

World Trade Organization Public Forum 2022

Towards a sustainable and inclusive recovery: ambition to action

Reflections from the Young Diplomats of Canada's Delegation to the WTO

I. Summary of Key Achievements

The Public Forum is the World Trade Organization (WTO)'s largest annual outreach event, providing a platform for members across civil society, public sector, private sector, and academia to discuss the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing world trade today. The theme of the 2022 Public Forum was "Towards a sustainable and inclusive recovery: ambition to action", focusing on three sub themes relevant to a world emerging from the pandemic: leveraging technology for an inclusive recovery, delivering a trade agenda for a sustainable future, and framing the future of trade.

Five young professionals - Katherine Tang, Amira Shousha, Anna Wong, Akash Jain, and Sydney Pagan - were chosen by Young Diplomats of Canada (YDC) to represent Canadian youths at the 2022 WTO Public Forum. The delegation had the honour of attending the four-day conference in Geneva, Switzerland, marking the event's first in-person gathering since the COVID-19 pandemic.



Delegation team, from left to right: Amira Shousha, Sydney Pagan, Katherine Tang, Akash Jain, and Anna Wong

Since its founding in 1995, the WTO has served an important role in trade liberalization, a key driver of economic prosperity around the world. Today, as the world faces a polycrisis - recovery from a global pandemic, an impending economic recession, and the increasingly harsh realities of climate change - the trading system is at a critical junction to reinvent itself; as such, inclusivity, adaptability, and sustainability cannot be afterthoughts, but must be structurally embedded in how the world trades. Canada, as an influential and forward-thinking Member of the WTO, has both the responsibility and opportunity to lead in this effort.

With the mandate of representing Canadian youths at the WTO Public Forum, the delegation's accomplishments are threefold: 1) pre-conference - consulted with distinguished stakeholders across public and private sectors to form a strong understanding of Canada's trade priorities, 2) during the conference - contributed to both formal sessions and informal dialogues, exchanging views with other diplomatic delegations, academics, and private sector leaders, and 3) over the course of three months - engaged with

Canadian youth across social media to raise awareness of Canada's role in the multilateral trading system.

Pre-conference, the delegation hosted 8 consultations with distinguished experts across private sector, public sector, and academia:

- Nadia Theodore, Canadian Ambassador to the WTO and Head of the Permanent Mission of Canada to Geneva
- Sara Wilshaw, Chief Trade Commissioner, Global Affairs Canada
- Jonathan Fried, Former Canadian Ambassador to the WTO and Personal Representative of Canada's Prime Minister to the G20
- Michael Trebilcock, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto Faculty of Law
- Marc Gilbert, Senior Managing Director and Partner, Boston Consulting Group
- Jaime Webbe, CEO and Executive Director, UN at Canada
- Jennifer Cooke, Director of Inclusive Trade, Export Development Canada
- David Cordobés, Program Manager, International Trade Centre



Consultation with Nadia Theodore, Ambassador to the WTO and Head of the Permanent Mission of Canada in Geneva; discussed Canada's trade strategy and multilateral priorities



Consultation with David Cordobés, Senior Program Manager at International Trade Centre; discussed the organization's Youth Employment Program in the Middle East

During the conference, the delegation contributed to 60+ formal sessions across key themes relating to climate change, gender inclusivity, trade reform, digital trade, intellectual property, and more. Examples of sessions include:

- "Is nature the trade-off?" organized by the International Chamber of Commerce United Kingdom

- “Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises: Realising sustainable gains under the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement” organized by International Trade Centre (ITC) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- “Safeguarding access to food in times of crisis” organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
- “Friend-shoring, concerted unilateralism and WTO reform” organized by European University Institute (EUI)
- “Improving lives and livelihoods through trade in medical technologies” organized by Global Medical Technology Alliance (GMTA)

Over three months, the delegation had a strong social media presence to provide a behind-the-scenes view for Canadian youths on international diplomacy:

- Published 65 pieces of content across LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter, with posts ranging from live-streams to meet the delegation, to live commentary from conference sessions
- Reached ~26,500 people across Canada with educational content surrounding the WTO, trade policy, and Canada’s interests from the youth perspective
- Engaged ~3,100 young people across platforms before and during the conference



Panel with Director-General, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and President of FIFA, Gianni Infantino on sustainable and inclusive trade, moderated by CNBC



Instagram Livestream to introduce the WTO delegation team, featuring Amira Shousha, Akash Jain, and Sydney Pagan, moderated by Christina Caouette, CEO of YDC

II. Key Themes and Learnings from Sessions

Throughout the delegation's attendance across 60+ formal sessions, three key themes stood out as the biggest opportunities facing global trade today: climate change, gender inclusivity, and intellectual property rights. Below are select sessions that reflect these priorities.

