



# International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation.

## International Trade Law in the Modern World: A Review of Evolving Practices and Agreements

Nsisong Louis Eyo-Udo <sup>1\*</sup>, Charles Elachi Apeh <sup>2</sup>, Bernadette Bristol-Alagbariya <sup>3</sup>, Chioma Ann Udeh <sup>4</sup>, Chikezie Paul-Mikki Ewim <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E-Ranch Autocare, Lagos, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup> Independent Researcher, UK

<sup>3</sup> Independent Researcher, Bonny Island, Nigeria

<sup>4</sup> Independent Researcher, Lagos, Nigeria

<sup>5</sup> Independent Researcher, Lagos, Nigeria

\* Corresponding Author: Nsisong Louis Eyo-Udo

### Article Info

ISSN (online): 2582-7138

Volume: 06

Issue: 01

January-February 2025

Received: 16-11-2024

Accepted: 17-12-2024

Page No: 840-847

### Abstract

In an era of increasing globalization, this paper examines the dynamic landscape of international trade law, shedding light on evolving practices and agreements that shape the contemporary framework for global commerce. The review delves into the multifaceted aspects of international trade law, exploring how the traditional principles have adapted to the complexities of the modern world. From the harmonization of trade rules to the role of regional and bilateral agreements, the paper examines the diverse strategies employed by nations to navigate the intricate web of international trade relationships. The analysis extends to the impact of technological advancements, digital trade, and e-commerce on trade law, recognizing the transformative influence of the digital age. It explores how emerging technologies have prompted legal considerations, necessitating a reassessment of traditional trade norms to accommodate the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital landscape. Furthermore, the paper evaluates prominent international trade agreements, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, regional pacts like the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), and other bilateral trade agreements. It considers the implications of these agreements on the sovereignty of nations, market access, dispute resolution mechanisms, and the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive trade practices. In conclusion, the paper offers a comprehensive review of international trade law, emphasizing its evolution in response to the demands of the modern world. By analyzing evolving practices and agreements, it provides insights into the ongoing efforts to balance economic interests, technological progress, and legal frameworks in the intricate tapestry of international trade.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJMRGE.2025.6.1.840-847>

**Keywords:** Trade law; International trade; WTO; CPTPP; e-commerce; Review

### 1. Introduction

International trade has long been a cornerstone of global economic relations, facilitating the exchange of goods and services across borders. In the ever-changing landscape of the modern world, the dynamics of international trade law have undergone profound transformations to address the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization, technological advancements, and shifting geopolitical landscapes (Azmeah, Foster & Echavarrri, 2020, Jakob, 2022) <sup>[18, 38]</sup>. This paper embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the contemporary framework of international trade law.

As nations navigate the complexities of the global economy, the traditional tenets of international trade law have had to adapt to the intricacies of the 21st century (Chukwu, et. al., 2023, Friant, Vermeulen & Salomone, 2020) <sup>[16, 23]</sup>. This review aims to dissect the evolving practices and agreements that shape the regulatory landscape, shedding light on the nuanced strategies employed by nations to navigate the challenges of international trade.

One focal point of this examination is the harmonization of trade rules and the role of regional and bilateral agreements in shaping international trade relations. The paper delves into the mechanisms through which countries seek to establish common ground on trade practices, fostering collaboration and economic integration in an era characterized by interconnected markets.

Moreover, the advent of digital technologies and the rise of e-commerce have introduced a new dimension to international trade. The impact of these technological advancements on trade law is scrutinized, unraveling the intricate legal considerations prompted by the digitization of commerce. As the global economy becomes increasingly reliant on digital trade, the paper assesses how trade laws have adapted to accommodate the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital age (Janow & Mavroidis, 2019, Jain, Malviya & Arya, 2021, Usman, H., & Shaheen, 2023) <sup>[39, 37, 67]</sup>.

In addition, the paper navigates the landscape of key international trade agreements, from the foundational World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements to contemporary regional and bilateral pacts. By scrutinizing these agreements, it seeks to unravel their implications on issues such as market access, dispute resolution mechanisms, and the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive trade practices.

In essence, this exploration seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of international trade practices and agreements. By unraveling the intricate tapestry of laws that govern global commerce, this paper aims to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse surrounding the dynamic intersection of economics, technology, and international law in the realm of global trade.

## 2.1. International Trade Law

International Trade Law is a complex and dynamic field that governs the exchange of goods and services between nations. In the interconnected and rapidly evolving global landscape, understanding the intricacies of International Trade Law is crucial for nations, businesses, and individuals alike (Inama, 2022, Salvatore, 2019) <sup>[35, 58]</sup>. This paper delves into the definition of International Trade Law, elucidates the paramount importance of international trade in the modern world, and contextualizes its evolving nature within the complexities of the 21st-century global economy.

International Trade Law encompasses a comprehensive set of rules and regulations that dictate the conduct of cross-border trade relations. It includes legal frameworks established at the national, regional, and international levels to govern the exchange of goods and services between sovereign states. At its core, International Trade Law addresses a wide array of issues, such as tariffs, trade agreements, intellectual property rights, dispute resolution mechanisms, and the rights and obligations of participating entities (Amro, 2019, Chibber, 2022, Chow & Schoenbaum, 2022) <sup>[7, 12, 15]</sup>. This legal framework serves as the bedrock for fostering cooperation and resolving conflicts in the realm of global commerce.

International trade plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and fostering interconnectedness among nations. The exchange of goods and services on a global scale enables countries to harness their respective comparative advantages, leading to increased efficiency and productivity. This economic interconnectedness creates a web of interdependence, where the prosperity of one nation is intricately linked to the economic well-being of others.

The modern world witnesses the orchestration of intricate global supply chains, where raw materials, components, and finished products traverse international borders seamlessly. International trade facilitates the optimization of production processes, allowing businesses to source inputs from different regions, enhance efficiency, and deliver a diverse array of products to consumers (Allioui & Mourdi, 2023, Fouseki, 2023) <sup>[5, 23]</sup>. This interconnectedness fosters resilience in the face of economic challenges.

International trade contributes significantly to job creation and poverty reduction, particularly in developing economies. Access to international markets allows nations to attract foreign investment, stimulate domestic industries, and create employment opportunities. This, in turn, lifts individuals and communities out of poverty, fostering sustainable development and improved living standards.

The evolution of international trade is closely intertwined with rapid technological advancements. The digital age has ushered in transformative changes, such as e-commerce, digital payments, and data-driven trade. Technology has become a driving force behind the acceleration of trade transactions, necessitating the adaptation of existing legal frameworks to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital revolution (Fróna, Szenderák & Harangi-Rákos, 2019, Kano, Tsang & Yeung, 2020) <sup>[24, 45]</sup>.

The dynamics of global governance in the context of international trade are undergoing notable shifts. Traditional multilateral institutions, exemplified by the World Trade Organization (WTO), are facing challenges in accommodating the diverse interests of member states. In response, there is a discernible rise in the prominence of bilateral and regional trade agreements, allowing nations to tailor agreements to their specific economic needs.

The evolving nature of international trade extends beyond economic considerations to encompass social and environmental dimensions. There is an increasing recognition of the need to integrate sustainability practices and ensure inclusivity in trade agreements. Issues such as environmental protection, labor standards, and social equity are becoming integral components of international trade law, reflecting a growing awareness of the interconnectedness between trade and societal well-being (Carroll, 2021, De Marchi, et. al., 2020) <sup>[11, 19]</sup>.

In conclusion, International Trade Law stands as a linchpin in the global economic system, providing the legal framework that governs the intricate web of cross-border transactions. Its definition encapsulates a broad spectrum of legal principles and agreements that regulate international commerce, reflecting the shared interests and responsibilities of nations in a globalized world.

The importance of international trade in the modern world cannot be overstated. It serves as a catalyst for economic growth, fosters global interconnectedness, and contributes to job creation and poverty reduction. As the nature of international trade evolves, propelled by technological advancements, shifts in global governance, and an increasing

emphasis on sustainability, the adaptation of legal frameworks becomes imperative to ensure the continued efficacy and relevance of International Trade Law (Jiang, et. al., 2019) <sup>[41]</sup>.

Contextualizing the evolving nature of international trade within the broader forces of globalization allows stakeholders to anticipate challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and work towards a more inclusive and sustainable global trading system (Yaya, Otu & Labonté, 2020) <sup>[70]</sup>. As nations navigate the complexities of the contemporary economic landscape, a nuanced understanding of International Trade Law is essential for fostering cooperation, resolving disputes, and building a resilient foundation for the future of global commerce.

## 2.2. Evolving Practices in International Trade Law

International Trade Law, as a dynamic and adaptive field, has witnessed a paradigm shift in its practices as the global economy becomes increasingly interconnected (Hynes, et. al., 2021, Shaffer, 2021, Voulvoulis, et. al., 2022) <sup>[32, 60, 68]</sup>. This paper delves into the evolving practices in International Trade Law, focusing on three key aspects: the harmonization of trade rules, the role of regional agreements, and the dynamics of bilateral trade relations.

Through an in-depth analysis, we explore the mechanisms, benefits, and challenges of harmonization, scrutinize the impact of regional trade blocs on global relations, and examine the nuances of bilateral trade agreements.

The harmonization of trade rules involves the alignment and standardization of legal principles governing international commerce across diverse jurisdictions. Mechanisms for harmonization include the establishment of international organizations and agreements that aim to create a common set of rules. The World Trade Organization (WTO) is a paramount example, providing a platform for member states to negotiate, adjudicate disputes, and formulate trade rules. Additionally, the development of model laws and conventions by entities like the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) serves as a catalyst for harmonization (Abbott & Snidal, 2021, Dau, et. al., 2022) <sup>[1, 18]</sup>.

