in the face of multiple global challenges. The meeting coincided with the South Centre's 30th anniversary and the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, bringing together ambassadors, health experts, and representatives of international organisations to discuss the protection and advancement of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in the Global South.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-briefing-report-on-srhr-june-2025/

Policy in Practice: Implementing Antimicrobial Stewardship Post-COVID-19
Q&A and Commentary
(South Centre Technical Report, June 2025)

By Dr Rasha Abdelsalam Elshenawy

This report summarises the key questions and expert commentary for the South Centre, as well as the South Centre Policy Brief on lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, to strengthen antimicrobial stewardship and provide practical recommendations discussed during the South Centre webinar on "Strengthening Antimicrobial Stewardship: Policy Insights from COVID-19 and Future Pandemic Preparedness."

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-technical-report-on-ams-post-covid-19-26-june-2025/

Comparison of Tax Revenue Effects of United Nations and OECD Subject to Tax Rule for G-24 and South Centre Member States (South Centre & G-24 Special Issue 1, July 2025)

By Faith Amaro and Sol Picciotto

The Subject to Tax Rule (STTR) seeks to address the historical imbalance in the allocation of taxing rights under international tax treaties by introducing within existing treaties a new article which makes the restrictions on source taxation conditional on the residence jurisdiction imposing a minimum level of tax on foreign-derived income. This paper presents a methodology for analysing the respective benefits of the STTRs developed by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations (UN). Applying this model to publicly available data for 2021, it also provides estimates of the possible revenue impact for the 65 Member States of the South Centre (SC) and the Intergovernmental Group of 24 (G-24). Our analysis indicates that the OECD STTR would have no impact on any OECD country treaty with a SC/G-24 Member State. Applying the prescribed 9% minimum rate to covered payments, only 100 treaties across 28 SC/G-24 Member States would qualify for improvement under the OECD STTR, with an estimated combined revenue gain of USD 55.6 million, 71% of which is concentrated in just five treaties. In contrast, the UN STTR, which does not specify a minimum rate, was modelled using rates of 9%, 10% and 15%. This resulted in estimated revenue gains of USD 212 million, USD 325 million, and USD 1,165 million across 171, 210 and 317 treaties, respectively. Given its complexity and restrictive scope, it seems pointless for any SC/G-24 Member State to join the OECD STTR. Instead, countries should focus on identifying treaties that cause unjustifiable revenue losses and consider revising them – either by adopting the simpler and broader UN STTR or implementing other measures such as active anti-abuse provisions to combat treaty shopping and tax avoidance.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-g-24-special-issue-1-july-2025/

Analysing the Impact of UN and OECD Subject to Tax Rule for G-24 and South Centre Member States (South Centre & G-24 Special Issue 2, July 2025)

By Suranjali Tandon and Chetan Rao

The Subject to Tax Rule (STTR) is meant to address base erosion and profit shifting in cross –border transactions. The United Nations (UN) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Group of Twenty (G20) Inclusive Framework have developed models of the STTR that countries may choose to adopt in their treaties. This paper provides a review of these designs of two STTR models and proceeds to estimate the revenue gains for the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four on International Monetary Affairs and Development (G-24) and South Centre Member States that may arise from a STTR that covers different kinds of payments. The OECD STTR is limited to related-party payments and imposes thresholds based on mark-up and materiality, reducing its applicability in practice. In contrast, the UN STTR offers broader coverage, applies to both related and unrelated parties, and does not impose restrictive thresholds, making it more administratively feasible for developing countries. Although the estimated gains from the OECD STTR appear modest due to its

narrow scope, the UN STTR shows greater potential. The analysis also highlights data limitations and the need for access to microdata for accurate country-level assessments.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-g-24-special-issue-2-july-2025/

Gender Intersectionality in Antimicrobial Resistance (South Centre Webinar Report, July 2025)

The South Centre held a webinar on Gender Intersectionality in Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), on 14 May 2025, with the participation of experts from academia, independent research institutions and international organizations. The webinar was attended by over 70 participants from around the world, demonstrating interest in gaining greater understanding of the gender dimension in effective strategies for tackling antimicrobial resistance.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-webinar-report-on-gender-intersectionality-in-amr-july-2025/

WTO Reform: Facilitator's Report on Initial Consultations (JOB/GC/445) (Commentary, 9 July 2025)

By Vahini Naidu, Trade for Development Programme, South Centre

This commentary provides a critical analysis of the Facilitator's Report on Initial Consultations on WTO Reform, highlighting the absence of a shared reform objective, the fragmentation of issues, and the risks posed to developing country priorities, particularly with respect to the Special and Differential Treatment and self-designation, and the consensus-based decision-making. It examines the legal and institutional implications of current reform narratives and cautions against proposals that may entrench rather than correct systemic imbalances.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-commentary-9-july-2025/

South Centre Inputs on the Draft Issues Notes on the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (11 July 2025)

In preparation for the First and Second Sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (UNFCITC) to be held in August 2025, the Co-Leads of each of the three Workstreams have released Draft Issues Notes for public comments. The Issues Notes are meant to provide direction on the content of the UNFCITC and its two early protocols on services and dispute prevention and resolution.

There are three Issues Notes:

1. Workstream I on the framework convention
2. Workstream II on the taxation of services
3. Workstream III on dispute prevention and resolution

The South Centre submitted inputs on all three Issues Notes on 11 July 2025 which are reproduced below:

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-inputs-on-draft-issues-notes-on-unfcitc-11-july-2025/

WTO Reform: Framing Challenges in the Facilitator-led Process and Strategic Considerations for Developing Countries (Informal Note, 15 July 2025)

By Vahini Naidu, Trade for Development Programme, South Centre

This Informal Note was prepared to inform developing country participation in the next round of Facilitator-led consultations on WTO reform. It provides a critical reflection on the three-track framework

proposed by the Facilitator, namely Governance, Fairness and Future, and raises concerns about the framing, legal coherence, and process legitimacy of the emerging reform agenda. The note highlights the risks of implicitly reshaping negotiating priorities through informal structuring, particularly in ways that may disadvantage developing countries or dilute existing legal mandates. It offers strategic considerations and suggested responses to the three guiding questions posed by the Facilitator, underscoring the need to reaffirm treaty-embedded rights such as Special and Differential Treatment, preserve institutional integrity, and ensure that any reform remains firmly anchored in multilateral principles, Member-driven processes, and the development dimension. A separate working document proposing a structured positive agenda for developing countries will follow to complement this analysis.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-informal-note-15-july-2025/

WTO Reform: Structuring a Positive Agenda for Developing Countries (A Working Document on Structuring Reform Around Legal Principles and Development Priorities, 15 July 2025)

By *Vahini Naidu, Trade for Development Programme, South Centre*

This Working Document outlines a structured contribution to the WTO reform process from a legal and developmental perspective. It organises the wide range of reform issues into seven categories, based on their legal character, institutional handling, and the procedural steps required for meaningful resolution. The aim is to support a more coherent and inclusive reform process by offering a logical framework grounded in the Marrakesh Agreement and reflective of the WTO's foundational principles. It is intended to assist Members in navigating reform discussions in a manner that is principled, transparent, and responsive to the priorities of developing countries.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-working-document-15-july-2025/

Submission on the Work Programme of the High-Level Champions and the Marrakech Partnership (CHLC/MP) 2025 and the Global Climate Action Agenda (August 2025)

South Centre

Voluntary action is no longer enough. The South Centre submission to the UNFCCC calls for transforming the climate agenda to ensure true inclusivity, tackle harmful lobbying, and create accountability mechanisms and policy gaps.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-submission-on-chlc-mp-2025-work-programme-global-climate-action-agenda-august-2025/

WTO Reform: Rewriting Trade History – The United States as Architect and Beneficiary of the Multilateral Trading System (A Working Paper on Elements of WTO Reform, 1 September 2025)

By Vahini Naidu, Trade for Development Programme, South Centre

This paper examines the revisionist trade narrative advanced by the United States, which portrays multilateral rules as disadvantageous and seeks to justify unilateral tariffs and coercive bilateral arrangements. It demonstrates that the principles of non-discrimination and reciprocity pre-date Bretton Woods and were embedded in the multilateral system through U.S. initiatives from the 1930s through the creation of GATT in 1947. Far from being disadvantaged, the U.S. has consistently shaped and benefitted from the system, including through the Uruguay Round's expansion of enforceable rules on services, intellectual property, and investment. The analysis shows that the shift toward what has been termed the "Turnberry system" risks fragmenting global markets, eroding the MFN principle, and deepening structural asymmetries that leave developing countries more vulnerable to exclusion. By correcting historical records, the paper underscores the importance of defending multilateral guarantees of equal treatment while building institutional capacity and strategic coordination to better safeguard development priorities in an increasingly contested global order.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-working-paper-1-september-2025/

Working Document – Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing System (3 September 2025)

Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity Programme, South Centre

This document is a work in progress intended to assist in the understanding of the ongoing negotiations in the WHO | IGWG for the establishment of a Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing System as an Annex of the Pandemic Agreement, as described in Article 12.

https://www.southcentre.int/working-document-pathogen-access-and-benefit-sharing-system-3-september-2025/

South Centre Inputs on 2025-2029 Work Program of the UN Tax Committee

25 September 2025

The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General appointed a new Membership of the UN Tax Committee to hold office from 2025-2029. This includes Members nominated by Brazil, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, India, Jamaica, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone (all of them are members States of the South Centre). The Committee will hold its first meeting in October in Geneva, Switzerland, and will decide, among other things, the issues they should work on during the tenure of the new members. The Committee also issued a call for inputs to stakeholders to help shape this agenda.

To ensure that the four-year agenda contains topics of importance to South Centre Member States and developing countries more generally, the South Centre made a submission to the Committee which is reproduced below.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-inputs-on-un-tax-committee-september-2025/

Implementing the 2024 AMR Political Declaration: Industry Accountability and Equity in Agrifood Sector Transformation (South Centre Report on FAO Side Event, 26 September 2025)

By Dr. Viviana Munoz Tellez

On 2 July 2025, at the sides of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Conference, a high-level dialogue on AMR was held, co-organized by the Governments of Kenya and the United Kingdom (co-chairs of the Group of Friends of AMR), the South Centre, FAO, and the AMR Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Platform. The event took place at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, with in-person participation and webcast. Ambassadors and senior officials of Kenya, South Africa, India and Brazil, among others, made interventions in the high-level segment. The South Centre was also part of the panel.

The theme of the event “Industry Accountability and Equity in Agrifood Sector Transformation” provided an opportunity for forward-looking dialogue on the urgent need to transform how antimicrobials are used in agrifood systems, and the government’s required leadership in developing and implementing national policy frameworks that are adapted to national contexts, priorities and needs to address AMR and in adopting measures to incentivize responsible practices in the agrifood sector.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-report-on-fao-side-event-26-september-2025/

The BBNJ Will Enter into Force in January 2026: Summary of PrepCom II Outcome (South Centre Report on BBNJ PrepCom II, October 2025)

By Ningxiner Li

The BBNJ Agreement enters into force on January 2026. Read the PrepCom II outcomes on developing country priorities: equitable governance, a demand-driven Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM), and accessible funding. There is critical work ahead before PrepCom III (March 23-April 2, 2026) and COP1.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-report-on-bbnj-prepcom-ii-october-2025/

Future of the UN Tax Committee under the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (SC, IBFD CSAT, WATAF Special Issue, 17 October 2025)

By Aisha Aize Isa, Sabrine Marsit, Abiodun Adewale Adegboye, Nyatefe Wolali Dotsevi, Anne Wanyagathi Maina and Abdul Muheet Chowdhary

The global tax governance landscape has recently undergone major shifts and is now at a pivotal momentum where demands of inclusivity, transparency and an equitable tax system are increasingly growing amongst countries. Central to this pivotal momentum is the creation of the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (UNFCITC), mandated by United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolution 78/230 (December 2023). The UNFCITC's objective is to establish an intergovernmental platform for governance and cooperation in international taxation. This report aims at exploring the possible role of the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters (UNTC) within the merging architecture of the UNFCITC, drawing on past lessons of efforts to democratize international tax governance.

The report starts by tracing the history of international tax cooperation, back from 1923 with the League of Nations Economists' Report, 1928 Model Treaties, 1943 Mexico proposed Draft, 1963 first Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Model Tax Convention, 1980 with the creation of the United Nations Model Tax Convention (UNMTC) to the UNFCITC creation in 2023. Each of these steps revealed recurrent patterns: marginalization of developing countries in the agenda setting processes, and the persistence of residence based taxation as the prevalent rule.

Based on the historical overview, the report provides an analysis of the UNTC institutional developments. Established in 1968, the UNTC has been incremental in the development of standard setting (UNMTC revisions and updates), technical guidance, and capacity building. However, its inherent structure, where members are acting on their individual capacity rather than on a governmental capacity has limited the legitimacy of its output compared to the OECD's intergovernmental negotiated standards. Hence, the UNFCITC seeks to address the UNTC gaps and to realign its functions with a more inclusive member state led process. The UNFCITC emphasizes building on existing work, including the UNTC and OECD, to leverage complementary strengths.

This report envisages five prospective scenarios for the UNTC future:

1. Status quo with enhanced collaboration with the UNFCITC, where the UNTC continues under the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) body and its outputs are then submitted for intergovernmental approval under the UNFCITC;
2. Integration as an intergovernmental body – the UNTC would be integrated into the UNFCITC as a subsidiary organ;
3. Dissolution and replacement of the UNTC – in this hypothesis the UNFCITC takes over the UNTC mandates;
4. Elevation alongside the UNFCITC – in this hypothesis the UNTC would be upgraded to an intergovernmental body alongside the UNFCITC; and
5. Coordinated roles models, where the UNTC would be refocusing on capacity building and regional support while the rule-setting would be under the UNFCITC mandate.

The report concludes that clear mandates and coordination between the UNTC and the UNFCITC are essential to avoid duplication and conflicts. It highlights that developing countries must actively engage in framing the new prospective structures to ensure their interests are represented.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-ibfd-csat-wataf-special-issue-17-october-2025/

Building Up a Balanced Global Intellectual Property System: Report of the WIPO Assemblies' Sixty-sixth Series of Meetings (South Centre Report on the 66th Series of Meetings of WIPO Assemblies, October 2025)

Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity Programme, South Centre

This report reviews the key discussions and outcomes of the 66th Series of Meetings of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Assemblies held in July 2025. The Assemblies addressed important governance, oversight, and norm-setting issues. Key developments included the launch of the process to appoint a new Director General, decisions on committee compositions and approval of the 2026/27 Program and Budget. Developing countries advocated for more inclusive participation in governance, balanced priority setting on norm-setting work, and stronger implementation of the Development Agenda.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-report-on-66th-series-of-meetings-of-wipo-assemblies-october-2025/

Gamani Corea and his Enduring Legacy for the Global South (South Centre Special Issue, 4 November 2025)

By Danish

Gamani Corea was an intellectual giant of the global South, with a long and illustrious career spent in strengthening multilateralism and advancing the common interests of developing countries. On the occasion of Gamani Corea's birth centenary on 4 November 2025, this paper revisits some of his most notable contributions in the different domains where he played important roles, and examines their relevance for addressing contemporary challenges facing the global South. It further explores his vision and impact as part of the South Commission and in establishing the South Centre. Amidst weakening multilateralism and rising geo-economic turmoil, this paper explores how Gamani Corea's legacy offers both inspiration and practical insights for developing countries in reshaping global governance. His ambition to strengthen Southern solidarity and collective action at the multilateral level continues to provide essential guidance for developing countries to accelerate sustainable development and ensure that no one gets left behind.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-special-issue-on-gamani-corea-4-november-2025/

WTO Reform: Assessment of the Facilitator's Communication and Process Ahead of the 4 November 2025 Plenary (An Informal Note Reviewing the Reform Tracks and Process in Advance of the 4 November Plenary, 2 November 2025)

By Vahini Naidu

This note provides an analytical assessment of the Facilitator's Communication and process ahead of the WTO reform plenary held on 4 November 2025. It highlights the growing procedural opacity surrounding the reform process, characterised by informal, facilitator-led configurations that lack clear mandates, participation criteria, or official records of discussions. These methods have blurred the lines between Member-driven deliberation and Secretariat-managed processes, creating uncertainty over accountability, legitimacy and inclusiveness.

Substantively, the Facilitator's synthesis elevates certain reform tracks, notably decision-making and level playing field, as forward-looking agendas, while confining the Development and S&DT track to a diagnostic or exploratory stage. This imbalance risks entrenching asymmetries rather than addressing them. By conflating S&DT with the broader development mandate, the Communication effectively narrows the systemic development agenda of the Marrakesh Agreement to a limited discussion of differentiation and eligibility.

Read together, the procedural and substantive dynamics reveal a process that is fragmented, imbalanced and at risk of being shaped by informal interpretations rather than by Member-driven

decisions. The note calls for restoring transparency, reaffirming the primacy of consensus and re-centring development as the organising principle of WTO reform.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-informal-note-2-november-2025/

Compulsory Licensing Provisions in the National Patent Legislation of 15 Middle-Income Countries: A Content Analysis and Recommendations (A Report of the Global Economic Governance Initiative of the Boston University Global Development Policy Center, November 2025)

Published by the South Centre and the Global Economic Governance Initiative of Boston University Global Development Policy Center

This study examines compulsory licensing laws in 15 middle-income countries often excluded from voluntary licenses & finds significant untapped policy space to advance access to affordable medicines. It highlights best practices & makes key recommendations to improve patent laws for the use of this important TRIPS flexibility.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-bu-gdpc-report-november-2025/

The GUIDE Framework for Evidence-based Antibiotic Prescribing
Strengthening Antimicrobial Stewardship for the Healthcare Workforce (November 2025)

By Dr. Rasha Abdelsalam Elshenawy

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) poses a critical threat to global health security, with inappropriate antibiotic prescribing in hospitals driving the spread of resistant pathogens. This GUIDE Framework for Evidence-Based Antibiotic Prescribing provides a structured, five-step model designed to strengthen antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) and empower the healthcare workforce to make informed, proportionate prescribing decisions.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-guide-framework-for-evidence-based-antibiotic-prescribing-november-2025/

South Centre Analysis of the European Union Proposal on the Pandemic Agreement Annex dated 17 October 2025 (November 2025)

This note is prepared to provide South Centre Member States and other developing country delegations with analytical comments on the proposal of the European Union (EU) on the Annex to the Pandemic Agreement, implementing the Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing (PABS) System as established in Article 12. The note begins with general commentary on the proposal, followed by detailed analysis of the EU proposal text, which is marked in red below the transcribed text.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-analysis-of-the-eu-proposal-on-the-pandemic-agreement-annex-november-2025/

South Centre Input to the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development Study on Artificial Intelligence, Cultural Rights, and the Right to Development (November 2025)

The South Centre submitted an input to the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development regarding the study on *"Artificial Intelligence, Cultural Rights, and the Right to Development."*

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) rapidly evolves, it presents a complex challenge for the international community. While AI holds the potential to advance human progress, unregulated deployment threatens to exacerbate existing global disparities and endanger the realisation of the Right to Development (RtD).

Key Policy Highlights from the Submission:

- Addressing the AI Divide: Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) face significant gaps in digital infrastructure and access to quality local datasets. To prevent the widening of global inequalities, governance frameworks must mandate technology transfer and capacity building without imposing restrictive intellectual property barriers.
- Protecting Cultural Sovereignty: The mass accumulation of data by Generative AI models risks replicating historical patterns of "digital extractivism". There is a need to increase transparency in training data protocols to prevent the misappropriation of traditional knowledge and cultural heritage.
- Beyond Self-Regulation: Voluntary measures by the private sector lack essential mechanisms for external accountability and redress. A pragmatic regulatory approach is necessary: a legally binding global baseline for human rights accountability, complemented by flexible domestic regulations that preserve national policy space for local innovation.

To ensure AI serves humanity, the international community must move toward a governance model that guarantees global fairness, upholds human rights, and prevents market monopolisation by a few corporations.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-input-to-the-expert-mechanism-on-the-right-to-development-november-2025/

Balancing the Global Copyright System in the Public Interest: An Analysis of the African Group's Proposed Instrument on Limitations and Exceptions (South Centre and Centre on Knowledge Governance Working Paper, 1 December 2025)

By Faith O. Majekolagbe

The establishment of an international instrument on copyright limitations and exceptions (L&Es) is essential to achieve an appropriate balance between exclusive rights and the overarching public interest in access to copyrighted works and related subject matter. Current international copyright instruments, including the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, fail to adequately address L&Es for education, research, equitable access for persons with disabilities, and the operations of educational, research, and cultural heritage institutions such as libraries, archives, and museums. The proposed instrument on L&Es by the African Group seeks to establish mandatory minimum L&Es to support education, research, and access to information within the international copyright system, thereby promoting global harmonization and ensuring that copyright law supports, not impedes, development objectives and compliance with human rights obligations. This working paper offers a thorough analysis of the proposed instrument, examining its substantive provisions and potential benefits.

https://www.southcentre.int/working-paper-1-december-2025/

WTO Reform: Reflections on Reform Week and Suggested Approaches for Breakout Groups (A Note Reviewing the Process and Reform Tracks in Advance of WTO Reform Week, 5 December 2025)

By Vahini Naidu

This note provides an assessment of the papers circulated by the WTO Reform Facilitator for Reform Week and highlights the structural gaps that limit their balance and practical value to move forward these discussions in a manner that takes the demands and interests of developing and least developed country Members into account. The current drafts reflect a narrow interpretation of the consultations, introduce elements that were not examined collectively and overlook mandated issues that continue to shape the functioning of the system. This note sets out the adjustments that Members may wish to propose to restore a development centred framing, make a clear distinction between descriptive reflections and new reform ideas, and ensure that any work proceeds in line with Ministerial instructions

for a member driven, transparent and inclusive process. The aim is to place the discussion on a footing that reflects the full range of Member views and respects the mandates already agreed.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-note-5-december-2025/

South Centre Submission to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee of the UNFCITC (December 2025)

The South Centre has made a submission to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee of the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation on the draft Framework Convention's commitments, and Dispute Prevention and Resolution protocol.

The contribution addresses the priorities and perspectives of developing countries in promoting inclusiveness, fair allocation of taxing rights, stronger transparency standards, and effective and accessible dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-submission-to-the-intergovernmental-negotiating-committee-of-the-unfcitc-december-2025/

MC14 in Yaoundé: Process and Modalities (An Analytical Note on the DG's Revised Road to Yaoundé MC14 Working Draft (JOB/TNC/127/Rev.2/Add.1), 26 January 2026*)*

By Vahini Naidu, Trade for Development Programme, South Centre

This paper provides an analytical assessment of the revised "Road to Yaoundé" for the Fourteenth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14). It examines the design of the proposed Ministerial programme and process, with a focus on their implications for inclusivity, balance, collective ministerial engagement, and the legitimacy of outcomes. The analysis considers how structural and procedural choices may shape ministerial deliberation and political signalling at MC14, particularly in light of the long-overdue fulfilment of development mandates and growing systemic challenges facing the multilateral trading system.

https://www.southcentre.int/analytical-note-26-january-2026/

WTO Reform: Institutional Authority and the Boundaries of the Facilitator-led Process (An Analytical Note on the WTO Reform Facilitator-led Process and Work Plan, 8 February 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This analytical note examines the WTO reform process reflected in the Draft Ministerial Statement and the proposed Post MC14 Work Plan dated 3 February 2026. It assesses whether the current process provides a sound basis for transmitting any reform outcome to Ministers at MC14. The note identifies procedural, institutional, and substantive concerns arising from the increasing reliance on facilitation led, non-consensual materials, limited anchoring in prior Ministerial mandates, and drafting choices that risk normalising a particular framing of reform in the absence of Member convergence. It highlights sequencing problems, the narrowing of the development agenda through its conflation with special and differential treatment, the premature elevation of plurilateral integration, and the marginal treatment of dispute settlement. These concerns suggest that the proposed Work Plan risks constraining Member-driven deliberation and weakening institutional balance. The note concludes that the Work Plan should not be treated as a basis for any reform outcome to be transmitted to Ministers at this stage.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-analytical-note-8-february-2026/

WTO Reform: Mapping Submissions and the Facilitator's Draft Work Plan (An Analytical Note on Member Positions Across the Facilitator's Reform Tracks, 8 February 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This paper maps seven WTO submissions and examines them in light of outputs emerging from the WTO reform process, including the Reform Facilitator's Draft Ministerial Decision and Flexible Post-MC14 Work Plan. Using comparative tables, it reviews Member positions across core reform elements, including overall reform vision, scope and sequencing; decision-making, consensus and governance; plurilaterals and Annex 4; development and Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT); agriculture, industrial policy and level-playing-field issues; dispute settlement; and Secretariat and institutional questions. The paper also distils key observations on the Reform Facilitator's Draft Ministerial Statement and Work Plan, examining how their structure and thematic emphasis align with different Member positions. It notes the relative prominence of EU and US framings across several reform tracks, alongside areas where longstanding developing country concerns, including agriculture, consensus-based decision-making, and treaty-based S&DT, are less explicitly reflected.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-analytical-note-8-february-2026-2/

MC14 in Yaoundé: Updated Process and Modalities (An Analytical Note on the Director-General's Revised Road to Yaoundé MC14 Working Draft (JOB/TNC/127/Rev.2/Add.1/Rev.1), 11 February 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This note examines the Revised Road to Yaoundé for the Fourteenth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) and the implications of its programme, sequencing, and institutional management. It situates the revised agenda within current dynamics in Geneva and assesses how process choices shape ministerial engagement, priority-setting, and the handling of long-standing development mandates. Drawing on lessons from earlier Ministerial Conferences, the note highlights the risks that compressed formats, limited transparency, and facilitator-driven structures pose for collective ownership and trust. It argues that the credibility of MC14 will depend on whether Members perceive the process as inclusive and balanced, and whether the Ministerial provides a clear and legitimate pathway for shaping the WTO's future direction. The note also includes recommendations.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-analytical-note-11-february-2026/

Digital Public Infrastructure for Democratic Data Monetization (South Centre Report, 18 February 2026)

By Rajesh Kumar & Meghna Dhariwal

Data monetization has long been discussed through narrow and fragmented lenses, often overlooking models that prioritize public value and shared benefit. While data is increasingly recognised as a strategic economic asset, conversations around its monetization have largely excluded approaches that empower individuals and communities alongside businesses. This paper proposes a more inclusive and development-centric model of data monetization enabled through Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), referred to as DPI for Democratic Data Monetization (DPI-DDM). First, we define data monetization, explore its importance in today's digital economy, and trace its evolution, highlighting past approaches and their limitations. Second, we introduce the concept of DPI and articulate why it serves as an optimal foundation for equitable and democratic data monetization. We also outline the key drivers and precedents that have led to the emergence of DPI-DDM. Third, we present a comprehensive framework for DPI-DDM, detailing its foundational layers, potential revenue streams, and the multifaceted benefits it offers to individuals, institutions, and society at large. Fourth, we examine the key challenges in the rollout and implementation of DPI-DDM, including issues related to governance, capacity, and trust. We conclude with actionable insights and a forward-looking roadmap to operationalise DPI-DDM as a vehicle for data equity, economic opportunity, and digital democracy.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-report-18-february-2026/

Input for the Working Group on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas Report on Peasant Territories on Land and Sea (February 2026)

By the South Centre

The South Centre has officially submitted its inputs to the UN Working Group on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas for their upcoming thematic report on "Peasant Territorialities of Sea and Land."

Our submission emphasises that realising the rights recognised in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants (UNDROP), particularly Article 17, depends on a fundamental shift in how "territory" is legally understood and economically managed.

The South Centre focuses on:

- How territory must be conceptualised as a socio-ecological space where cultural identity and sustainable production intersect, not merely as a financial asset.
- The dangers of "Blue Economy" industrialisation and "Green Grabbing," where conservation mechanisms like carbon offsets displace local communities.
- How States should recognise collective tenure rights and protect agrarian reform from Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) challenges.

Climate finance must support peasant agroecology, not displace the very people who steward the land.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-input-to-wg-on-peasants-february-2026/

Inputs to UN CSTD Working Group on Data Governance at All Levels
Track 3 – Considerations of Sharing the Benefits of Data (February 2026)

By the South Centre

The South Centre submission to the United Nations Working Group on Data Governance highlights how economic and social benefits of data can accrue more equitably to the people and countries of the Global South.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-input-to-un-cstd-wg-on-data-governance-track-3-february-2026/

MC14 in Yaoundé: Implementation of Consensus in Ministerial Preparations (An Analytical Note on the Evolving Consensus Practices in the Lead-Up to MC14, 23 February 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This Analytical Note examines four procedural developments in the preparations for MC14 against the consensus requirements of Article IX:1 of the Marrakesh Agreement. These concern: (i) the transmission of the draft fisheries subsidies decision without a formal meeting of the negotiating body; (ii) the General Council Chair's requirement that Members pre-secure consensus before proposed text can be considered for the Ministerial Declaration; (iii) the conduct of WTO Reform consultations outside formal WTO bodies; and (iv) the separation between the consensus-governed agenda and the non-consensus modalities that shape the Conference programme. Each development engages with one or more of the safeguards embedded in the treaty definition of consensus. The Note observes that these evolving practices, which have not been formally authorized by the membership, may have particular implications for developing countries and LDCs with limited delegation capacity.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-analytical-note-23-february-2026/

Contribution to the Report of the UN Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly Resolution on the "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", 13 February 2026

By South Centre

The illegal blockade against Cuba is a continuing violation of the UN Charter & international law and must be lifted to allow full realisation of human rights and SDGs. See the South Centre inputs to the UN Secretary-General's report, emphasising urgent need to end the blockade.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-contribution-to-unsg-report-on-embargo-against-cuba-13-february-2026/

Elevating South Voices in the Global AMR Response
***Report of Impact and Lessons Learned (2018 – 2025)* (March 2026)**

By South Centre

Evaluation of the initiatives implemented with financial support from the Fleming Fund, Department of Health and Social Care, United Kingdom.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-amr-impact-report-march-2026/

South Centre Inputs to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (February-March 2026)

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (UNFCITC) released three documents in January 2026 to inform negotiations at its Fourth Session, held in February 2026 in New York:

I. Co-Lead's Draft Framework Convention Template (22 Jan 2026) prepared by Workstream I, providing draft text for the Articles of the Convention.