Working Session 103: "Rethinking trade rules on subsidies to enhance sustainable development"

Subsidies are a common tool used by governments to bolster the competitiveness of a particular industry. In the face of climate change, it is an important lever to encourage investments in green industries. However, subsidies are equally a double-edged sword: policymakers need to ensure subsidies are not just disguised protectionism that impair free trade, and that countries do not create subsidy levels that are only costly and no longer productive.



One of several sessions dedicated to discussing sustainable trade; participants include diplomats, journalists, NGOs, think tanks, and private sector

The current WTO policies do not yet adequately promote development measures (e.g., energy transition, carbon reduction, etc.), as there is no express recognition of sustainability as a policy goal. For example, the subsidy rulebook only specifies prohibitions, but not permissible subsidies. In order to update WTO policies on subsidies, the current knowledge base on subsidies is not yet adequate, and requires more discussions, analysis, and assessment of subsidy policies and their positive and negative effects. While this process in assessing the use of "good" subsidies can be lengthy, harmful subsidies should be stopped as soon as possible, such as fossil fuels.

Participants outlined a few practical options for governance surrounding legal environmental subsidy use, ensuring that they are indeed bolstering green industries, but not excessively protectionist.

Examples include: placing a spending cap on environmental subsidies, setting "green, yellow, red light" parameters around clearly permissible subsidies vs. ones

requiring additional scrutiny vs. ones that are definitely prohibited, and a "balancing test" that can help distinguish subsidies with legitimate environmental objectives or purely for economic gains.

Working Session 30: Think Up! Gender Equality in the DNA of the WTO?

A consistent theme throughout the Public Forum was the importance of imbedding gender inclusivity into international trade practices, which is a relatively new lens through which to assess international trade. In working session 30, the WTO Gender Research Hub discussed findings and methodologies to improve research work on trade and gender.

The working session provided an overview of the recent history of the WTO's work on trade and gender, including the [WTO Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender](#), established in September 2020, and the [WTO Gender Research Hub](#), established in May 2021. These two bodies were designed to share best practices to remove barriers to women's participation in world trade, exchange knowledge on mainstreaming a "gender lens" into the WTO, and serve as a knowledge-gathering platform where the latest gender and trade research is shared. The panelists discussed how some have cast doubt about the importance of this work, and feel that gender is not particularly relevant to trade. However, they made the case that this work is critical for women's economic empowerment and thus gender equality more broadly, as access to trade results in increased economic growth.

The panelists discussed various initiatives and methodologies, including the Informal Working Group on Trade and Gender's work to help women benefit from the WTO's [Aid for Trade](#) program, which helps least developed countries trade. Other initiatives discussed were the WTO's [Database on gender provisions in RTAs](#) (regional trade agreements) and [Research database on trade and gender](#). Lastly, our team was proud to see that Canada's [Gender-based analysis plus \(GBA+\)](#) framework was lauded as a shining international example of how to assess the impact of policies and programs on gender and other intersecting identity factors.

This session highlighted the wide portfolio of exemplary work being done at the WTO, partner institutions, and member countries to mainstream gender inclusivity into global trading practices. However, gender in trade is still considered somewhat niche, and there is a lot of work left to do to fully embed gender equality as a core pillar of the WTO. As the WTO looks to modernize itself to meet current and emerging global challenges, it is encouraging that the organization has begun to recognize the critical role that gender equality plays in a robust international trading system, and our team looks forward to seeing how this file advances in the future.

Working Session 67: Trade and Health after COVID-19

In October 2020, India and South Africa introduced a proposal to waive Members' compliance with the copyright, patent, industrial design, and undisclosed information sections of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS Agreement) in relation to health technologies essential to combatting COVID-19. This sparked a 20-month period of debate on the relationship between intellectual property and access to medicines, culminating in a June 2022 compromise to waive patent obligations on COVID-19 vaccines for Developing

Country Members. Members are expected to reconvene and decide whether the waiver will be extended to other essential COVID-19 therapeutics and medical devices by December 2022.