The benefits of harmonizing trade rules are manifold. It promotes legal consistency, reduces uncertainty for businesses, and facilitates a level playing field in global markets. Harmonization fosters cooperation among nations, streamlining cross-border transactions and enhancing economic efficiency (Nemoto & González, 2021) <sup>[50]</sup>. However, challenges arise due to the diverse economic, cultural, and legal contexts of participating nations. Striking a balance between uniformity and accommodating the unique needs of individual states poses a continuous challenge. Furthermore, the pace of harmonization may lag behind the rapid evolution of global trade practices, necessitating flexible and adaptive legal frameworks.

Regional trade blocs play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of international trade. Examples include the European Union (EU), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, now USMCA), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). These blocs go beyond harmonizing trade rules among member states; they often seek deeper integration through common economic policies, regulatory frameworks, and even shared currencies.

Regional trade blocs have profound implications for global trade relations. While fostering intra-bloc cooperation and

economic growth, they can potentially create barriers for non-member states (Gereffi, Lim & Lee, 2021) <sup>[26]</sup>. The rise of regional agreements has led to the diversification of global supply chains and altered the traditional dynamics of North-South trade. The challenge lies in balancing regional interests with global inclusivity and ensuring that regional agreements complement, rather than undermine, the broader framework of international trade law (Boffa, Jansen & Solleder, 2019, Hulme, 2021) <sup>[10, 31]</sup>.

Bilateral trade agreements involve negotiations between two nations, aiming to facilitate trade and economic cooperation. These agreements can cover various aspects, including tariff reductions, market access, and intellectual property protection. Notable examples include the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement.

A comparative analysis of key bilateral trade agreements allows for a nuanced understanding of their impact. The examination of specific provisions, such as dispute resolution mechanisms and investment protection, provides insights into the diverse approaches taken by nations (Harrison, et. al., 2019) <sup>[28]</sup>. Bilateral agreements offer flexibility and customization, allowing parties to address specific economic priorities and challenges. However, the potential risk lies in the proliferation of a complex web of overlapping agreements, which can lead to confusion and disputes (Abman & Lundberg, 2020, Curzi & Huysmans, 2022) <sup>[2, 17]</sup>. Evolving practices in International Trade Law reflect the dynamic nature of the global economy and the ever-changing landscape of international relations. The harmonization of trade rules, the role of regional agreements, and the dynamics of bilateral trade relations constitute essential elements in this evolution. Harmonization brings about consistency and efficiency but requires careful navigation of diverse interests. Regional agreements shape economic blocs, influencing global trade relations and challenging the traditional North-South paradigm. Bilateral agreements offer tailored solutions but necessitate a delicate balance to avoid fragmentation (Hosli & Selleslaghs, 2020, Ogunjobi, et. al., 2023, Slagter & Van Doorn, 2022) <sup>[30, 51, 61]</sup>.

As we navigate the complexities of a globalized world, the key lies in fostering collaboration and adaptability. International Trade Law must continue to evolve to accommodate technological advancements, address sustainability concerns, and uphold the principles of fairness and inclusivity. The ongoing dialogue and evolution of these practices are essential to ensure that International Trade Law remains a robust and responsive framework, facilitating the growth of nations and the integration of the global community.

## 2.3. Technological Advancements and Digital Trade

In the contemporary global landscape, technological advancements have ushered in a new era of international trade, transforming traditional commerce into a digitally-driven paradigm (Ismail, et. al., 2023) <sup>[36]</sup>. This paper explores the profound impact of technology on international trade, delving into the digitization of commerce and the changing dynamics of trade practices. Additionally, it examines the legal considerations that arise in the digital age, focusing on privacy and data protection as well as the intricate realm of intellectual property rights in the context of digital trade.

The digitization of commerce has revolutionized the way

nations conduct international trade. From the rise of e-commerce platforms to the integration of digital supply chains, technology has enabled businesses to transcend geographical constraints and reach a global audience (Maduka *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[52]</sup>. The ease of online transactions has democratized trade, allowing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to participate in international markets, fostering economic inclusivity.

Moreover, digital platforms have facilitated the direct interaction between consumers and businesses, eliminating intermediaries and streamlining the purchasing process (Ahmedov, 2020) <sup>[4]</sup>. This shift towards digitization has not only increased the efficiency of trade but has also created a data-rich environment, providing valuable insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and market trends (Rymarczyk, 2021, Ikwuagwu *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[56, 34]</sup>.

Technology has disrupted traditional trade practices, giving rise to innovative models such as platform-based economies, peer-to-peer transactions, and cross-border e-commerce. Blockchain technology, for instance, has introduced transparency and security into supply chains, reducing fraud and ensuring the authenticity of products. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning algorithms have enhanced the efficiency of logistics, inventory management, and demand forecasting.

The advent of digital trade has also expanded the scope of services trade, with the global exchange of digital services such as software development, data analytics, and online education. As technology continues to evolve, the dynamics of trade practices will likely see further transformations, blurring the lines between goods and services and necessitating an agile legal framework.

