



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
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DEVELOPMENT

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## WTO ARBITRATORS REDUCE U.S., CANADIAN BEEF RETALIATION LEVELS

The WTO on 12 July reduced the retaliation levels sought by the U.S. and Canada against the EU for the EU's failure to lift its import ban on hormone treated beef. (See *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest Vol. 3, No.19, 17 May 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story1.17-05-99.htm> ) The WTO arbitration panel set the final retaliation level at US\$116.8 million for the U.S. and CDN\$11.3 million for Canada.

The EU had previously argued that the dollar values proposed for retaliation by the U.S. and Canada were excessive in relation to the actual value of damages the countries suffered as a result of lost trade. The U.S. had proposed a retaliation list of products valued at US\$202 million, and the value of Canada's proposed retaliation list was CDN\$75 million. The EU argued that it owed at most US\$50 million for lost trade to the U.S. and Canada. (See *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest Vol. 3, No. 22, 7 June 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story1.07-06-99.htm> )

Canada and the U.S. are expected to seek final authorisation for retaliation from WTO Members (which should be no more than a "rubber-stamping" of the decision) at a 26 July meeting of the Dispute Settlement Body. In the meantime, the EU said it would step up its efforts to negotiate a compensation agreement with the U.S. and Canada in an effort to avoid retaliatory sanctions.

"We would prefer to negotiate about compensation because we think this would be much more in favour of the cattlemen in the U.S. With retaliation, the cattlemen will be the losers," EU Agricultural Commissioner Franz Fischler said last week, referring to the presence of pig producers and other interests besides cattle producers on the U.S. proposed retaliation list.

Indeed, the U.S. may have trouble arriving at a final retaliation list in light of the arbitration panel's decision to lower the allowed retaliation level, according to one source, since U.S. officials have promised various groups that certain products would be on the list. The U.S. last week did promise the EU that it would not pursue a so-called carousel approach to retaliation under which the U.S. would periodically change targeted EU products in order to maximise the trade impact to the EU and to ensure that all EU members face retaliation.

French President Jacques Chirac last week said that despite the WTO decision, the EU would maintain its ban on hormone treated beef until EU scientific assessments show the meat is safe. He criticised the WTO for ignoring the "precautionary principle," endorsed by other multilateral forums such as the World Health Organisation. The principle, often used in environmental policy, is used to allow preventive measures when scientific evidence is lacking.

The WTO Arbitrator's rulings on U.S. and Canadian retaliation can be found at <http://www.wto.org/wto/dispute/distab.htm>.

"WTO cuts damages sought by U.S., Canada in EU beef hormone case," *INSIDE US TRADE*, 16 July 1999; "Trade: US beef-hormone damage set at \$117 million," *SUNS*, 12 July 1999; "Boeuf aux hormones: l'Europe paiera," *LE FIGARO*, 13 July 1999; "EU to step up beef talks with US to prevent sanctions," *DOW JONES*, 12 July 1999; "Chirac-EU will keep block on hormone-treated beef," "US pledged no 'carousel' retaliation vs EU over beef-WTO," *REUTERS*, 14 July 1999; "Focus-EU favours compensation in hormone dispute," *REUTERS*, 15 July 1999.

## **AGREEMENT IN SIGHT ON WTO DIRECTOR-GENERALS**

Things are at last looking good for the WTO's prospects of having a new Director-General (DG), so good in fact that it might find itself appointing two - successive - heads after having been leaderless for three and a half months.

A proposal developed by Bangladesh and Australia and apparently brokered by Australia seems to be about to be accepted by WTO Members, who have called an informal General Council meeting for Tuesday morning, 20 July.

According to the proposal, a six-year term would be split equally between the two DG candidates: Mike Moore of New Zealand, and Supachai Panitchpakdi of Thailand. While the number of WTO Members opposing the proposal has been greatly reduced, some report that the issue of which of the two candidates should go first could be a sticking point in tomorrow's meeting. Most Members are prepared to let Moore go first, but some Supachai supporters may still call for Supachai to have the first innings.

WTO Members have been bitterly split in disagreements over who should replace Renato Ruggiero as the WTO's new Director-General, when his term expired at the end of March.