This session discussed some of the limitations of the June 2022 TRIPS waiver compromise, as well as larger considerations in the trade and health debate. In particular, panelists focused on the global health procurement practice of prioritizing price and speed when seeking to purchase needed health technologies. They acknowledged the benefits of these criteria when responding to public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic - but also highlighted one key limitation of this model: by focusing on these criteria, large multinational companies with existing international reach are favoured during procurement cycles, resulting in local manufacturers being left out. This disproportionately hurts manufacturers in low- and middle-income countries, and hurts the international response to global health emergencies by failing to take full advantage of the world's total manufacturing capacity. Panelists suggested a two-pronged approach to future international procurement efforts to ensure that regional manufacturers are not left out, premised on a separate evaluative scheme for bidders seeking to only supply local markets rather than the international market.



Participants assembling in conference room ahead of discussion on healthcare intellectual property

Panelists also focused on the importance of ensuring that low- and middle-income countries can build the technical capacity to position themselves as vaccine and therapeutic manufacturers over the next five years. The World Health Organization mRNA technology transfer hub was highlighted as a key institutional facilitator of technical know-how from the Global North to the Global South. Given that many TRIPS waiver critics argued that a lack of domestic manufacturing capacity and technical know-how, rather than patents, were the primary barriers to expanding vaccine manufacturing to the Global South, this was seen as an important initiative to counteract TRIPS waiver critics.

III. Advice and recommendations for future delegations

Attending the WTO's Public Forum was a transformative experience for the entire delegation. The team had the privilege of consulting the YDC Executive Team and past delegations for their experiences, and the team also accumulated our share of learnings from the experience. Below, we pass forward our advice to be both well-prepared and ready to optimize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Before the conference:

1. **Not sure where to start? Begin by researching the WTO and past Public Forums.**

Trade is intricately connected with many aspects of society and can become complex very quickly. Familiarizing yourself with the role of the WTO and its agendas for past Public Forums is a great place to start, which will provide insight into the WTO's role in international trade, evolution of top-of-mind topics through the Forums' themes, and the structure of the Public Forum experience.

2. **Schedule stakeholder consultations early.**

Stakeholder consultations before the conference were invaluable to accumulate knowledge and well-rounded perspectives on trade. Given stakeholders are typically very senior, they often have busy schedules. Therefore, it is imperative to reach out as early as possible, especially if you plan on meeting stakeholders during the conference. Always reach out to more stakeholders than you plan on meeting as not everyone will be available for consultation. Reaching out to previous YDC contacts, as well as personal connections, whether through school, work, or extracurricular involvements, will typically get the team quite far. Don't be intimidated -- if your team has a desire to talk to the WTO Director General, reach out - there's nothing to lose! In fact, stakeholders are often very happy to share their experiences and advice to the younger generation. Remember to take time to prepare insightful questions, ones that draw on the specific experiences of the stakeholders you are talking to.

3. **Keep updated with the news, especially regarding topical international trade developments.**

While panels at the forum typically focus on discrete areas of trade, current trade developments and geopolitical advancements inevitably permeate these conversations. Since representatives from countries often advocate for their own national interests, it is important to be aware of what is going on around the world. As the 2022 Public Forum focused on sustainable trade recovery, many of the panels framed conversations around pandemic build-back and inclusive trade (particularly related to agricultural commodities) in light of the Russia-Ukraine crisis. The more nuanced an understanding you have of these issues, the easier it is to follow along in conversations.

In addition to being aware of developments in international affairs, it is important to keep abreast of trade-specific advancements. Several months prior to the conference, the United States had publicly criticized the efficacy of the dispute resolution system at the WTO. During the Trump administration, the United States blocked the appointment of new judges to the WTO Appellate Body. Resultantly, some panels were devoted to discussing ways to improve dispute resolution mechanisms. By understanding similar developments, the delegation can better appreciate the positions certain delegates take on issues.

4. Understand the structure and roles of international agencies.

International agencies (e.g., International Institute for Sustainable Development, OECD, etc.), are prominent players in the trade ecosystem, and delegations will have many opportunities to interact with their representatives at the Public Forum. Familiarizing yourself with their structures and roles will help shape understanding of their incentives and the roles they play in trade policy. For example, in a discussion with a NGO, the team learned that European countries are more likely to perceive trade promotion and economic growth in overseas countries as an anti-immigration approach, as opposed to Canada that perceives trade as a pro-immigration initiative. This distinction enabled our delegation to understand trade more holistically, as not just an economic tool, but also a complex vector that involves political and humanitarian considerations.

5. Reach out to previous delegations if you feel stuck!

Reaching out to previous delegations is a great way to field questions you may have and hear directly from students and young professionals who have previously attended the conference. Moreover, previous delegations may have specific trade-related knowledge that would be valuable in your pre-conference preparations.

During the conference:

6. Embrace this experience with curiosity and inspiration, in spite of any possible imposter syndrome!

While walking the halls of the WTO Headquarters alongside experienced diplomats and trade experts may be anxiety provoking for most, it's equally as life-changing. To capture the most of the experience, avoid succumbing to feelings of imposter syndrome or inexperience; instead, remember that your perspective and role as a young person is critical to the conversation - your voice is unique and deserves to be heard. Embrace the opportunity from a mindset of wanting to learn and contribute as much as possible.

7. Challenge yourself to network and speak up when you have questions!

One of the best components of Public Forum is the ability to network with people you'd otherwise not get the opportunity to meet. Take this advantage seriously and intentionally meet people from different corners of the world. Don't be afraid to ask



Photobooth fun with the delegation in the main Atrium, with plenty of networking opportunities in between sessions

questions to better understand other leaders and share your story and insight. A simple “Hello, I’m from Canada, where are you from?” can unlock a wealth of conversations!

8. Attend diverse panels and jot down your favourite ideas!

There was no shortage of insightful and inspirational words at every session. Given the number of opportunities to attend sessions, intentionally attend a diverse variety in the beginning, and narrow down to the ones you are most interested in. The days are long and can blur together, so be sure to quickly jot down your favourite ideas before moving onto the next session. They will help you reflect on your learnings at the end of each day, strengthening the entire delegations’ experience as you share experiences from different sessions.

IV. Delegate Reflections



Katherine Tang
Head Delegate

I am incredibly honored to have served as the Head Delegate this year. As a young professional with a predominantly private sector background, this experience represented an invaluable opportunity for me to dig deeper into the ways in which multilateralism, NGOs, and academia work together with businesses to influence the world. All of this was done alongside my incredibly bright, passionate, and fun

co-delegates, who made the time in Geneva so memorable.

My passion is at the intersection of climate action and international development. As a management consultant at BCG, I served Canadian pension funds on tackling their climate investing goals from a systems-level; then, working in Sierra Leone for a solar mini-grid startup, I witnessed first-hand the meaningful infrastructure improvements needed for climate resilience in developing countries. From these two formative experiences, the biggest question I wanted to answer at the WTO Public Forum was: how can the world trade system respond to climate change, at the unprecedented speed and magnitude it requires us to?

The conclusion I arrived at is: we have a few levers, but no perfect answer, yet. This year's Public Forum follows the landmark agreement in the Fisheries Subsidy, the first WTO agreement that prioritizes the environment, and not just trade liberalization as its sole goal. While it is a monumental success deserving celebration, this agreement has been a 20-year effort, and still, remains to be ratified by at least two-thirds of the countries for it to be enforceable by law. In contrast, climate change requires a much broader scope and depth of change, in just 8 years. Evidently, the legacy system is not equipped for making big decisions swiftly. One key lever to accelerate change is the formation of "fact-finding groups", a smaller but committed group of countries driving action on-the-ground, proving a business and political case to the rest of the members. An example is the current Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform group, with 47 WTO members as co-sponsors, seeking to limit inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. This mechanism allows for progress, in parallel to traditionally lengthy negotiation rounds.

Still, the trade system of today is incongruent with the decisive nature the climate emergency demands. It requires a structural reform that prioritizes action over deliberation, and holistic negotiations over single-issue debates. Climate change reminds us that the actions we take today will have magnified effects in the years to come, and it is we, the young people, who have the biggest stake in this world's future. We need more organizations like YDC that invite youth to the conversation, and young people need to be fearless in demanding our seat at the table and advocating for the world that we wish to inherit.