The digitization of commerce has brought about a surge in the collection, storage, and transfer of vast amounts of personal and business data. Consequently, privacy and data protection have become critical legal considerations in the digital age. Cross-border data flows, often essential for digital trade, pose challenges in reconciling different jurisdictions' approaches to data protection.

Legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union and various national data protection laws worldwide aim to safeguard individuals' privacy rights. The challenge lies in developing a harmonized approach to data protection that balances the free flow of information with the imperative to protect personal privacy, ensuring that businesses can leverage digital trade opportunities while upholding fundamental rights (Hoofnagle, Van Der Sloot & Borgesius, 2019) <sup>[29]</sup>.

The digitization of trade has led to an increased reliance on intangible assets, emphasizing the significance of intellectual property rights (IPR). Protecting innovations, trademarks, copyrights, and trade secrets becomes paramount in a digital ecosystem where the rapid dissemination of digital content is commonplace (Ryngaert & Taylor, 2020, Kingsley *et al.*, 2014) <sup>[57, 46]</sup>.

Issues such as digital piracy, unauthorized use of intellectual property, and the challenge of enforcing IPR across borders necessitate a comprehensive legal framework (Orlando, *et al.*, 2021) <sup>[53]</sup>. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and regional agreements address these concerns, but the evolving nature of technology continually challenges existing norms. Striking a balance between promoting innovation and protecting intellectual property rights remains a nuanced task, particularly in the digital trade landscape

(Kang, 2020, Okunade *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[44, 52]</sup>.

Technological advancements have undeniably reshaped the landscape of international trade, marking a shift towards a digitally-driven, interconnected global economy. The digitization of commerce has opened new horizons, fostering economic inclusivity, enabling innovative trade practices, and expanding the scope of services trade (Altenried, 2022, Jansen van Rensburg, *et al.*, 2021, Sanni *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[6, 40, 59]</sup>. However, this transformation comes with its share of legal considerations. Privacy and data protection, as well as intellectual property rights, stand out as critical areas that require comprehensive and adaptable legal frameworks. Navigating the complexities of data flows, privacy rights, and intellectual property in the digital age demands collaboration between nations and the continuous evolution of legal norms. As we embrace the opportunities presented by technological advancements in international trade, it becomes imperative to strike a delicate balance between harnessing the benefits of digital trade and addressing the legal challenges it introduces. A forward-looking legal framework that prioritizes privacy, data protection, and intellectual property rights will be pivotal in ensuring that the digital era contributes to a more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable global trade environment.

## 2.4. Key International Trade Agreements

International trade agreements form the backbone of the interconnected global economy, facilitating the movement of goods and services across borders (Ostrovskaya, Tsarik & Khaliliulin, 2021, Ikechukwu *et al.*, 2019) <sup>[54, 33]</sup>. This paper provides a comprehensive examination of key international trade agreements, encompassing the core principles of World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, the impact of regional trade agreements like the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and European Union (EU) trade agreements, and the nuances of bilateral trade agreements through case studies and analysis (Rahman & Rahman, 2022, Enebe, Ukoba and Jen, 2019) <sup>[55, 20]</sup>.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) serves as the preeminent international body governing trade relations between nations. Its agreements are built on core principles that include non-discrimination, transparency, and the reduction of trade barriers. The WTO aims to facilitate fair and predictable trade, fostering economic development and stability globally. Key agreements under the WTO, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), set out rules governing trade in goods and intellectual property.

The WTO plays a vital role in facilitating global trade by providing a platform for member states to negotiate trade agreements, resolve disputes, and promote a rules-based international trading system. Through multilateral negotiations, the WTO seeks to reduce tariffs, eliminate trade barriers, and ensure that trade practices are conducted in a transparent and fair manner. The organization's principles encourage open markets, creating an environment conducive to economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction on a global scale (Furculiță, 2021, Wouters & Hegde, 2022, Ukoba and Inambao, 2018) <sup>[25, 69, 18]</sup>.

The CPTPP is a significant regional trade agreement involving 11 Pacific Rim countries. It emerged from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) after the United States withdrew. The agreement aims to deepen economic ties

among member nations by lowering tariffs, harmonizing regulations, and facilitating trade in goods and services. The CPTPP addresses emerging issues such as e-commerce, environmental protection, and labor standards, reflecting a commitment to comprehensive and progressive trade practices.

The European Union is a pioneer in establishing comprehensive trade agreements, both within the EU and with external partners. The EU negotiates trade deals collectively on behalf of its member states. Trade agreements, such as the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, aim to eliminate tariffs, enhance regulatory cooperation, and foster a closer economic partnership (Ferreira-Pereira & Smith, 2021, Ukoba and Jen, 2019) [21, 20]. These agreements also emphasize the importance of sustainable development and upholding high labor and environmental standards.

The USMCA, replacing NAFTA, is a trilateral trade agreement between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. It modernizes trade practices by addressing issues such as digital trade, intellectual property protection, and labor standards. Notable features include rules of origin requirements for the automotive sector and provisions related to e-commerce and environmental protection (Chidolue and Iqbal, 2023, Stender, et. al., 2021) [13, 62].

The ChAFTA aims to deepen economic ties between China and Australia by eliminating tariffs on a range of goods, facilitating market access for services, and promoting investment. The agreement reflects the importance of the Asia-Pacific region in global trade dynamics and underscores the potential benefits of bilateral cooperation.

Bilateral trade agreements offer flexibility and customization to address specific economic priorities, but their implications vary. These deals can enhance market access, promote economic growth, and foster diplomatic relations. However, challenges arise in areas such as dispute resolution, differing regulatory standards, and potential asymmetries in negotiating power. Analyzing the implications of bilateral deals requires a nuanced understanding of the economic, political, and social contexts of the involved nations.

Key international trade agreements, whether established under the auspices of the WTO, within regional blocs, or through bilateral negotiations, play a pivotal role in shaping the contours of global commerce. The principles and objectives of WTO agreements set the foundation for a rules-based international trading system, fostering cooperation and predictability. Regional trade agreements, exemplified by the CPTPP and EU agreements, demonstrate the commitment of nations to deeper economic integration and the pursuit of shared values.

Bilateral trade agreements, as evidenced by the USMCA and ChAFTA, showcase the adaptability and customization possible in addressing specific economic needs. However, the implications of such agreements necessitate careful consideration of both opportunities and challenges.

As the global economy continues to evolve, navigating the complex web of international trade agreements requires ongoing collaboration, adaptability, and a commitment to fair and inclusive trade practices. These agreements not only facilitate economic transactions but also serve as instruments for building diplomatic relations, promoting sustainable development, and upholding the principles of a balanced and equitable global trading system.

## 2.5. Challenges and Opportunities

International trade, as the lifeblood of the global economy, encounters a myriad of challenges and opportunities that shape the landscape of international trade law (Bacchus, 2022, Jones, 2021, Thomas, 2020, Uddin *et al.*, 2022) [9, 43, 64]. This paper delves into the critiques and controversies surrounding current trade agreements, addressing concerns related to sovereignty and criticisms of existing frameworks. Simultaneously, it explores the opportunities for enhancing trade relations through sustainable and inclusive trade practices, along with initiatives aimed at addressing global economic disparities.

One of the prominent critiques of international trade law centers around concerns regarding national sovereignty. Critics argue that certain trade agreements may infringe upon a nation's ability to enact policies that align with its domestic priorities. Provisions within agreements, such as investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms, have been criticized for potentially allowing corporations to challenge and override domestic regulations, raising sovereignty concerns. Striking a balance between fostering international trade and respecting the autonomy of nations remains a persistent challenge.

Existing international trade agreements have faced criticism on various fronts. Some argue that certain agreements disproportionately benefit large corporations and developed nations, contributing to economic inequality. Additionally, concerns have been raised about the environmental and labor standards within trade agreements, with critics contending that these frameworks may not adequately address sustainability and workers' rights. The complexity and opacity of trade negotiations and dispute resolution processes have also been criticized for limiting public participation and transparency (Chidolue and Iqbal, 2023, Han & Ahn, 2020, Jones, et. al., 2019) [13, 27, 42].

Addressing the critiques and controversies in international trade law presents an opportunity to enhance trade relations through sustainable and inclusive practices. Incorporating environmental and social considerations into trade agreements can promote sustainable development (Maarouf, 2019, Adebukola *et al.*, 2022) [48, 3]. Emphasizing fair labor practices, protecting the rights of workers, and incorporating environmental safeguards are crucial steps toward fostering a trade environment that prioritizes ethical practices. Trade agreements, such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), incorporate provisions that address labor and environmental concerns, setting a precedent for future agreements.

International trade can be a powerful tool for addressing global economic disparities when approached with a focus on inclusivity. Trade agreements that prioritize the needs of developing nations, facilitate technology transfer, and provide avenues for capacity building can contribute to reducing economic disparities. Efforts to promote fair and ethical trade practices, along with initiatives supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are essential for creating a more balanced and equitable global economic landscape.

Navigating the challenges and opportunities in international trade law requires a nuanced understanding of the critiques and controversies surrounding existing agreements, coupled with a commitment to fostering sustainable and inclusive trade practices. Sovereignty concerns can be addressed by ensuring that trade agreements respect the autonomy of nations and provide mechanisms for transparent negotiations.

Criticisms of existing agreements can serve as a catalyst for refining frameworks, making them more equitable, transparent, and responsive to environmental and social considerations.

Embracing opportunities for enhancing trade relations involves a commitment to sustainable and inclusive practices. Prioritizing fair labor standards, environmental protection, and addressing the needs of developing nations can contribute to a more ethical and balanced global trade system. As nations grapple with the complexities of international trade, the ongoing dialogue surrounding challenges and opportunities provides an invaluable opportunity to shape the future of trade relations. By fostering cooperation, transparency, and a commitment to shared values, the international community can build a resilient and inclusive global trading system that benefits nations of all sizes and levels of development.

