Side Event

World Trade Organization
July 8, 2026

Empowering Mountain and Landlocked Communities Through Trade Facilitation, Market Access, and Student-Centric Learning: Lessons from the Kyrgyz Republic and the State of Utah, United States

STATEMENT

Erynn Lammi

Utah Valley University

Good morning. My name is Erynn Lammi, and I am a student at Utah Valley University and a member of the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs that promotes sustainable mountain development through the Student-Engaged Learning model.

I would like to thank the organizers of this side event and the representatives of the World Trade Organization for providing students with the opportunity to contribute to discussions on trade, development, and the challenges facing mountain and landlocked communities.

Through Student-Engaged Learning, students conduct research, engage in advocacy, and collaborate with faculty mentors to address real-world challenges. This model has enabled me to study how trade and economic development affect communities in different regions of the world.

As part of my research, I am examining the Voluntary National Reviews of Jamaica and Algeria, which report on implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6, including Target 6.6 on protecting water-related mountain ecosystems.

Our research shows that sustainable economic development requires more than market access. Communities also need education, infrastructure, and opportunities to develop the skills necessary to participate in the global economy. When these elements work together, trade becomes a tool for reducing inequality and improving quality of life.

Through the Utah International Mountain Forum and Student-Engaged Learning, I have participated in community service, research, and international engagement that have connected local concerns in Utah with global development challenges. These experiences have shown me that students can make meaningful contributions to international policy discussions while preparing to become future leaders.

As the Utah International Mountain Forum continues its partnership with the United Nations Mountain Partnership, we remain committed to promoting dialogue, education, and international cooperation on behalf of mountain communities. By investing in people, expanding educational opportunities, and strengthening pathways to economic participation, trade can help communities overcome barriers created by geography and limited access to resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspectives.