

The Issue of Trade with China

Trade relations between China and the United Nations (UN) are complex and multifaceted. As an intergovernmental organisation, the UN does not engage in direct trade with any country, including China. Instead, trade relations between countries are typically managed by individual governments and private enterprises.

The UN does exert a significant impact on global trade, however, through its various agencies and programs. For instance, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) play a vital role in promoting fair and open trade and addressing issues such as poverty and inequality that may be related to trade. Additionally, the UN has a mandate to promote sustainable development, and the protection of human rights, which can influence the trading practices of its member states, including China.

The UN can also play a crucial role in mediating trade disputes between countries, as well as providing humanitarian aid to individuals affected by trade policies. This is particularly significant in light of the ongoing trade tensions between China and other countries. One of the main concerns in such trade relations are the intellectual property theft, forced labour, and human rights abuses in China, which have led to calls for increased tariffs and other trade restrictions on Chinese goods. According to a report by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), China has failed to adequately address these issues despite repeated calls to do so.

Another issue is the economic and geopolitical competition between China and other countries. China has been rapidly expanding its economic influence around the world, and this has led to concerns that it could challenge the other countries' global economic dominance. According to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), China's Belt and Road Initiative, which aims to improve infrastructure and connectivity between Asia, Europe, and Africa, has the potential to reshape global trade routes and challenge other countries' economic and strategic interests. There have been concerns that trade policies with China could lead to a trade war, which would be detrimental to both economies. According to a report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a trade war between China and other countries could lead to reduced economic growth and increased inflation in both countries.

Trade relations between China and the United Nations are crucial to maintain and whilst the UN does not engage in trade with China, it exerts a significant influence on global trade through its various agencies and programs. Trade relations between China and other countries are marked by a series of concerns such as intellectual property theft, forced labour, human rights abuses, economic and geopolitical competition, and the risk of a trade war.

Points to consider:

- How far is the UN able to get involved with trade disputes and restrictions?

- What knock-on impacts could trade restrictions have on Chinese and other citizens?
- What impact does trade with China have upon your member state?
- Should trade with China be encouraged/discouraged?
- How can trade be used as an incentive to encourage respect for human rights within China?

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<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zvwmy9q/revision/2>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-45899310>

<https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/white-house-announces-new-trade-regulations-on-china>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China>