

UK announces investment to help developing economies thrive in global trade at WTO Ministerial Conference

25.3.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

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The UK Government has announced £13 million in Official Development Assistance (ODA) to enable developing economies to participate more effectively in the global trading system and has transferred £1m to the WTO Fisheries Fund.

Minister of State at the Department for Business and Trade, Chris Bryant, made today's announcement at the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14), being held in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

The funding package will be distributed across seven key initiatives that work directly with partner governments and business in developing economies to modernise systems and connect with global markets. By helping countries trade effectively, the UK is contributing to a stronger global economy with more reliable trading partners, benefitting developing economies and the UK alike.

Minister of State for Business and Trade Chris Bryant said:

"Trade is one of the most powerful tools we have for driving growth and creating opportunity, both at home and around the world. This investment in our Aid for Trade programmes demonstrates the UK's commitment to a global trading system that works for everyone, not just the wealthiest nations.

"By working in partnership with developing countries to overcome barriers to trade, we are opening up new markets for British businesses whilst supporting economic growth where it is needed most. A stronger, fairer multilateral trading system benefits us all."

UK Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO, Kumar Iyer, said:

"The UK has long been a champion of the rules-based multilateral trading system, and this announcement reinforces our commitment to ensuring it delivers for all WTO members.

"At a time of global uncertainty, it is more important than ever that we invest in the institutions and programmes that support countries so they can trade on equal terms.

"These contributions are not simply aid, they are investments in shared prosperity and a more stable, predictable global economy."

Today's announcement reinforces the UK's commitment to strengthen the WTO and increase the integration of developing economies into global value chains, supporting them to meet international standards, and seize the opportunities of the multilateral trading system.

As trade ministers from WTO member countries gather in Cameroon's capital, reform of the organisation will be high on the agenda. Building on the policy paper published earlier this month, the UK will be setting out a clear vision for a more relevant, flexible and functional WTO.

Notes to Editors:

The 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) is taking place in Yaoundé, Cameroon. The Ministerial Conference is the WTO's highest decision-making body. Breakdown of funding

The UK's funding will support:

- £5 million to the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) - helping the world's least developed countries put trade at the heart of their development plans. The UK was the single largest donor to Phase 2 of the Enhanced Integrated Framework, contributing \$22.7 million over six years.
- £3 million to the Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme - strengthening implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement to drive down the cost of trade and boost predictability at the border.
- £1.75 million to the World Bank Umbrella Facility for Trade - supporting 122 countries to make trade greener, more resilient and more inclusive.
- £1 million to the Standards and Trade Development Facility - enabling countries to meet food safety and plant health standards.
- £1 million to the Advisory Centre on WTO Law - ensuring developing countries can access legal support in trade disputes.
- £750,000 to the World Bank Competitiveness for Jobs and Economic Transformation (C-JET) Programme - funding Needs Assessments and supporting implementation of the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement as the donation will be part of the formal WTO Needs Assessment programme.
- £500,000 to the WTO Global Trust Fund - supporting the Trade in Services for Development Initiative.

The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies entered into force in September 2025 and is the first WTO agreement centred on environmental sustainability. The UK committed to donate £1m to the fund in December 2023 and has now transferred funding.

The UK published a policy paper on reforming the WTO on 6 March 2026 - WTO reform.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-announces-investment-to-help-developing-economies-thrive-in-global-trade-at-wto-ministerial-conference>