"Breakthrough on world trade leadership," BBC NEWS, 18 July, 1999; "Full support of split term for next WTO DG may be near," INSIDE US TRADE, 16 July, 1999; ICTSD Internal Files.

### **U.S. ANNOUNCES LONG TERM STUDY ON GMO SAFETY; JAPAN MOVES TOWARDS MANDATORY GMO LABELLING**

The European Commission (EC) on 7 July warned it would launch legal proceedings against France in the European Court of Justice for failing to allow two genetically modified (GMO) types of rapeseed to be marketed in France despite their having EU approval for sale on the EU-wide market. An EC official warned France that France does not have the option of ignoring the EU legislation. "You don't have to like it, but you have to deal with it," the official said. The official acknowledged some inconsistency on the part of the EC regarding its pursuit of legal action against France while not doing the same against Austria and Luxembourg: both EU members have blocked use of a GMO maize seed that was approved for EU-wide use almost three years ago.

Also last week, Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries issued a report on how genetically modified organisms should be categorised (versus not being classified in a separate or special food category). The report is regarded as the first step towards mandatory labelling of GMOs in Japan. The Ministry of Agriculture is expected to make a final decision on labelling in August. Mandatory GMO labelling in Japan is sure to incur the ire of the U.S. and Canada, as both countries oppose labelling arguing that GMO foods are substantially equivalent to traditional foodstuffs. Japanese consumers, however, have pushed hard for GMO labels.

In other news, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman last week said the U.S. would undertake long-term studies on the safety of GMOs. Mr. Glickman announced he would be seeking "an independent scientific review of USDA's biotech approval process. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that, as we are faced with increasingly complex issues surrounding biotechnology, our scientists have the best information and tools to ensure our regulatory capabilities continue to evolve along with advances in the new technology"

Mr. Glickman also proposed "an arm's length regulatory process" for GMOs under which, "government regulators must continue to stay an arm's length, dispassionate distance from the companies developing and promoting these products; and continue to protect public health, safety and the environment." Mr Glickman also announced four other principles that will guide U.S. policy on biotechnology into the next century, including consumer acceptance (and the possibility of informative GMO labelling); fairness to farmers; corporate citizenship; and free and open trade.

With regard to free and open trade, Mr. Glickman said, "We cannot let others hide behind unfounded, unwarranted scientific claims to block commerce in agriculture." Further, Mr. Glickman said, "To forestall a major US-EU trade conflict, both sides of the Atlantic must tone down the rhetoric, roll up our sleeves and work toward conflict resolution based on open trade, sound science, and consumer involvement." EU officials welcomed the U.S. action. The EU biotech industry welcomed the announcement saying it could help solve the EU-U.S. impasse over GMOs.

Environmental groups also welcomed the announcement. "The U.S. has realised it can't bully its way out of this problem, said Rebecca Goldberg of the Environmental Defence Fund. "Just a year ago, I don't think there was anyone in the Agriculture Department that would have acknowledged the legitimate issues of risk."

"EC to sue France over refusal to allow genetically modified seed approved for use," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 14 July 1999; "EU warns France over GMO authorisation delays," REUTERS, 7 July 1999; "U.S. to study biotech food safety," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 15 July 1999; "EU welcomes United States moves on GMOs," REUTERS, 14 July 1999; "Remarks as prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman before the National Press Club," USDA, 13 July 1999; "GM Foods: Japan's move on labelling may anger US," FINANCIAL TIMES, 15 July 1999.

## **UNDP REPORT CRITICISES WTO TRIPS AND CTE**

The Human Development Report-1999 (HDR) released 12 July by the UN Development Programme cast a critical eye toward globalisation and its supporting forums, including the WTO.

"The new rules of globalisation - and the players writing them - focus on integrating global markets, neglecting the needs of people that markets cannot meet. The process is concentrating power and marginalising the poor, both countries and people," according to the HDR.

The HDR recommended an agenda for action including the establishment of high-level mechanisms in individual countries to co-ordinate policy on globalisation; independent legal aid and an ombudsperson process to support weaker countries in the WTO; and faster debt relief and a redirection of aid in favour of poorer countries and human development priorities.

With regard to the WTO, the HDR called for revisions to the WTO Agreement on Trade Related Aspects on Intellectual Property (TRIPs Agreement). The HDR said the current intellectual property rules raise the price for technology transfer to developing countries and risk blocking developing countries out of the knowledge sector. New patent laws, the HDR says, "pay scant attention to the knowledge of indigenous people, leaving it vulnerable to claims by others."

With respect to trade and environment, the HDR suggested the establishment of a "green round" of global trade talks to "co-ordinate joint actions on eliminating environmentally damaging subsidies and internalising environmental costs." The HDR also criticised the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment for focusing "mostly on fitting environmental concerns into existing trade regimes, not on seeking a true synergy between environment and trade as equal policy objectives." The HDR said trade and environment linkage need not be viewed negatively by developing countries, which could use the next round of global trade talks to exact trade concessions from developed countries in return for protecting significant environmental assets (e.g. rain forests).

In a comprehensive review of the internet and its implications for human development, the HDR said the internet "can open a fast track to knowledge-based growth in rich and poor countries alike, but at present benefit the relatively well-off and educated. . . The literally well connected have an overpowering advantage over the unconnected poor, whose voices and concerns are being left out of the global conversation."

The HDR also called on the EU to reinforce its commitment to the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of countries in Lome V negotiations. The HDR said the EU must not take a one-size-fits-all approach when negotiating with the 71 ACP countries, but should pursue a mix of policies keeping in mind the political, economic and cultural diversity of ACP countries.

The HDR also noted that the world's three richest men have more wealth than the combined GNP of the 43 poorest countries.

"Human development report 1999," UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP), 12 July 1999; "A human face for globalisation;" "Reducing the gap between the knows and the know-nots," UNDP PRESS RELEASE, 12 July 1999; "Pays en développement: le PNUD propose un programme mondial pour promouvoir les technologies de pointe," LES ECHOS, 14 July 1999; "Call for rules on global integration," FINANCIAL TIMES, 12 July 1999; "Politics this week," THE ECONOMIST, 10 July 1999.

### **OAU, SADC MEETINGS DISCUSS GLOBALISATION, TRADE**

African heads of state met last week in Algeria for the 35th summit of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU). Among other regional matters, African economic integration and "the challenge of globalisation" were discussed.

Algerian president Abdel Aziz Bouteflika, who will chair the OAU for the next year, noted that wars, refugees and a lack of credibility with the developed world has resulted in Africa's marginalisation in the global economy. "Africa remains isolated and removed from the forces that are pushing the rest of the world, mired in internal conflict and wars, hesitant to move forward economically and sinking in debt," Mr Bouteflika said. "By facing the political, economic and social realities and co-operating to overcome the challenges. . . we have a chance today to embark on a new beginning for Africa."

Addressing the OAU summit, UN Secretary Kofi Annan urged African leaders to "to face unpleasant facts and confront them head on." Mr. Annan said that by doing so, Africa could change its image among the developed world, which he said, underestimates Africa's potential as a destination for foreign investment. Mr. Annan pointed out that Africa currently "brings a higher return to American and Japanese companies which invest there than any other region of the world," - as evidence of Africa's potential.

Colonel Moammar Kadhafi of Libya proposed a Pan African Congress and an Integration Bank, which would help facilitate closer African unity and the process of implementing the treaty on the Economic Community of Africa.

Also last week, trade officials from the 14-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC) met for talks towards concluding an SADC free trade agreement. Trade officials failed to reach final agreement on a SADC free trade area, but said ministers would meet again in August when an agreement is expected to be reached. SADC hopes to launch an SADC free trade area by January 2000. (See *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 25, 28 June 1999.) On other trade matters, SADC called for trade preferences enjoyed by SADC under the Lome IV trade and aid agreement with the EU to be extended for another 10-years, versus the five years the EU has proposed. (See *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 20, 24 May 1999.) SADC said it would request a continuation of the WTO waiver which allows the trade preferences under the Lome IV accord at the WTO Ministerial later this year.