### 2.6. Recommendation and Conclusion

In light of the comprehensive review of evolving practices and agreements in international trade law, several key recommendations emerge to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of the global trading system. Encourage further efforts in harmonizing trade rules and standardizing practices across jurisdictions. This includes supporting initiatives at the World Trade Organization (WTO) that aim to streamline regulations, reduce trade barriers, and establish a common framework for international trade. Recognize the significance of digital trade and invest in the development of robust digital trade infrastructure. This includes fostering international cooperation on issues like data protection, cybersecurity, and e-commerce regulations to ensure the secure and efficient flow of digital transactions across borders.

Advocate for the integration of sustainability considerations into international trade agreements. Promote the inclusion of environmental and social standards, ensuring that trade practices contribute to global efforts in addressing climate change, promoting responsible resource use, and protecting human rights. Encourage nations to adopt inclusive trade policies that consider the needs of both developed and developing economies. Prioritize initiatives that support SMEs, technology transfer, and capacity building, fostering economic development in emerging markets and reducing global economic disparities. Foster increased collaboration between public and private sectors. Engage businesses, industry associations, and civil society in the negotiation and implementation of trade agreements to ensure that diverse perspectives are considered and that trade policies align with broader societal goals.

### 3. Conclusion

The review of evolving practices and agreements in international trade law highlights the dynamic nature of the global economic landscape and the ongoing efforts to adapt legal frameworks to meet contemporary challenges. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, trade practices evolve, and technological advancements reshape commerce, it is imperative to maintain a forward-looking approach to international trade law.

The challenges identified, including sovereignty concerns, criticisms of existing agreements, and the need for sustainability, present opportunities for improvement and innovation. By addressing these challenges, the international community can build a more resilient, transparent, and

inclusive global trading system.

As nations navigate the complexities of international trade, collaboration and a commitment to shared values will be key. The recommendations outlined above, focusing on harmonization, digital trade infrastructure, sustainability, inclusivity, and public-private collaboration, offer a roadmap for advancing international trade law in the modern world.

The ongoing evolution of international trade law requires collective action and a dedication to shaping a future that promotes economic growth, environmental responsibility, and social equity. By embracing these recommendations, the global community can contribute to a more sustainable, inclusive, and fair international trading system.

### 4. Reference

1. Abbott KW, Snidal D. International “standards” and international governance. In: *The Spectrum of International Institutions*. Routledge; 2021:29-51.
2. Abman R, Lundberg C. Does free trade increase deforestation? The effects of regional trade agreements. *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*. 2020;7(1):35–72.
3. Adebukola AA, Navya AN, Jordan FJ, Jenifer NJ, Begley RD. Cyber security as a threat to health care. *Journal of Technology and Systems*. 2022;4(1):32–64.
4. Ahmedov I. The impact of digital economy on international trade. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*; 2020:5(4).
5. Alloui H, Mourdi Y. Exploring the full potentials of IoT for better financial growth and stability: A comprehensive survey. *Sensors*. 2023;23(19):8015.
6. Altenried M. *The digital factory: The human labor of automation*. University of Chicago Press; c2022.
7. Amro IAS. *Online arbitration in theory and in practice: A comparative study of cross-border commercial transactions in common law and civil law countries*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing; c2019.
8. Azmeh S, Foster C, Echavarri J. The international trade regime and the quest for free digital trade. *International Studies Review*. 2020;22(3):671–692.
9. Bacchus J. *Trade links: new rules for a new world*. Cambridge University Press; c2022.
10. Boffa M, Jansen M, Solleder O. Do we need deeper trade agreements for GVCs or just a BIT? *The World Economy*. 2019;42(6):1713–1739.
11. Carroll AB. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the COVID-19 pandemic: Organizational and managerial implications. *Journal of Strategy and Management*. 2021;14(3):315–330.
12. Chibber A. Impact of globalization on trade law. *Supremo Amicus*. 2022;28:142.
13. Chidolue O, Iqbal MT. Design and performance analysis of an oil pump powered by solar for a remote site in Nigeria. *European Journal of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science*. 2023;7(1):62–69.
14. Chidolue O, Iqbal T. System monitoring and data logging using PLX-DAQ for solar-powered oil well pumping. In: *2023 IEEE 13th Annual Computing and Communication Workshop and Conference (CCWC)*; 2023 Mar 6-9; pp. 690–694. IEEE.
15. Chow DC, Schoenbaum TJ. *International business transactions*. Aspen Publishing; c2022.
16. Chukwu E, Adu-Baah A, Niaz M, Nwagwu U, Chukwu MU. Navigating ethical supply chains: The intersection