Amira Shousha

Communications Coordinator

I am incredibly grateful to have served as the Communications Coordinator for the WTO delegation this year. It was a challenging and fulfilling role. As someone who's community involvement has primarily focused on the public sector through advocacy and nonprofit work, this experience was vastly different from my previous experiences. The combination of my educational background, community work and future career aspirations, I was able to resonate with various topics that at first glance may seem unrelated but were really helpful for this delegation. Though my time in Geneva was brief, it was really pivotal for my development as an individual, leader and Canadian. This delegation was a worthwhile experience, one I'll be able to reflect on for years to come.

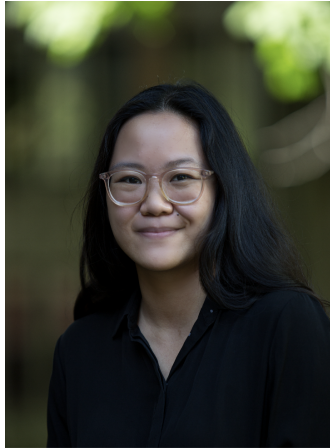
I decided to apply to this delegation because I value experiences that provide me with networking opportunities with various trailblazing professionals. I'm grateful I was able to tackle the communications role, because it enabled me to have a creative and flexible outlet to share this experience with hundreds of leaders across Canada. With no shortage of inspiration, I felt that working with a diverse delegation provided our respective communities with unique and creative ways to apply the knowledge we were able to acquire for the duration of our experience. Applying to YDC as an Albertan was a great idea for me because I felt that my takeaway of trade and Canada's role was different than that of my Ontario co-delegates.

Arriving in Geneva was thrilling, everything from navigating public transit, stopping by the UN and meeting the ambassador of Canada enriched the overall experience. A personal takeaway from attending the various forum sessions was that the panelists brought vastly different but vital perspectives to the conversations of Trade. I was personally inspired by the amount of women who participated in their sphere and excelled at it.

As I pursue my Masters Education in Public Health, it was essential for me to learn about the intersectionalities of healthcare and trade. I'm intrigued by how socio-economic inequalities impact the international community and each country's access to healthcare services or vaccines. I believe that because of my time at the WTO forum, I was able to grasp a better understanding of how interconnected we are both as individuals and as countries. I deeply appreciated the commonalities many communities share, and how we can use those as a means to excel on a global level.

My advice to any youth who are considering representing Canada on an international platform is to remain authentic to who you are. Being selected to represent Canadians through these various opportunities is both a privilege and a responsibility to represent yourself and your

community to the best of your ability. Your selection for any international opportunity is a testament to the value you can bring to any conversation. Prioritize networking with leaders that you'd otherwise not cross paths with. That will enrich your leadership and development as an individual. Most of all, recognize that the magnitude of the impact that these opportunities have on you and the impact you contribute to them is truly up to you. It has yet to be fully discovered, so embrace that and optimize on the untapped potential.



Anna Wong

Delegate

It was an honour to serve as one of this year's Delegates to the World Trade Organization Public Forum. As a law student with a background in science and international relations, I have spent my early professional career studying interdisciplinary strategies to expand access to essential medicines. The relationship between trade, intellectual property, and pharmaceutical supply has been a particular area of focus for me, and is one that reemerged as an issue of international concern during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Getting to participate in live conversations in this area of international policy was a highlight of my experience as a delegate and a key motivator behind my decision to apply to attend the WTO Public Forum.

The WTO Public Forum provides members of the public with a unique opportunity to engage in a policymaking space that is otherwise reserved for the representatives of sovereign states. It was heartening to see stakeholders from government, industry, and civil society engaging with each other to discuss some of the world's most pressing trade issues. While the positions and solutions advanced by these groups frequently differed, the Public Forum reinforced a common recognition of the international trading system's role in solving larger social challenges - such as climate change, access to medicines, and equitable socioeconomic development.

As I begin my legal career, I hope to continue to pursue my dual interest in trade and intellectual property law. The Public Forum demonstrated that these often disparate areas of law can and do overlap - and perhaps most importantly, can be leveraged in tandem to ensure that no person is deprived of lifesaving essential medicines due to a lack of supply or prohibitively high costs. Canada has a role to play in not only advocating for trade policies that promote equitable international access to medicines, but in actively walking the talk and leading in an area where others often falter. Vitally, young people across the country ensure that such goals remain in the public eye - and consequently, on the policy agenda. From our stakeholder engagement meetings and the enthusiasm we received from others we met at the Public Forum, it is clear that there is an appetite for more youth voices on the international stage. It is up to us to seize these opportunities and push the pace at which tomorrow's most pressing challenges are addressed today.



