

The need for an INTA INI on ensuring fair and sustainable international trade for the global textiles ecosystem

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Dear MEP

We, a group of NGOs and trade unions, call on the INTA Committee to come forward with an **own-initiative report focused on how to ensure fair and sustainable international trade in the global textiles ecosystem**.

The Commission's **EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles** aims to provide a comprehensive approach to sustainability in the textile sector. However, it focuses mainly on environmental aspects and lacks a sufficient actionable strategy when it comes to ensuring good working conditions and fair and sustainable international trade.

We welcome the ENVI Committee's Report in response to the strategy. **However, it remains crucial that the European Parliament provides a political perspective relating to international trade in the garment sector.** The EU is the world's largest importer of apparel and textiles, it accounted for 24.3% of the world's apparel and textile imports value in 2020 ([World Trade Statistical Review 2020](#)). Given that the international trading dimension of imports and exports of garments and textiles, as well as the impact on workers and the environment, are too important to leave aside.

Such a report can cover a wide ground, including the implications of the General Scheme of Preferences, the TSD chapters in Free Trade Agreements (including the revised Commission Strategy), ad hoc arrangements such as the Bangladesh Sustainability Compact and the Vietnam Roadmap, the role of the ILO and Better Work.

In addition to the state-to-state dimension, the role of responsible business conduct in external trade is crucial, and thus should equally cover the upcoming legislation on Corporate Sustainable Due Diligence, Banning Products with Forced Labour as well as exploring additional policy related to Transparency and Unfair Trading Practices.

For civil society and trade unions, various aspects of international trade in the garments sector must be improved. We need an EU trade policy that rewards sustainability, and as such, we see a clear need for the INTA Committee to further investigate the current issues and challenges in international trade in the global textiles ecosystem. Such a report should put forward clear recommendations as to how to ensure that EU trade can create a fairer and more sustainable global textiles ecosystem benefitting the lives of communities, the planet, and millions of workers.