



**The United Church  
of Canada  
General Council**

# **GCE Free Trade – Mexico-U.S.-Canada (1991F676)**

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Whereas the country is entering into a new phase of negotiations to secure a trade agreement with the United States and Mexico;

Whereas models exist in Europe\* and elsewhere for conducting negotiations on economic development in tandem with matters of social policy (including human rights) and social development, environment and security);

Whereas the well-being of people and nature is inextricably linked to the particular paths to economic development that their countries pursue;

Whereas a basic social charter of entitlement for all people has already been elaborated and adopted as international law in the United Nations;

Whereas the peoples of the three countries are not just “markets” but “publics” and citizens who have both rights and duties to one another;

Therefore be it resolved that the Executive of General Council:

1. Affirm the value of co-operative relations between sovereign states within the framework of international law;
2. Urge the Canadian Government not to enter into a trade agreement without creating an effective arena for negotiating trade and economic matters in tandem with matters of social and environmental policy;
3. Seek the active involvement of churches in the United States and Mexico in a co-operative Christian witness within our countries, in the interest of just economic development for the peoples of the region.

\*Note: In Europe, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe had been the political arena for negotiating many of the foundational matters that have lead to do-operation and “Europe 1992”. It is composed of three arenas and a series of review conferences for pursuing the co-operative management of the region. The arenas addressed are 1. Trade, economic development and environment; 2. Security; 3. Human dimension (human rights and social policy). Canada is a member of this conference and is familiar with the possibilities of working on several matters in tandem.

Concern was expressed about the degree of workload for its implementation and how this is to be guided. It was noted that some of the material in the motion is on the agenda of the Coalition for Economic Justice. The question was raised about who is being asked to do the work. It was noted that if the staff of DWO and DMC are being asked to do this then we need to be clear about this.

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