"Conflicts, globalisation top agenda of OAU summit," PANAFRICAN NEWS AGENCY, 11 July 1999; "Face facts and fight back, OAU leaders told," BUSINESS DAY (Johannesburg), 13 July

1999; "African summit opens to bleak look of the future," FINANCIAL TIMES, 13 July 1999; "Kadhafi calls for Pan African Congress," PANAFRICAN NEWS AGENCY, 13 July 1999; "Africa's trade struggle," LOS ANGELES TIMES, 12 July 1999; "Mbeki paves the way for free trade deal," AFRICA ANALYSIS, 9 July 1999; "Annan says Africa is investors paradise," PANAFRICAN NEWS AGENCY, 12 July 1999; "Southern Africa seeks 10-year extension to EU trade concessions," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 12 July 1999; "Southern African countries fail to finalise free trade deal," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 14 July 1999.

## **E-COMMERCE POSITIONS EMERGE**

Japan on 14 July called for electric commerce (e-commerce) to be included in the next round of global trade talks. In its position paper submitted to the WTO, Japan said that WTO Members should continue to keep e-commerce transactions duty free and develop rules to protect consumers and privacy under a global e-commerce pact. Japan also noted that "Developed countries should extend co-operation toward the smooth participation of developing countries in electronic commerce-related markets."

WTO Members last year agreed to an interim global pact keeping electronic commerce duty free until the end of 1999. (See *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 2, No. 21, 8 June 1998, [http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/getbulletin.cfm?bulletin\\_ID=14&issue\\_ID=440&browse=1&SID=](http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/getbulletin.cfm?bulletin_ID=14&issue_ID=440&browse=1&SID=) ) Australia and the U.S. have pushed for this agreement to be extended permanently. Australia last week called for an "indefinite ban" on e-commerce duties, but left open the possibility of reviewing such an agreement if WTO Members find down the road that the arrangement is not workable. The U.S. goes further, calling for "a binding and permanent commitment" to keep e-commerce duty free, to be concluded in advance of the 30 November-3 December Third WTO Ministerial meeting in Seattle.

The EU on 7 July said that it would not back the U.S. initiative until WTO Members first complete their work program on e-commerce. Under the work program, established last year, the WTO Council for Trade in Services, the Council for Trade in Goods, the Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, and the Committee on Trade and Development are responsible for looking at e-commerce issues related to their specific sectors. The working groups are to report on their findings at the Seattle Ministerial.

Indonesia and Singapore on 8 July announced their support for extending the global moratorium on e-commerce duties. However, a number of other developing countries - notably India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Jamaica, remain wary of extending the moratorium. These countries want more time to study the issue. E-commerce duties present an additional source for revenue-generation which developing economies may not be able to forgo. Further, most of the computer networks enabling e-commerce are in the developed countries. For example, as the world's leader in information technology the U.S. stands to benefit the most from an increase in e-commerce of products and services. This has left many poor countries questioning the benefits to them from extending a moratorium.

The WTO General Council last week also discussed the Work Programme on electronic commerce. For the time being it is waiting for the four WTO bodies working on the issue (Committee on Trade and Development, Council on Trade in Goods, Council on Trade in Services and the TRIPs Council) who should report on e-commerce to the General Council by the end of this month, in

order that Members can consider the issue again at the next General Council, scheduled for early October.

In related news, UNCTAD will over the next few months hold a series of regional roundtables on e-commerce and development, in advance of the Seattle WTO Ministerial. Lima, Peru is to host the first of these sessions on 4-5 August. UNCTAD is holding from 14-23 July a series of meetings in Geneva dealing with various aspects of developing countries' participation in global e-commerce.

"Electronic commerce: communication from Japan," WTO GENERAL COUNCIL (WT/GC/W/253), 14 July 1999; "EU says it will not support WTO e-commerce moratorium," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 14 June 1999; "Australia seeks indefinite ban on e-commerce tariffs," REUTERS, 15 July 1999; "Un apartheid technologique," LIBERATION, 13 July 1999; "Intense activity ahead on promoting electronic commerce for developing countries," UNCTAD PRESS RELEASE, 17 June 1999.

### **UNCTAD LAUNCHES TRADE-ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE; ECOSOC CALLS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION**

The UN Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD) last week announced an initiative to strengthen research and policy-making capacity on trade and environment issues in ten developing countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, India, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda. The initiative will bring together policy makers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and developing country research institutions to improve these countries' ability to participate effectively in multilateral deliberations on trade and environment in the WTO and other forums.

Project participants launched the 18-month initiative in Geneva on 24-25 June, where they defined priority issues for the project. These include *inter alia*: the issue of *sui generis* systems for traditional knowledge and access to genetic resources and mutual benefit sharing (see *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest Vol. 3, No.15-16, 26 April 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story2.26-04-99.htm> ); market access and trade liberalisation; promoting trade in environmentally preferable products, particularly organic products; and technology transfer and the WTO.

In other news, the annual meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) opened on 5 July in Geneva, where the focus is to be on the role of employment and work in poverty eradication, and the empowerment and advancement of women. Speaking at a high-level policy dialogue with the heads of international financial and trade institutions marking the opening day of the month-long ECOSOC session, UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero called again for the next round of global trade talks to be a so-called development round, where the focus should be on industrial countries opening up their markets to developing countries where developing countries have a competitive advantage and on redressing the imbalance of past negotiations.

ECOSOC President Francesco Paolo Fulci in his opening address called for greater co-operation between ECOSOC and the international financial and trade institutions as well as the private sector to help alleviate poverty.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan also addressed the opening session, remarking that the cost to reduce the number of the world's poor and ensure their access to basic social services by 2015

would be US\$40 billion a year: about the amount people in developed countries spend every year on cigarettes and one-third of what developing countries spend on the military.

"Strengthening understanding of trade and environment links," UNCTAD PRESS RELEASE, 13 July 1999; "Les Nations Unies souhaitent entraîner le secteur privé dans la lutte contre la pauvreté," LE MONDE, 13 July 1999; "UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero urges at opening of ECOSOC meeting," UNCTAD PRESS RELEASE, 5 July 1999.

## **WTO GENERAL COUNCIL POSTPONES CONSIDERATION OF DOCUMENT DERESTRICTION**

Meeting on 15 July, the WTO General Council *inter alia* established an Accession Working Party for Bosnia, discussed the Work Programme on electronic commerce (see related story, this issue), continued consideration of the institutional image of the WTO, decided to continue informal consultations on frequency and scheduling of WTO meetings, reached probable agreement on observer status for Inter-governmental Organisations at WTO meetings, and said that the informal consultations on document derestriction would be taken up once again by a Deputy WTO Director-General, once a new Director-General had been appointed.

WTO Members also agreed, at last week's General Council, to allow all 31 governments in the process of acceding to the WTO to sit in on informal meetings of the General Council's Special Session to prepare for the Ministerial Conference at the end of this year. Until now, these governments could attend formal, but not informal meetings.

Earlier this year, Venezuela had suggested that the WTO should do more to enhance public understanding of the WTO's work (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest*, Vol. 3, No 9, 8 March 1999, [http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/getbulletin.cfm?bulletin\\_ID=14&issue\\_ID=1277&browse=1&SID=](http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/getbulletin.cfm?bulletin_ID=14&issue_ID=1277&browse=1&SID=)). In response to this, the Secretariat produced a report outlining some of the activities regarding public information. Some Members resisted the idea of spending resources on "advertising," preferring scarce resources to be spent on technical assistance. Other Members said that each Member should take steps domestically to explain the WTO's work and enhance its image. At last week's General Council, Members were interested in exchanging information on initiatives taken domestically in this regard. This issue will be on the General Council's agenda again at future meetings.

ICTSD Internal Files.

## **WTO DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES WORRY ABOUT LACK OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The WTO's Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) met on 7-8 July. Of the various issues before it, the one that most concerned WTO Members at the CTD meeting was that the WTO trust funds for technical co-operation for development have been used up. Members urgently requested more money.