II. Co-Lead's Draft Options Paper (21 Jan 2026) prepared by Workstream II, outlining options for the protocol on the taxation of services.

III. Co-Leads' Concept Note (23 Jan 2026) prepared by Workstream III, presenting potential design features for dispute prevention and resolution protocol mechanisms.

The South Centre submitted inputs on the three documents on February 26 and March 6, 2026, following a call for input by the INC. The submissions are reproduced below.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-inputs-to-inc-on-unfcitc-february-march-2026/

MC14 in Yaoundé: Twenty Questions on the Process Documents (A Note on Questions Arising from the MC14 Documents Released on 6 March 2026, 9 March 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This note raises twenty questions arising from the MC14 process documents released on 6 March 2026. It examines whether the conference architecture is consistent with the Geneva First Principle, the WTO Rules of Procedure, and the member-driven character of the organisation.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-note-11-march-2026/

MC14 in Yaoundé: Consider, Endorse or Finalize? Mixed Procedural Signals in the WTO Reform Package (An Analytical Note on the Procedural Design of the MC14 WTO Reform Package, 17 March 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This note examines the procedural design of the MC14 WTO reform package and its implications for developing countries. It maps six conflicting formulations of what Ministers are expected to do with the draft reform texts, identifies an institutional tilt towards the Facilitator's document, and shows how non-binding breakout "takeaways" and informal small group consultations are being used to shape post-MC14 work. It concludes with practical recommendations for safeguarding a genuinely member-driven, consensus-based reform process.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-analytical-note-17-march-2026/

MC14 in Yaoundé: Mapping of Member Submissions on WTO Reform (A Reference Note on Member and Group Submissions on WTO Reform, 19 March 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This reference note maps written submissions on WTO reform circulated to the WTO General Council between May 2024 and March 2026, to support negotiators' preparations for MC14 in Yaoundé. It organises Member and group positions thematically, with comparative tables on issues such as decision-making and consensus, special and differential treatment, plurilaterals, institutional governance, and dispute settlement, and includes a detailed comparison of the EU and Paraguay draft ministerial decisions on WTO reform. A final cross-cutting section distils areas of convergence and divergence to offer a factual overview of the current reform landscape.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-reference-note-19-march-2026/

Prioritize Antibiotic Access to Tackle Resistance (South Centre and One Health Trust Information Note, March 2026)

92 million deaths could be averted by 2050 with improved access to antibiotics and infection care. The time to act is now, and it requires both access and stewardship.

Together with One Health Trust, we highlight key recommendations to make it happen in a pointed brief.

* Available in 3 languages (English, Portuguese and Spanish)

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-one-health-trust-information-note-march-2026/

Elevating South Voices in the Global AMR Response (South Centre AMR Impact Webinar Report, March 2026)

On 5 March 2026, the South Centre convened a virtual webinar to mark the conclusion of its seven-year antimicrobial resistance (AMR) programme, supported by the Fleming Fund, Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), United Kingdom (UK) since 2018. The main objective of the webinar was to present the findings of an Impact Assessment of the programme and to gather reflections from key partners on lessons learned and the way forward. The South Centre emphasised that the end of the Fleming Fund grant marks a transition, not a closure as the organisation remains committed to AMR as a core area of work and is actively seeking new partnerships.

The webinar was opened by Prof. Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre, and moderated throughout by Dr Viviana Munoz Tellez, Head of the Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity programme of the South Centre. Eleven speakers from multilateral institutions, the UK

Fleming Fund, government delegations, academics, civil society, and the media shared perspectives and calls to action.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-amr-impact-webinar-report-march-2026/

The UN Treaty on Business and Human Rights: Regulating Corporate Power in the Era of Deregulation (South Centre and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Geneva Office Report, March 2026)

By Daniel Fernando Uribe Terán

This study examines how the United Nations Legally Binding Instrument (LBI) serves as a vital tool to preserve state sovereignty and to ensure the primacy of human rights in the era of deregulation.

https://www.southcentre.int/fes-sc-report-march-2026/

Global Activism to Make Patented Drugs More Accessible: An ITPC Case Study of Bedaquiline for Treatment of Tuberculosis (South Centre Report, March 2026)

By Priti Patnaik

This report documents efforts by civil society organizations (CSOs) in various countries, including Brazil, Ukraine and Thailand, to make Bedaquiline more accessible by using the flexibilities provided in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) – the safeguards in the intellectual property system that take into account public health needs. The case study was undertaken during 2023-2024.

Tuberculosis remains a major global health crisis, with drug-resistant forms requiring newer more effective treatments like Bedaquiline which offers shorter treatment times and fewer side effects than older regimens. The report offers an overview of global and country-specific efforts by CSOs to challenge patents held by Johnson & Johnson on the tuberculosis (TB) drug bedaquiline (BDQ) to improve patient access and affordability. CSOs primarily focused on opposing “evergreening” secondary patents that extend Johnson & Johnson’s monopoly beyond the original patent expiration, arguing that these patents lack inventive merit and artificially inflate prices. Successful actions, such as patent rejections in India and Thailand and Johnson & Johnson’s agreement not to enforce patents in 134 low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), are discussed alongside challenges, including judicial difficulties, insufficient political will, and the strategic importance of pursuing pre-grant patent oppositions.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-report-march-2026/

South Centre Input for the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development
For the 2026 thematic reports to the Human Rights Council on “Participation in development” and to the United Nations General Assembly on “Peace for development” (April 2026)

The South Centre has submitted its latest input to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development for the 2026 thematic reports on “Participation in Development” and “Peace for Development”.

Our report underscores that development is not a charitable concession but an inalienable human right. To overcome the structural violence of the current international order, we advocate for:

- Reforming the Global Architecture: Democratising the Bretton Woods institutions and the UN Security Council to rectify the historical underrepresentation of Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

- A “Human Rights Economy”: Transitioning from voluntary corporate “tick-box” exercises to a Legally Binding Instrument (LBI) that ensures extraterritorial accountability for transnational corporations.
- Dismantling “Regulatory Chill”: Reforming the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) system, which currently prioritizes corporate profits over the policy space needed for development and climate justice.
- A Paradigm Shift to “Positive Peace”: Redirecting a portion of the $2.7 trillion global military expenditure toward the SDGs and grant-based climate reparations.
- Substantive Justice: Recognising traditional and indigenous knowledge as valid evidence in policy-making and ensuring reparative justice for historical dispossessions.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-input-for-sr-on-rtd-17-april-2026/

South Centre Inputs to the Global Dialogue on AI Governance (April 2026)

These inputs have been provided in response to the letter by the Co-Chairs of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance dated 18 March 2026 requesting for stakeholders to share perspectives, priorities and proposals to inform the thematic focus, structure and preparations for the first Global Dialogue, to be held in Geneva on 6-7 July.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-inputs-to-the-global-dialogue-on-ai-governance-april-2026/

The First Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels: Reclaiming Multilateralism for a Just Transition (South Centre Informal Note, 28 April 2026)

By Daniel Uribe Terán

The First Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels, co-hosted by Colombia and the Netherlands, serves as a necessary platform for reclaiming multilateralism for a just transition. This paper analyses how the conference addresses the ‘judicialization’ of climate obligations following landmark 2025 advisory opinions from the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)**, the **International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)**, and the **Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR)**. It highlights critical barriers facing developing countries, specifically the ‘regulatory chill’ caused by Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms and the ‘debt-fossil fuel trap’ that binds extractive economies to external risks. It also recognises that integrating the ‘People’s Summit’ outcomes into the official Conference could promote a reparative financial model and strengthen the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). Ultimately, Santa Marta should provide a blueprint for systemic reform, ensuring that global decarbonisation respects resource sovereignty and human dignity while moving toward a coordinated, legally backed effort for collective survival.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-informal-note-28-april-2026/

South Centre Input for the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee
Study on the Impact of Artificial Intelligence Systems on Good Governance (May 2026)

The South Centre has submitted technical input to the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee regarding AI systems and governance. The submission analyses the integration of AI through the framework of Rule of Law principles: effectiveness, accountability, and inclusiveness.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-input-for-the-human-rights-council-advisory-committee-may-2026/

The sixty-fourth sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SB64), Belém indicators, plastic treaty and Santa Marta outcomes (South Centre Informal Note, 5 June 2026)

By Daniel Uribe Terán and Touba Esfahani Nejad

The Belém Adaptation Indicators agreed at COP30 to make adaptation more measurable. While the measurement of the adaptation efforts is a step forward, it is not sufficient. The indicators can be used for comparison and surveillance. However, the adaptation objective of the Paris Agreement is to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability of persons and of vulnerable ecosystems that are critical for the maintenance of forest ecosystems and the provision of forest ecosystem services. To achieve these objectives, it is necessary to take effective action to provide finance, technology transfer, debt relief and capacity-building. In SB64, developing countries will have the opportunity to discuss what is the role of reporting while support for implementing adaptation measures are missing.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-informal-note-5-june-2026/

Addressing the Systemic Risks of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) to Climate Action (South Centre Informal Note, 5 June 2026)

By Daniel Uribe Terán

The current international investment agreement (IIA) framework, featuring over 2,200 treaties with Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms, acts as a structural barrier to the implementation of key aspects of the Paris Agreement. By protecting fossil fuel investments, those treaties create significant financial risks that may induce "regulatory chill," deterring states from implementing necessary climate mitigation measures. Recent rulings from the International Court of Justice, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the European Court of Human Rights have affirmed states' sovereign rights to regulate for climate action, providing new legal tools to challenge the ISDS status quo. However, these judicial developments do not eliminate litigation risks or guarantee favourable outcomes. Consequently, states must pursue systemic reform, including treaty modernisation, the termination of outdated IIAs, the implementation of comprehensive climate carve-outs, and restrictions on forward-looking damages. Addressing these legal barriers at upcoming forums like the 64th sessions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Subsidiary Bodies (SB 64) is essential to align international investment law with the existential imperative of a low-emission transition.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-informal-note-5-june-2026-2/

Transparency Without Results: UN Climate Reports Fail to Show Effective Transfer of Technology to Developing Countries (South Centre Report, June 2026)