Akash Jain
Delegate

Attending the 2022 Public Forum, alongside a team of energetic, enthusiastic, and inquisitive colleagues, was an invaluable experience. It was an honour to have been selected as one of the YDC delegates to the WTO.

My primary motivation in applying to the YDC WTO delegation was the opportunity to witness the interdisciplinary nature of trade. Through my undergraduate program, PPE, I studied a combination of economics, philosophy, and politics. The WTO Public Forum was the perfect place to understand how these seemingly siloed

areas of study intersect and work together. As a current law and public policy student, it was exciting to see how trade law can be used as a vehicle for advancing important policy objectives. I quickly realized that trade is not a rigid set of rules, but a system in constant flux, providing opportunities to reshape, remold, and reiterate.

My colleagues and I attended a number of insightful panels. I was particularly fascinated by the conversations regarding data governance and the digital divide, a topical and pressing area of concern. Establishing a rights-based approach, governed by the rule of law, to cross-border data flow infrastructure was an area of particular salience in these conversations. A variety of novel ideas were discussed and explored, including collective, rather than individual, ownership of data. Hearing from public and private stakeholders was stimulating, demonstrating the importance of developing symbiotic, incentive-compatible solutions. It became apparent that trade solutions must remain flexible and adaptable to the different regulatory regimes of WTO member states.

Ultimately, the WTO Public Forum demonstrated the importance of thought leadership. The goal of the conference was not to achieve concrete outcomes, but to bring forward innovative ways of thinking about problems and articulating the many countervailing considerations that must be addressed. The conference demonstrated that policy is a process, and the genesis of every solution is an idea.

In speaking with stakeholders, panelists, and fellow attendees, there was a desire to hear *our* perspectives and ideas about how we can develop equitable and sustainable trade solutions. The willingness to hear our thoughts was surprising, but reinforced the fact that the younger generation is a fundamental part of this process. The onus is on us, young people, to seize this opportunity.



Sydney Pagan
Delegate

It was a great privilege to be part of the 2022 YDC Delegation to the WTO Public Forum in Geneva. I was motivated to participate in the forum to have the opportunity to represent Canadian youth and get first-hand experience on the international stage. I came into this delegation not as a trade expert, but as someone with an interest in international affairs more broadly, with a recognition that trade is an important vehicle to strong international relations, sustainable globalization, and economic empowerment. I learned the basics of trade through my Master's in International Affairs (specialization in International Organizations and Global Public Policy), and I wanted to apply and expand my knowledge through this opportunity.

Going into the delegation, I was well aware of the broad criticism that the current structure of the WTO is ill-prepared to address modern global challenges and is in need of reform. However, the WTO's ministerial conference this June showed some promise, including an agreement by consensus that the WTO is in need of reform. As a result, I was eager to attend the forum in September under the theme of "ambition to action" and observe the beginning of this reform.

I am most motivated by and interested in the way that trade intersects with gender equality and international development. I was encouraged to see that both of these topics were covered widely at the forum, but while some commendable work is being done across both fields, there is a lot left to do. Gender is a fairly new area of focus at the WTO, and it was evident through the various sessions that more needs to be done to mainstream gender equality in trade, and to foster sustainable development and empower developing nations. However, it was encouraging to see the wide portfolio of laudable work being done by WTO initiatives like the Gender Research Hub and the Aid for Trade program. An approach discussed during one of the panels was the need for "re-globalization" - the process of reforming and renewing globalization to better meet current and emerging global challenges. In the process of re-globalization, I am hopeful that important topics like sustainable international development and gender equality are at the forefront of trade reform in the WTO.

I am grateful to the YDC for this opportunity and feel that it has allowed me to better understand the important role that trade plays in addressing pressing global challenges, including Canada's role in them as a middle power. Attending the WTO Public Forum allowed me to work alongside an exceptionally talented, diverse, and hardworking group of youth leaders, and I feel that it has opened new doors for my career as a public servant interested in international relations and trade. As youth will be most impacted by today's global decisions, organizations like the YDC are important avenues to ensure that young Canadians have a voice and a seat at these decision-making tables.