

Sagafi-nejad, Tagi. **The UN and transnational corporations: from code of conduct to global compact**, by Tagi Sagafi-nejad with John H. Dunning. [Indiana](#), 2008. 284p index; ISBN [9780253352125](#), \$65.00; ISBN [9780253220127](#) pbk, \$24.95. Reviewed in 2009jun CHOICE.

This volume in the "United Nations Intellectual History Project Series" rescues from the memory hole an account of initiatives and ideas generated by the UN's Centre on Transnational Corporations (1974-92). The book traces how proposals for a New International Economic Order in the 1970s gave way to a shift in the 1980s to greater pragmatism and eventual absorption of the Centre into the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). One chapter recounts the controversy over the role of transnational corporations (TNCs) in ending South African apartheid. Sagafi-nejad, an expert on technology transfer and foreign investment, collaborated with Dunning, a world authority on TNCs, to produce a careful, thorough work with unique content. Few UN histories say much about UN economic projects, and fewer mention TNCs. UNCTAD's *Beyond Conventional Wisdom in Development Policy: An Intellectual History of UNCTAD 1964-2004* (2004) briefly discusses the UNCTC and TNCs, and John Toye and Richard Toye's *The UN and Global Political Economy* (CH, Dec'04, 42-2330) is a more exciting intellectual history of related (but not identical) economic issues. This new volume is a must for graduate libraries but is too detailed an institutional history and too dry in its effort at evenhandedness to engage most undergraduates. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Graduate and research collections. -- *M. Larudee, Mount Holyoke College*