By Ningxiner Li

This report synthesizes the findings of research on the reporting and compliance mechanisms governing transfer of technology obligations of developed country Parties under the United Nations climate change regime. The legal basis for transfer of technology has evolved from foundational principles in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to an enhanced transparency framework (ETF) as part of the Paris Agreement, with defined modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support (MPGs). The ETF requires that developed countries submit Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) detailing their transfer of technology provided to developing countries. Our review of developed countries' first BTR submissions reveals significant shortcomings that hinder proper evaluation of compliance with the transfer of technology obligations. The current system allows reporting that meets procedural requirements but fails to deliver clear, comparable, and outcome-oriented data essential for enforcing the legal obligations on transfer of technology and ensuring it serves as a genuine catalyst for global climate actions. This report argues that the ETF, as currently operationalized, prioritizes procedural transparency over substantive

effectiveness. The design of the reporting requirements is characterized by discretionary language, fragmented methodologies, and weak linkages between financial and technological support. These features undermine the ability of Parties, review bodies, and the global stocktake to assess whether technology is being delivered in a manner that meaningfully supports developing countries' climate action. Recommendations are advanced to strengthen reporting requirements, enhance traceability and comparability, and reorient the transparency framework toward measurable outcomes rather than process-based compliance. As the first comprehensive review of the first BTR submissions by developed countries, this report is intended to provide an evidentiary foundation for the 2028 MPGs review.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-report-june-2026/

TOOLKIT: Leveraging the Universal Periodic Review to Advance the Rights of Women and Girls to the Highest Attainable Standards of Health (June 2026)

By Daniel Uribe Terán

This Toolkit serves as an operational guide for State officials, policymakers, civil society organisations (CSOs), national human rights institutions (NHRIs), and healthcare professionals on how to leverage the United Nations Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism. The primary focus is advancing the rights of women and girls to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, with a specific focus on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

The toolkit outlines the international normative frameworks, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), that establish state obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil these rights, as set out in the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality (AAAQ) framework. It details evidence-gathering strategies using a Human Rights-Based Approach to Data (HRBAD), guidelines for drafting impactful stakeholder or "shadow" reports, and the integration of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) recommendations. Furthermore, it emphasises national implementation mechanisms, showcasing digital tracking innovations like Paraguay's System for Monitoring Recommendations (SIMORE) and the Pacific region's Integrated Management and Planning of Actions Open Source Software (IMPACT OSS). Real-world state reporting dynamics are illustrated through 4th-cycle UPR report excerpts from Mexico, South Africa, and Costa Rica.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-toolkit-26-june-2026/

South Centre Input to CSTD Inter-Sessional Panel Meeting on Data Governance for Development: From Asymmetry to Equitable Stewardship

July 2026

Data Governance for Development needs equitable participation by the Global South, capacity-building & fully realising the benefits of data. See our inputs to the Issues Paper by UNCTAD for upcoming UN CSTD Intersessional Panel.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-input-to-cstd-on-data-governance-july-2026/

South Centre Inputs on Workstream III on dispute prevention and resolution (Co-Leads' Draft Protocol on the Prevention and Resolution of Tax Disputes)

24 August 2026

The South Centre supports the development of an effective multilateral framework for the prevention and resolution of tax disputes. The Protocol should reflect the different capacities of States and provide sufficient flexibility for broad participation.

The Protocol should contain sufficient legal and procedural detail to provide a legal basis for mechanisms where none currently exist and to ensure coherence with mechanisms available under existing instruments. As such, the protocol itself should establish who can invoke it, when it applies, the obligations of competent authorities, and the relationship with existing instruments, and minimum procedural safeguards. Detailed operational procedures such as how an advance pricing arrangement (APA) or joint audit is conducted or mediator is appointed should be addressed through accompanying guidance issued by the Parties to the Protocol.

The protocol should cover the broad range of dispute-prevention mechanisms, but none should be mandatory, to allow flexibility given different State capacities.

The Mutual Agreement Procedures (MAPs) could constitute the core mechanism for the resolution of tax disputes under the Protocol, as it has a well-established basis in international tax practice.

The Protocol should not establish mandatory arbitration. Any arbitration mechanism, if retained, should be expressly voluntary and based on the consent of all competent authorities concerned.

The timelines provided in the protocol should be indicative rather than hard deadlines.

The protocol should provide for capacity building and technical assistance for the implementation.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-inputs-on-workstream-iii-on-dispute-prevention-and-resolution-24-august-2026/

South Centre Inputs on Workstream I – Co-Lead's Zero Draft of UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation

26 August 2026

I. Fair allocation of taxing rights should include nexus factors based on OR rather than AND, should specify methods of allocation and be de-linked from the objective of avoiding double taxation.
II. Conference of State Parties (COSP) should be the supreme body for administering the Framework Convention (FC) and the Protocols and any other instruments it produces, be able to undertake any actions required to achieve the objectives of the FC, and should be able to make decisions by simple majority vote.
III. Amendments to the FC and adoption of the FC's Protocols should also be by simple majority.
IV. All Parties to the FC and its Protocols should make regular and mandatory contributions. This is essential for the success of the UNFCITC. Sustained non-payment should result in denial of voting rights, as is currently the practice in the UN General Assembly under Article 19 of the UN Charter.
V. The commitment to align existing tax treaties, domestic law and other instruments with the FC and its Protocols should not be request-triggered, and the COSP should determine a timeline by when it will be done.
VI. The COSP shall take measures to ensure that no Party to the FC is prevented from implementing the Convention, its Protocols and any other instruments adopted by the COSP.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-inputs-on-workstream-i-co-leads-zero-draft-of-unfcitc-26-august-2026/

South Centre Inputs on Workstream II on Taxation of Services (Co-Lead's Draft Protocol on the Taxation of Income from Cross-Border Services)

26 August 2026

The South Centre welcomes the Draft Protocol on the Taxation of Income from Cross-Border Services and submits the following comments:

I. **Scope**: Cover all cross-border services broadly, not limiting it to technical and digital services alone, to avoid fragmentation.

II. **Optionality**: No reservations on key substantive provisions (Articles 5, 6, 7, 9); reservations permitted only for non-key administrative/procedural matters (e.g., rates, timelines).
III. **Article 1**. Subject to tax rule can apply to cross-border services income within Protocol scope, with the statutory rate fixed in the Protocol; extend paragraph 4's residence state preservation to Articles 5–11.
IV. **Taxes covered**: Exclude excise taxes.
V. **Define** "**beneficial owner," "payer," "payment,"** and **"special relationship**"; as applied in Articles 5 and 6.
VI. The automated digital services list in Article 6(4) should be expressly non-exhaustive.
VII. The protocol should **provide guidance on nexus and revenue-sourcing rules** under Articles 5 and 6, particularly for remote/data-driven monetization with no direct in-country payment.
VIII. The protocol should **broaden "physical presence**" beyond employees/agents and provide **guidance on profit-allocation methods**, including simplified profit allocation approaches under Article 9.
IX. **Existing treaties:** Where inconsistent with an existing treaty, the Protocol should ideally automatically override the relevant provisions. However, in case treaty-by-treaty renegotiation is preferred, then the Protocol should trigger mandatory renegotiation within a defined timeframe aligned with Article 21 of the Framework Convention.
X. **Implementation:** In case the option of treaty-by-treaty renegotiation is chosen, then implementation can be done by a UN Fast-Track Instrument to streamline bilateral treaty alignment.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-inputs-on-workstream-ii-on-taxation-of-services-26-august-2026/

Beyond *Amicus Curiae*: Rethinking the Role of Third-Party Participation in Investment Arbitration and Environmental Governance (South Centre Report, September 2026)

By Paulina Kuehme, Lakshmi Swathi Ganti, Brian Kelly Nyaga, Mattia Semenza

Supervisor: Prof. Elena Cima

Prepared for the South Centre as part of the Geneva Graduate Institute's LL.M. Legal Clinic Programme, International Environmental Law and Governance Stream

This document examines third-party participation in Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), with a particular emphasis on environmental considerations. It investigates how to ensure procedural fairness and enable meaningful involvement of affected communities in cases concerning environmental protection. The study assesses the scope and challenges of such participation, including the ability to present evidence and legal arguments related to environmental impacts. It also explores the potential role of third-party involvement in shaping counterclaims against investors for environmental damage, and its possible influence in mitigating compensation by introducing arguments and evidence related to environmental costs. Through this analysis, the project aims to support a more balanced and sustainable ISDS framework – one that protects both investors and the environment – while fostering community empowerment and strengthening accountability for environmental harm.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-report-september-2026/

South Centre Input on Technologies related to Climate Change and their Impacts on Human Rights (Report of the Special Rapporteur on Climate Change)

September 2026

Technological progress alone cannot resolve the compounding crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Without a human rights-centred framework, deploying speculative and capital-intensive technologies risks reproducing historical extractivism and shifting ecological and social burdens onto developing countries and vulnerable communities.

The South Centre has submitted its formal input to the **UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change**, addressing the multifaceted impacts of climate-related technologies.

Drawing on landmark advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), as well as the Right to Science under Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), our submission underscores four structural priorities:

1. **Comprehensive Social Life Cycle Assessments (SLCAs):** Assessments must go beyond operational carbon accounting to evaluate the full value chain—from upstream mineral extraction and localized water depletion to downstream e-waste disposal.
2. **Binding Due Diligence & Precautionary Principle:** States hold an objective duty to prevent significant transboundary harm. Stringent necessity tests, human rights impact assessments, and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) are mandatory before licensing new interventions.
3. **Operationalising Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC):** Advanced economies with greater historical responsibility must fulfill obligations via direct domestic decarbonization, public grant-based climate finance, and unencumbered technology transfers, not by treating developing nations as testing grounds for high-risk offsets.
4. **Safeguarding Sovereign Regulatory Space from ISDS:** Outdated international investment agreements with Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms and speculative discounted cash flow damages lead to “regulatory chill”. States must protect their policy space to drive community-based defossilisation without the threat of multi-billion-dollar investor arbitrations.

https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-input-to-sr-on-climate-change-report-september-2026/

SOUTHVIEWS

Contract-based Arbitration: Lessons Learned from Bolivia's Extractives Industries (SouthViews No. 281, 31 January 2025)

By Daniel Uribe Teran

Bolivia has undergone a significant shift in its approach to investment dispute resolution, moving away from reliance on Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) and international arbitration towards domestic mechanisms and contract-based arbitration. This shift, driven by a desire to assert greater state sovereignty over natural resources, seeks to align dispute resolution with national development priorities while reducing the costs associated with international arbitration. The recent Shell Bolivia Corporation v. YPF Bolivia case highlights the complexities inherent in contract-based arbitration within the extractive sector, emphasizing the need for meticulous contract drafting and a clear definition of arbitrable disputes within the framework of Bolivian law.