- of diplomatic management and theological ethics. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Sciences and Arts*. 2023;2(1):127–139.
17. Curzi D, Huysmans M. The impact of protecting EU geographical indications in trade agreements. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. 2022;104(1):364–384.
  18. Dau LA, Moore EM, Doh JP, Soto MA. Does global integration stimulate corporate citizenship? The effect of international trade agreements and regulatory quality on state and private firm adoption of CSR standards. *Journal of International Business Policy*. 2022;5(3):328–352.
  19. De Marchi V, Di Maria E, Golini R, Perri A. Nurturing international business research through global value chains literature: A review and discussion of future research opportunities. *International Business Review*. 2020;29(5):101708.
  20. Enebe GC, Ukoba K, Jen TC. Numerical modeling of effect of annealing on nanostructured CuO/TiO<sub>2</sub> pn heterojunction solar cells using SCAPS. NIEEE Nsukka Chapter Conference; 2019:338–348.
  21. Ferreira-Pereira LC, Smith M. The European Union's strategic partnerships. Springer International Publishing; c2021.
  22. Fouseki K. US shipping in the global economy and the economic impact of the COVID-19. Master's thesis, Πανεπιστήμιο Πειραιώς; c2023.
  23. Friant MC, Vermeulen WJ, Salomone R. A typology of circular economy discourses: Navigating the diverse visions of a contested paradigm. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*. 2020;161:104917.
  24. Fróna D, Szenderák J, Harangi-Rákos M. The challenge of feeding the world. *Sustainability*. 2019;11(20):5816.
  25. Furculiță C. The WTO and the new generation EU FTA dispute settlement mechanisms: Interacting in a fragmented and changing international trade law regime. Vol. 19. Springer Nature; c2021.
  26. Gereffi G, Lim HC, Lee J. Trade policies, firm strategies, and adaptive reconfigurations of global value chains. *Journal of International Business Policy*. 2021;1-17.
  27. Han H, Ahn SW. Youth mobilization to stop global climate change: Narratives and impact. *Sustainability*. 2020;12(10):4127.
  28. Harrison J, Barbu M, Campling L, Richardson B, Smith A. Governing labour standards through free trade agreements: Limits of the European Union's trade and sustainable development chapters. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*. 2019;57(2):260–277.
  29. Hoofnagle CJ, Van Der Sloot B, Borgesius FZ. The European Union general data protection regulation: What it is and what it means. *Information & Communications Technology Law*. 2019;28(1):65–98.
  30. Hosli MO, Selleslaghs J. The changing global order. Springer International Publishing; 2020.
  31. Hulme PE. Unwelcome exchange: International trade as a direct and indirect driver of biological invasions worldwide. *One Earth*. 2021;4(5):666–679.
  32. Hynes W, Trump BD, Kirman A, Latini C, Linkov I. Complexity, interconnectedness and resilience: Why a paradigm shift in economics is needed to deal with Covid-19 and future shocks. In: *COVID-19: Systemic risk and resilience*. Cham: Springer International Publishing; 2021. p. 61–73.
  33. Ikechukwu IJ, Anyaoha C, Abraham KU, Nwachukwu EO. Transient analysis of segmented Di-trapezoidal variable geometry thermoelement. NIEEE Nsukka Chapter Conference. 2019:338–348.
  34. Ikwuagwu CV, Ajahb SA, Uchennab N, Uzomab N, Anutaa UJ, Sa OC, Emmanuela O. Development of an Arduino-Controlled Convective Heat Dryer. In: *UNN International Conference: Technological Innovation for Holistic Sustainable Development (TECHISD2020)*; 2020:180–195.
  35. Inama S. Rules of origin in international trade. Cambridge University Press; c2022.
  36. Ismail A, Hidajat T, Dora YM, Prasatia FE, Pranadani A. Leading the digital transformation: Evidence from Indonesia. Asadel Publisher; c2023.
  37. Jain VIPIN, Malviya BINDOO, Arya SATYENDRA. An overview of electronic commerce (e-Commerce). *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government*. 2021;27(3):665–670.
  38. Jakob M. Globalization and climate change: State of knowledge, emerging issues, and policy implications. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*. 2022;13(4):e771.
  39. Janow ME, Mavroidis PC. Digital trade, e-commerce, the WTO and regional frameworks. *World Trade Review*. 2019;18(S1):S1–S7.
  40. Jansen van Rensburg SJ, Viviers W, Parry A, Strydom PD, Kühn ML, Orkoh E, *et al.* Africa's digital future: From theory to action. *AOSIS*; 2021:420.
  41. Jiang L, He S, Zhong Z, Zhou H, He L. Revisiting environmental Kuznets curve for carbon dioxide emissions: the role of trade. *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics*. 2019;50:245-57.
  42. Jones A, Neal B, Reeve B, Mhurchu CN, Thow AM. Front-of-pack nutrition labelling to promote healthier diets: current practice and opportunities to strengthen regulation worldwide. *BMJ Global Health*; 2019:4(6).
  43. Jones K. Populism and trade: The challenge to the global trading system. Oxford University Press; c2021.
  44. Kang HY. Patents as assets: intellectual property rights as market subjects and objects. *Inside Technology*; 2020:2.
  45. Kano L, Tsang EW, Yeung HWC. Global value chains: A review of the multi-disciplinary literature. *Journal of International Business Studies*. 2020;51:577-622.
  46. Kingsley U, Aigbogun JO, Alasoluyi JO, Oyelami AT, Idowu AS, Babatunde G, Olusunle SOO. Development of Laboratory-Scale Salt Bath Furnace. *Innovative Systems Design and Engineering*. 2014;5(8):16-21.
  47. Li Y, He Y, Wu R. Traversing the macroeconomic terrain: An exploration of South Korea's economic responsiveness to cross-border e-commerce production technology alterations in the global arena. *Sustainability*. 2023;15(15):11719.
  48. Maarouf H. Pragmatism as a supportive paradigm for the mixed research approach: Conceptualizing the ontological, epistemological, and axiological stances of pragmatism. *International Business Research*. 2019;12(9):1-12.
  49. Maduka CP, Adegoke AA, Okongwu CC, Enahoro A, Osunlaja O, Ajogwu AE. Review of Laboratory Diagnostics Evolution in Nigeria's Response to COVID-19. *International Medical Science Research Journal*. 2023;3(1):1-23.
  50. Nemoto T, González JL. Digital trade inventory: Rules,