This article analyses Bolivia's transition from reliance on international investment treaties and arbitration to a domestic, contract-centred approach for resolving disputes in its extractive industries. The article examines how the legal framework adopted by Bolivia highlights the role of contract-based arbitration in addressing disputes related to investment, production, technology transfer, environmental and social impacts, labour relations, and contract interpretation. The article draws lessons from other developing countries' experience, recommending that Bolivia further strengthen its investment framework by adopting clear protection standards, prioritizing fair administrative procedures, and emphasizing domestic remedies. This approach seeks to balance attracting responsible investment with protecting state sovereignty and promoting sustainable development in Bolivia's extractive industries.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-281-31-january-2025/

America First, Trade Last: The Rise of Weaponised Tariffs (SouthViews No. 282, 13 February 2025)

By Vahini Naidu

Donald Trump's return to the White House has reignited economic nationalism, transforming tariffs into instruments of political and economic coercion. His administration's four-phase strategy—setting policy objectives, conducting strategic reviews, imposing preemptive tariffs, and unpredictable brinkmanship—signals a shift towards unilateralism that bypasses traditional legal frameworks and undermines multilateral trade governance. The recent tariffs on Mexico, Canada, and China, imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) on security grounds, represent an unprecedented expansion of executive power in trade policy. As the U.S. weakens the WTO and prioritises economic nationalism, the Global South faces a decisive moment. The increasing use of trade measures for geopolitical leverage threatens to further marginalise developing countries. In response, the Global South must take a proactive role in shaping the global trade landscape—deepening South-South cooperation, enhancing regional trade frameworks, and advancing structural reforms to promote resilience and economic sovereignty in an era of growing trade uncertainty. This piece argues that Trump's trade strategy marks a broader shift towards a power-driven trade order, where economic dominance supersedes rules-based governance, and that the Global South must act decisively to prevent a future where trade is dictated by the strongest rather than negotiated through fairness and equity.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-282-13-february-2025/

Knowledge and Global Inequality (SouthViews No. 283, 28 February 2025)

By Dev Nathan

This paper argues that the global capitalist economy has been and is built on the monopolization of advanced technological knowledge through trade secrets and intellectual property rights protection,

controlled by companies and countries of the Global North. Companies and countries in the Global South use commoditized knowledge or knowledge in the commons. In the colonial period this was largely confined to the production of agricultural commodities and now to carry out the bulk of production functions. This division of knowledge and the difference in returns to monopolized knowledge and knowledge in the commons drives global inequality. The paper points out that countries of the Global South that moved out of the middle-income trap did so by advancing from just using knowledge to also creating knowledge. Finally, it argues that there is a need to reform the system of intellectual property rights in order to promote inclusion and not exclusion.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-283-28-february-2025/

WTO at 30: A Reckoning or Just Another Review? (SouthViews No. 284, 21 March 2025)

By Vahini Naidu

As the World Trade Organization (WTO) marks its 30th anniversary, Director-General (DG) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has called for a reflection process to assess the organisation's achievements and chart its future. For developing countries, this reflection presents a significant opportunity. A well-managed process could begin to address the structural imbalances embedded in WTO rules that constrain policy space, limit technology access, and restrict development pathways. Conversely, a poorly handled approach risks reducing it to a narrow review that fails to account for the broader economic realities shaping trade and the persistent development needs of the Global South. This paper argues that the DG's reflection process must be firmly member-driven, with clear governance principles, and rooted in a comprehensive development audit to assess how WTO rules have impacted developing countries over the past three decades. The paper contends that a meaningful reflection requires more than procedural introspection; it requires a serious conversation about the future of global trade governance and its relevance to development, ensuring that the WTO's evolution genuinely responds to the priorities of its majority membership.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-284-21-march-2025/

Advancing International Cooperation under the Global Digital Compact (SouthViews No. 285, 28 March 2025)

By Danish

Bridging the global digital divide in new and emerging technologies, particularly Artificial Intelligence, will require developing countries to strongly leverage international cooperation to build digital skills, knowledge and gain access to these technologies which can accelerate their digital transformation and sustainable development. This emphasis on international cooperation is also deeply embedded in the Global Digital Compact, which was adopted as part of the Pact for the Future. This paper therefore looks at how international cooperation modalities have been included in the GDC across the different issue areas, how developing countries are already engaging with the GDC through their national initiatives, and provides some useful considerations going forward.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-285-28-march-2025/

Human Rights Council 58: Neurotechnology, Ethical Frontiers and Human Rights (SouthViews No. 286, 9 April 2025)

By Daniel Uribe

The UN Human Rights Council's 58th session examined the impact of neurotechnology on human rights, with a particular focus on privacy. The Special Rapporteur guided discussions on the report on neurotechnology, which detailed risks to privacy, autonomy, and mental integrity, and proposed principles such as human dignity, informed consent, stringent security measures, rights-by-design, and precautionary approaches to the development of this technology. This *SouthViews* considers the

Member States' discussion during the presentation of this report, taking into account the profound ethical challenges, the need for safeguards, equitable access (especially for developing nations), and international cooperation, while voicing concerns about potential misuse. The relevance of UNESCO's ongoing work on the ethics of neurotechnology is also considered. The session underscored the pressing need for a proactive, holistic, and ethically grounded governance framework for neurotechnology, emphasizing core human rights principles and international collaboration to ensure the responsible development and use of this technology.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-286-9-april-2025/

Mali's Mining Shake-Up: Tax audits reveal massive revenue loss and lead to stringent policy changes (SouthViews No. 287, 28 April 2025)

By Anne Wanyagathi Maina and Kolawole Omole

Mali's recent regulatory changes and tax dispute settlements highlight the government's determination to secure a greater share of economic benefits from its natural resources. Mali's approach presents a lesson for resource-rich developing countries. The article explores the country's mining tax reforms, ensuing tax disputes and settlements, and implications on revenue mobilization.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-287-28-april-2025/

Leaving the WHO? The US Just Shot Itself in the Foot (SouthViews No. 288, 9 May 2025)

By Germán Velásquez

At the start of his second term, United States president Donald Trump has again announced that the US will formally leave the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2025. Leaving the WHO is a financial blow to the Organization, as many have pointed out, but it is much more than that. Trump's decision to abandon WHO is counterproductive and puts at risk the capacity of the organization to perform its role as the global health agency. The WHO has been central to responding to global health emergencies for more than seven decades. Its work in the fight against diseases such as smallpox, polio, Ebola and HIV/AIDS, or the binding international convention against tobacco use, has saved millions of lives.

The US' withdrawal from WHO will have a serious impact on various aspects of global health, and the US will itself be directly affected. WHO members should unite to strengthen the WHO and counteract this decision by the current US Administration.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-288-9-may-2025/

Book Review: What Do We Know and What Should We Do About Tax Justice (SouthViews No. 289, 30 June 2025)

By Abdul Muheet Chowdhary

The book W*hat Do We Know and What Should We Do About Tax Justice*, written by Alex Cobham, CEO of the Tax Justice Network, is an excellent summary of the state of knowledge on tax justice and provides a clear direction on what should be the goals of the tax justice movement going forward.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-289-30-june-2025/

The Importance of Balanced Intellectual Property Systems for Patients' Access to Medicines: An Analysis (SouthViews No. 290, 5 August 2025)

By Archana Jatkar and Nicolás Tascón

Access to safe, effective, cost-effective, and quality-assured medicines is fundamental from a patients' perspective. The International Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (IGBA) recently released a report highlighting the critical balance between innovation, competition, and timely access to medicines. This article delves into the key findings of IGBA's report, their implications on patient access to medicines and national healthcare budgets, and the IGBA's recommendations for improving the global pharmaceutical landscape.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-290-5-august-2025/

Alternative Modality for Landmark Decision of UN Convention on Biodiversity: Bounded Openness over Natural Information (SouthViews No. 291, 8 August 2025)

By Joseph Henry Vogel

The Secretariat of the 1993 United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity requested Submissions of Views on "possible additional modalities for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources". Bounded Openness over Natural Information is an alternative that could supplant the modalities of Decision 16/2 and achieve fairness, equity and efficiency.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-291-8-august-2025/

Global South's Aspirations for Inclusive Human Development (SouthViews No. 292, 29 August 2025)

By Sudheendra Kulkarni

China's epoch-changing success in complete eradication of extreme poverty by the end of 2020 has many lessons for other developing countries, including India, that still have a large burden of poverty. India and China, as the only two nations with populations over one billion, should expand all-round cooperation based on mutual learning. Without any doubt, this will prove highly beneficial to inclusive Global Development.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-292-29-august-2025/

Bandung and Beyond: Reclaiming Collective Agency through Triangular Cooperation (SouthViews No. 293, 12 September 2025)

By Amitabh Mattoo

Seventy years after the 1955 Bandung Conference, the Global South finds itself once again at a moment of moral and geopolitical reckoning. This article argues that Bandung must be reimagined not as a commemorative episode, but as an evolving framework of collective agency. By placing triangular cooperation at its centre, and by advancing new epistemic and institutional partnerships, we can craft a more inclusive, ethical, and action-oriented multilateralism for the 21st century.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-293-12-september-2025/

Trump and the Return of the Nation-State: Hegemony and Crisis of the Neoliberal Global Order (SouthViews No. 294, 23 September 2025)

By Humberto Campodonico

This article examines the deepening crisis of the global economic and trade order established after World War II, a crisis accelerated by Donald Trump's return to the United States presidency. Trump has adopted a stance openly hostile to neoliberal globalization, promoting instead a project centered on

reinforcing the nation-state, employing commercial coercion, and using economic power to preserve US hegemony by neutralizing China. His “reciprocal tariffs” and the “Big Beautiful Bill” illustrate this shift, breaking with the World Trade Organization and consolidating elite power while sharply reducing social spending. Far from correcting the inequities of neoliberal globalization, these measures channel the social dislocations of deindustrialization and the impoverishment of the US Rust Belt into an authoritarian discourse of economic sovereignty.