- standards and principles; c2021.
51. Ogunjobi OA, Eyo-Udo NL, Egbokhaebho BA, Daraojimba C, Ikwue U, Banso AA. Analyzing Historical Trade Dynamics and Contemporary Impacts of Emerging Materials Technologies on International Exchange and US Strategy. *Engineering Science & Technology Journal*. 2023;4(3):101-19.
  52. Okunade BA, Adediran FE, Maduka CP, Adegoke AA. Community-Based Mental Health Interventions in Africa: A Review and Its Implications for US Healthcare Practices. *International Medical Science Research Journal*. 2023;3(3):68-91.
  53. Orlando B, Mazzucchelli A, Usai A, Nicotra M, Paoletti F. Are digital technologies killing future innovation? The curvilinear relationship between digital technologies and firm's intellectual property. *Journal of Intellectual Capital*. 2021;22(3):587-609.
  54. Ostrovskaia EY, Tsarik EV, Khaliliulin IN. Regional Trade Agreements and Global Value Chains: Is There Any Connection Between These Backbone Trends of World Economy?. *Revista Turismo Estudos e Práticas-RTEP/UERN*. 2021;(01):1-18.
  55. Rahman MN, Rahman N. Exploring digital trade provisions in Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) in times of crisis: India and Asia-Pacific countries. *Asia and the Global Economy*. 2022;2(2):100036.
  56. Rymarczyk J. The impact of industrial revolution 4.0 on international trade. *Entrepreneurial Business and Economics Review*. 2021;9(1):105-17.
  57. Ryngaert C, Taylor M. The GDPR as global data protection regulation?. *American Journal of International Law*. 2020;114:5-9.
  58. Salvatore D. *International economics*. John Wiley & Sons; c2019.
  59. Sanni O, Adeleke O, Ukoba K, Ren J, Jen TC. Prediction of inhibition performance of agro-waste extract in simulated acidizing media via machine learning. *Fuel*. 2024;356:129527.
  60. Shaffer G. *Emerging powers and the world trading system: the past and future of international economic law*. Cambridge University Press; c2021.
  61. Slagter TH, Van Doorn JD. *Fundamental perspectives on international law*. Cambridge University Press; c2022.
  62. Stender F, Berger A, Brandi C, Schwab J. The trade effects of the economic partnership agreements between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of states: Early empirical insights from panel data. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*. 2021;59(6):1495-1515.
  63. Thomas AO. *Shadow Trades: The Dark Side of Global Business*. *Shadow Trades*; 2020:1-296.
  64. Uddin SU, Chidolue O, Azeez A, Iqbal T. Design and Analysis of a Solar Powered Water Filtration System for a Community in Black Tickle-Domino. In: 2022 IEEE International IOT, Electronics and Mechatronics Conference (IEMTRONICS); 2022 Jun; pp.1-6. IEEE.
  65. Ukoba KO, Inambao FL. Solar cells and global warming reduction; c2018.
  66. Ukoba OK, Jen TC. Review of atomic layer deposition of nanostructured solar cells 4. In: *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*. IOP Publishing. 2019; 1378(4):042060.
  67. Usman H, Shaheen KH. Pixels and Policy: The Symbiotic Relationship Between Digitalization and International Trade Legislation. *Journal of Social Research Development*. 2023;4(3):570-88.
  68. Voulvoulis N, Giakoumis T, Hunt C, Kioupi V, Petrou N, Souliotis I, Vaghela CJGEC. Systems thinking as a paradigm shift for sustainability transformation. *Global Environmental Change*. 2022;75:102544.
  69. Wouters J, Hegde V. Reform of global trade governance: the role of the European Union. *Journal of European Integration*. 2022;44(5):715-30.
  70. Yaya S, Otu A, Labonté R. Globalisation in the time of COVID-19: repositioning Africa to meet the immediate and remote challenges. *Globalization and Health*. 2020;16:1-7.