The article situates this process within the broader crisis of democratic capitalism, marked by declining trust in liberal democracy and the rise of populisms and authoritarian regimes that capitalize on discontent without offering redistributive solutions. The analysis draws on Graham Allison’s “Thucydides Trap” and Carla Norrlöf’s reading of Ibn Khaldun to explain both hegemonic rivalry and internal fragmentation. Finally, it explores alternatives to the failed neoliberal order and argues for opening a collective debate on a new international system in which the Global South must play a role.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-294-23-september-2025/

New Amendments to the International Health Regulations: Strengthening Access to Health Products in Emergencies and Pandemics (SouthViews No. 295, 24 September 2025)

By Viviana Munoz Tellez

The International Health Regulations amendments entered into force on September 19, 2025 across most World Health Organization (WHO) Member States. These updates don’t give WHO any new powers but help countries work better together to advance fair and timely access to health products such as vaccines, treatments and diagnostics needed to respond to health emergencies. The real challenge now is implementation and building the necessary capabilities to make these improvements function.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-295-24-september-2025/

WTO TRIPS Agreement: Insights from a Negotiator at the Uruguay Round of GATT (SouthViews No. 296, 1 October 2025)

By Jayashree Watal

This article recounts how the TRIPS Agreement negotiations took place from the perspective of a participant in the negotiations. It outlines India’s concerns with the developed countries’ proposals and notes that most developing countries wrongly thought that TRIPS was about trade in counterfeit goods, a subject that was first broached at the end of the Tokyo Round in 1978-9. On the contrary, Industry associations of the US, EU and Japan had, quite early on in the negotiations in 1988, drawn up a legal text very close to what became the final text of the TRIPS Agreement.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-296-1-october-2025/

The negotiations on the Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing System under the WHO Pandemic Agreement: State of Play as of September 2025 (SouthViews No. 297, 3 October 2025)

By Viviana Munoz Tellez, German Velasquez

The World Health Organization (WHO) Member States adopted a Pandemic Agreement in May 2025 but deferred negotiations on the critical Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing System (PABS). Despite the tight timeline, the Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) has made minimal progress as of September 2025, with no draft text produced and formal negotiations yet to begin. The PABS system is essential for pandemic equity, balancing rapid pathogen sharing with equitable access to vaccines and treatments. But with the current approach to the IGWG process, without formal negotiations underway, Member States risk failing to finalize the PABS Annex by the March 2026 deadline.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-297-3-october-2025/

A Revolution in HIV/AIDS Treatment (SouthViews No. 298, 6 October 2025)

By German Velasquez

On September 24, 2025, two agreements were announced with generic drug manufacturers in India for the supply of generic lenacapavir at $40 (instead of the original $28,218) per patient per year. However, these generics can only be supplied to the countries included in Gilead's voluntary license, excluding too many from accessing this price.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-298-6-october-2025/

WIPO's new Treaty on genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge – a long-awaited and groundbreaking step towards combatting biopiracy (SouthViews No. 299, 9 October 2025)

By Wend Wendland

WIPO's new Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge responds to an over 25 years' demand by developing countries to combat biopiracy. The Treaty is the first intellectual property treaty for which those countries were the proponents. While the Treaty's adoption on May 24, 2024 was a momentous milestone in the evolution of the patent system, it is critical that the Treaty's paradigm-shifting political and symbolic importance be matched by its practical effectiveness.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-299-9-october-2025/

Promoting a Symbiotic Relationship Between Trade Policy and Climate Action (SouthViews No. 300, 21 November 2025)

By Vahini Naidu

This paper is based on remarks delivered in the lead up to COP30. It outlines how African countries are working to align trade, climate action, and development priorities through early transparency on climate-related trade measures, technology transfer, and the protection of policy space for green industrialisation. It also highlights the growing focus on critical minerals, the rise of unilateral climate-related trade measures, and the need to bring scattered initiatives into a coherent multilateral framework that supports fair and sustainable outcomes.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-300-21-november-2025/

Brazil's challenges in implementing the highest attainable standard in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SouthViews No. 301, 16 December 2025)

By Camila C. Gasparro

This paper examines Brazil's efforts to improve women's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. Brazil is making progress through the Ministry of Health and collaborative engagement with social movements. However, persistent structural barriers continue to disproportionately undermine women's sexual and reproductive rights, particularly among Black, Indigenous, and vulnerable populations.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-301-16-december-2025/

Promoting Health Equity and Reproductive Rights in Angola (SouthViews No. 302, 17 December 2025)

By Sandra Benge Neto

This article examines Angola´s progress in rebuilding its health system in the post conflict era, focusing on health equity and the promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in alignment with the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) and international human rights commitments.

Despite significant advances – such as the expansion of primary healthcare, municipalization of services, and youth–friendly centres – Angola continues to face challenges including geographic disparities, sociocultural barriers to contraception, insufficient funding, and limited data systems. Drawing from national initiatives and community based experiences, this article highlights best practices and strategic recommendations to accelerate Angola´s implementation of the Maputo Protocol and achieve universal, gender–responsive health coverage.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-302-17-december-2025/

Experiences and Challenges Faced by Sri Lanka in Implementing the Highest Attainable Standard of Health, Including Health Equity and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SouthViews No. 303, 22 December 2025)

By Janani Sivapakthan

Sri Lanka's long-standing commitment to free and equitable healthcare with a focus on primary healthcare has yielded impressive achievements in health equity, maternal and child health, disease elimination, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. However, Sri Lanka faces challenges in upholding health equity in the context of escalating domestic and global pressures. Safeguarding the highest attainable standard of health for all Sri Lankans requires addressing underinvestment, workforce migration, uneven service distribution, and the emerging burden of non-communicable diseases in a context of economic constraint.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-303-22-december-2025/

Trade Policy Uncertainty and Impacts on Developing Countries' Exporters: The Case of Sri Lanka (SouthViews No. 304, 21 January 2026)

By Anushka Wijesinha and Senith Abeyanayake

Key Takeaways:

- Rapid increases in uncertainty have material implications for economies. Each tariff announcement by the US President triggered a fresh round of uncertainty and speculation, with ambiguities of implementation and frequent changes in timelines.
- Global indices tracking uncertainty are recording historic highs in recent months.
- Our study of Sri Lankan export-oriented firms finds that there is wide variation in how, and to what extent, trade policy uncertainty has affected them. Firms experienced mixed impacts on orders to the US, with differences observed both within and across sectors.
- Buyer reactions to tariff announcements were mixed, with some 'wait-and-see' approaches and some margin shrinkage. Exporters have taken diverse measures to adapt to the uncertainty, ranging from absorbing margin losses to commencing export diversification.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-304-21-january-2026/

Taxation of Digital Services – A Domestic Law Solution for Overcoming Tax Treaty Barriers (SouthViews No. 305, 23 February 2026)

By Radhakishan Rawal

Tax treaty treatment of source taxation of cross-border services continues to be an unresolved issue even fifteen years after it was recognized as a major issue within the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Project. While the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Inclusive Framework's Amount A of Pillar One does not seem to be getting finalised, at the United Nations (UN) an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) is working on a UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation which will offer a solution to the issue. The success of the UN's initiative will depend on how many developed countries sign the Framework Convention and relevant Protocols. This article evaluates a Domestic Law Solution to the issue which was presented at the February 2026 session of INC at New York. As per this solution, the domestic law of the source country can define the term "profits of an enterprise" to exclude consideration for digital services and thus bypass treaty restrictions on source taxation. As a result of this, the source country will be able to levy tax on such income in terms of Article 21(3) of the tax treaties signed by it provided the wording of Article 21(3) is identical to that in the UN Model Tax Convention.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-305-23-february-2026/

G20 Critical Minerals Deal: A Step Toward Equity or a New Extractive Frontier (SouthViews No. 306, 26 February 2026)

By Touba Esfahani Nejad

This paper examines the Group of Twenty (G20) Critical Minerals Framework adopted under South Africa's Presidency and the extent to which it represents a shift toward more equitable mineral governance. It analyses the Framework's key pillars and political commitments alongside the Johannesburg G20 Leaders' Declaration, assessing their implications for mineral-rich developing countries, importing economies, refining hubs, and the G20 itself. The paper pays particular attention to gaps between stated ambitions and practical constraints having in view financing, technology transfer, and the policy space under the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. It concludes by identifying the conditions under which the Framework could support real value addition and industrialization in the Global South rather than function as a supply-security tool for advanced economies.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-306-26-february-2026/

Engaging the UN Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence for the Global South (SouthViews No. 307, 16 April 2026)

By Danish

The UN General Assembly has set up the new Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence to assess how the development and deployment of AI technologies are creating risks, impacts and opportunities. Co-chaired by Maria Ressa and Yoshua Bengio, the Panel will be presenting its inaugural report in July 2026. This paper presents significant priorities for developing and least developed countries around AI impacts, benefit-sharing and governance, and provides some recommendations on how these priorities can be addressed by the Panel for promoting sustainable development in the global South.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-307-16-april-2026/

Evidence of Partnerships in the Cuban Pharmaceutical Sector (SouthViews No. 308, 30 April 2026)

By Graziela Ferrero Zucoloto

This article analyzes the pharmaceutical partnership agreements of Cuban institutions. It identifies various partnerships with national and foreign firms that spanned 17 countries, with several developed nations appearing as recipients of Cuban technologies, and with Cuban institutions acting as the primary technology holder and licensor in the majority of agreements identified. These findings suggest that Cuba's state-directed pharmaceutical model has produced an active, innovation-generating sector, with potential lessons for other countries, including Brazil, that maintain public pharmaceutical laboratories.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-308-30-april-2026/

No Country Can Cruise Past Collective Responsibility: The Hantavirus Outbreak (SouthViews No. 309, 11 May 2026)

By Dr. Viviana Munoz Tellez

The hantavirus outbreak aboard the MV Hondius is a vivid reminder of why global health cooperation matters. It is one of many simultaneous outbreaks WHO is responding to, at a time the broader architecture of global health is under growing strain. The WHO faces deep funding shortfalls as some governments retreat from multilateralism. Despite International Health Regulations strengthened in response to COVID-19 and a newly adopted Pandemic Agreement, the system for pathogen access and benefit sharing that it must contain remains unfinished. Every country's health security depends on global collaboration and solidarity.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-309-11-may-2026/

Decolonising Intellectual Property Law: An Afrocentric Approach - A book review (SouthViews No. 310, 30 June 2026)

By Nkem Itanyi

This paper examines *Decolonising Intellectual Property Law: An Afrocentric Approach* as a transformative intervention in global intellectual property (IP) discussions. Drawing on the book's central claim that contemporary IP frameworks were designed for Western priorities and subsequently imposed on Africa through colonial legal transplantation, the paper evaluates how Eurocentric assumptions about creativity, ownership, and individual authorship have displaced African systems of communal knowledge governance.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-310-30-june-2026/

Grappling with Biofraud: Decision 16/2 Disenfranchises UNCBD Parties of Justifiable Rents for Genetic Resources (SouthViews No. 311, 22 July 2026)

By Joseph Henry Vogel and Pallavi Mishra

A multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism for digital sequence information on genetic resources (DSI) is under development by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD). Benefits are slated to be negligible. Biopiracy will continue to thrive in the digital realm unless an effective mechanism is established. The global South should place on record at COP17, scheduled for October 2026, that DSI-distinct-from-genetic-resources is not only wrong but fraudulent. Like-minded mega-diverse Parties should propose that a "fair and equitable" benefit be interpreted as analogous to the economic rent that inheres in intellectual property. Rent is the difference in profits that industry enjoys before a patent expires. For a Global Multilateral Benefit-sharing

Mechanism to be efficient, the use of de-materialized genetic resources, *inter alia* “DSI”, must be disclosed in patent applications (Yes/No), with tracing for successful commercialisations.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-311-22-july-2026/

The Growing Centrality of UNDROP in the International Governance of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (SouthViews No. 312, 27 August 2026)

By Raffaele Morgantini

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) is increasingly becoming a key normative and political tool for transforming food and agricultural systems, particularly in the Global South. In a context of growing corporate concentration, commodification, and external dependencies, UNDROP provides a framework for strengthening peasants’ rights, food sovereignty, and democratic control over rural development.

Its growing influence results from both grassroots appropriation by peasant and rural organizations and its progressive integration into international and national legal frameworks. UN human rights mechanisms, courts, legislatures and public institutions are increasingly using UNDROP to interpret rights and develop policies concerning land, seeds, food, health, climate, and rural livelihoods. Recent developments in countries such as Honduras, Colombia, Kenya, Ecuador, and Brazil illustrate this shift towards practical implementation.

For the Global South, UNDROP offers a strategic opportunity to strengthen food and agricultural sovereignty, support agroecological pathways, protect biodiversity and traditional practices, and reduce dependence on concentrated global markets. Its effective implementation requires sustained political mobilization, institutional commitment and greater cooperation among States, human rights bodies, legal practitioners and rights holders.

https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-312-27-august-2026/

ANALYTICAL NOTES

Reform Proposals on Decision-Making at the WTO: Mapping the Consensus Debate in the light of the Marrakesh Agreement (South Centre Analytical Note, 1 July 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

This Analytical Note maps the consensus and decision-making proposals advanced in the pre- and post-MC14 WTO reform communications in the light of the Marrakesh Agreement. For each proposal it asks the same question: if the proposal were adopted, what in the Agreement would have to change, and through which legal route? The submissions are sorted into four analytical groups according to their effect on the consensus rule, and for the proposals that engage the Agreement's text, the Note identifies whether the route is amendment, authoritative interpretation, a change to the Rules of Procedure, or an arrangement outside the Agreement, and sets out the procedure the Agreement prescribes.

The Note shows that Article IX:1, the consensus rule, and Article X:9, governing the incorporation of plurilateral agreements into Annex 4, are both entrenched by Article X:2, so that an amendment to either will take effect only upon acceptance by all Members.

A plurilateral agreement concluded and implemented outside the WTO requires no amendment to the Marrakesh Agreement. Article II:3 has no bearing on such an agreement until it is incorporated into Annex 4, and only that step of incorporation engages Article X:9 and its consensus requirement. The authoritative-interpretation power under Article IX:2 cannot be used to undermine Article X and therefore cannot substitute for amendment where the object is to change the consensus or incorporation rules.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-analytical-note-1-july-2026/

Into the Void: The Inflation Reduction Act Panel Ruling and the Crisis of WTO Reform (South Centre Analytical Note, 10 July 2026)

By Vahini Naidu

On 30 January 2026, a WTO Panel ruled that the domestic content bonus credits under the United States' Inflation Reduction Act violated the GATT 1994, the TRIMs Agreement, and the SCM Agreement. The United States appealed the ruling to a non-functional Appellate Body, sending it into a legal void. Read against the backdrop of WTO reform discussions that culminated at the Fourteenth Ministerial Conference in Yaoundé in March 2026, the ruling is far more than a bilateral dispute. It exposes the central contradictions in the reform agenda: the Members most vocally demanding new disciplines on others' subsidy practices have themselves demonstrated both the willingness to operate prohibited measures and the capacity to do so without meaningful consequence. This paper unpacks the Panel's findings, situates them within the post MC14 reform process, and draws out the implications for developing countries. It argues that the Level Playing Field track must be reframed around compliance symmetry and policy space; that dispute settlement restoration must be decoupled from other reform tracks; that the African Group's call for reinstatement of non-actionable subsidy categories under Article 8 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (ASCM) is the most operationally precise developing country proposal currently on the table; and that the United States' parallel push to render Article XXI(b) fully self-judging threatens to create a zone of immunity for industrial policy that is structurally unavailable to the majority of developing countries.

https://www.southcentre.int/analytical-note-10-july-2026/

SOUTH CENTRE 30TH ANNIVERSARY PUBLICATIONS

Reflections on 30 Years of the South Centre (South Centre 30th Anniversary Special Publication)

31 July 2025, Geneva

To honour the South Centre's 30th Anniversary, we are pleased to feature reflections on the South Centre's work over the years. We invited entities and individuals to share brief remarks on how the South Centre has contributed to support development efforts or, specifically, to their own work—whether through the Centre's policy support, technical assistance, capacity-building, or advocacy. These reflections highlight the strength of South-South solidarity and the impact of our collective efforts over the years. We were grateful to receive the remarks compiled in this document and deeply appreciate the contributions to this celebration of the South Centre.

https://www.southcentre.int/reflections-on-30-years-of-the-south-centre-31-july-2025/

30 Years supporting advancing multilateral rules for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of biological diversity (South Centre 30th Anniversary Series No. 1, 7 January 2026)

By Dr. Viviana Munoz Tellez

Countries are bound through international agreements to advance biodiversity conservation, including by maintaining genetic diversity, to ensure sustainable use of biodiversity and advance both access and fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. These obligations are also reasserted in the United Nations (UN) agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

There are several international agreements in which these issues are addressed, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA Treaty), the Agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), as well as fora where these issues are debated or negotiated, such as those conducted under the auspices of the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The South Centre has provided constant support over the years to developing countries in advancing their common interests in this field and ensuring coherence and synergies among the different conventions and negotiations.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-30th-anniversary-series-1-7-january-2026/

Three Decades of Global Engagement: The South Centre's Contribution to Intellectual Property and Development (South Centre 30th Anniversary Series No. 2, 30 April 2026)

By Nirmalya Syam

This paper is part of a series of publications made in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the South Centre, an intergovernmental organization established in 1995 to advance the interests of developing countries in global governance. Tracing its origins to the 1990 South Commission, it examines the Centre's pivotal role in shaping intellectual property (IP) policies to promote equitable development. Through rigorous research, advocacy, and technical assistance, the South Centre has supported negotiations at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and World Trade Organization (WTO), influencing milestones like the 2007 WIPO Development Agenda and extensions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) transition periods for least developed countries.

Key contributions include promoting TRIPS flexibilities for public health, biodiversity, and technology transfer, with seminal publications on compulsory licensing, patent examination, and traditional knowledge protection. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centre advocated for IP waivers to enhance access to vaccines and therapeutics. Impacts include empowering Global South nations to implement development-oriented IP strategies and reform patent laws. Looking ahead, the paper addresses challenges from digital transformation, artificial intelligence (AI), and data governance, calling for strengthened South-South cooperation and proactive advocacy to ensure inclusive IP frameworks. The South Centre remains essential for fostering sustainable development and reducing global inequalities.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-30th-anniversary-series-2-30-april-2026/

The South Centre's Contributions to the Reform of the International Tax System (South Centre 30th Anniversary Series No. 3, 16 June 2026)

By Abdul Muheet Chowdhary

The South Centre has, over the last 30 years, contributed to major reforms to the international tax system to make it fairer and more equitable for developing countries. Some of the key impacts relate to the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation and updates to the UN Model Tax Convention to strengthen developing countries' taxing rights on automated digital services, shipping and air transport, services more broadly, extractive industries, insurance premiums, computer software, offshore indirect transfers of capital gains, the subject to tax rule and wealth taxes. The South Centre also produced pioneering revenue estimates for its Member States on the UN and OECD solutions for taxing the digital economy.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-30th-anniversary-series-3-16-june-2026/

The South Centre: 30 Years Advancing towards a Fair and Responsible International Investment Regime (South Centre 30th Anniversary Series No. 4, 20 July 2026)

By Daniel Uribe

This paper examines the South Centre's 30-year effort to reform the international investment law (IIL) regime, advocating for a shift from a self-contained system to one integrated with human rights, environmental protection, and sustainable development. It analyses how the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism has led to "regulatory chill" and legal fragmentation, disproportionately impacting developing nations. The South Centre promotes aligning investment with national development strategies through technical assistance, treaty renegotiation, and policy frameworks that emphasise investor obligations and State sovereignty. Ultimately, the paper calls for a paradigm shift in global governance to address emerging challenges such as climate change and the digital divide, thereby ensuring a more equitable and responsible investment landscape.

https://www.southcentre.int/sc-30th-anniversary-series-4-20-july-2026

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