At the same meeting Members considered the concerns and problems of small economies. The World Bank and the Commonwealth Secretariat made separate presentations, introducing their joint report entitled "Making Small States Less Vulnerable: Supporting Development During



Globalisation." The report highlights priority areas for the WTO, including procedures for small States' accession to the WTO should be accelerated, the cost of access to the WTO's Dispute Settlement Mechanisms should be reduced, and the amount of contributions small States make to the WTO's budget should be lessened. A number of small States have already asked to be given special status within the WTO (See also *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest*, Vol. 2, No 43, 9 November, 1998, [http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/getbulletin.cfm?bulletin\\_ID=14&issue\\_ID=1178&browse=1&SID=](http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/getbulletin.cfm?bulletin_ID=14&issue_ID=1178&browse=1&SID=) ).

The review of the application of special provisions in favour of developing countries in WTO Agreements was again considered, without much substantive discussion as so few countries (only 7) have replied to a Secretariat questionnaire on this issue. The Secretariat has prepared a note based on replies received, but the issue will be on the CTD's agenda again, possibly with a longer Secretariat paper if more replies are received. The problem seems to be that Members themselves are finding it difficult to find the time and resources to assess what the problems are that they face in implementing the special provisions for developing countries.

Last Monday, the Sub-Committee on Least Developed Countries met with the same three agenda items as usual: Follow-up to the October 1997 High-Level Meeting on Least-Developed Countries; Market Access; and Future Work. Annet Blank of WTO's Technical Co-operation Division informed participants in the meeting about a workshop in Bangladesh on follow-up of the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance, and on the process of raising the profile of the Integrated Framework. The initiatives Ms Blank reported on are in response to the generally-agreed feeling that the process agreed to at the 1997 LDCs meeting is not moving forward as it should do.

At the end of the Sub-Committee on LDCs, the Chairperson said that future work would concentrate on 4 main issues: market access, capacity building, implementation and coherence.

The Sub-Committee on LDCs will next meet on 29 September, and the next meeting of the CTD is scheduled for 15 October.

ICTSD Internal Files.

## **IN BRIEF**

Building on its recently concluded trade agreement with Egypt, Saudi Arabian officials last week indicated it would pursue free trade agreements with Arab countries toward a possible pan-Arabian free trade zone. "Saudi planning free trade pacts with Arab states," DOW JONES, 11 July 1999.

Negotiators from more than 100 countries met in Rome 12-16 July to "jump start" the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (adopted in 1998 but not yet in force). Negotiators were expected to discuss inclusion of an additional six hazardous pesticides in the treaty and agree on technical and financial assistance necessary to implementation of the Convention. "Experts discuss convention on dangerous chemicals," PANAFRICAN NEWS AGENCY, 12 July 1999.

Japan and Mexico last week agreed to hold preliminary talks late this year toward reaching a bilateral investment treaty. Mexican officials also indicated interest in negotiating a free trade agreement with Japan, but no plans have been announced on that issue. "Japan, Mexico agree to

work on investment treaty," KYODO NEWS AGENCY, 16 July 1999; "Mexico mulls free trade agreement with Japan," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 13 July 1999.

## **WTO IN BRIEF**

Australia and China on 13 July reached an agreement in principle towards China's WTO membership. The deal reportedly extends greater access to China's markets for Australian manufactured goods, services and agricultural products. "China agrees WTO deal with Australia," FINANCIAL TIMES, 14 July 1999.

Delegates from Caribbean banana producing states and Ecuador are to meet this week in Dominica for talks aimed at settling the dispute over the EU banana import regime. (See *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest*, Vol. 3, No.13-14, 12 April 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story1.12-04-99.htm> ) Dominican Prime Minister Edison James said Caribbean producers hope Ecuador, Latin America's largest banana producer, can play a key role in convincing Latin American banana producers to bring closure to the WTO dispute. "Caribbean, Ecuador banana producers for talks," THE HERALD (St. Vincent-Grenadines), 17 July 1999; "Bananas: rival growers seek EU solution," FINANCIAL TIMES, 15 July 1999.

Canada last week announced it has filed an appeal of the March WTO ruling which found that Canada violated WTO rules by providing low-cost milk to processors for export, constituting an export subsidy. "Canada appeals world trade organisation's dairy ruling," DOW JONES, 15 July 1999.

The European Commission last week announced the launch of an independent assessment on the impact that future trade negotiations will have on sustainable development. The Sustainability Impact Assessment has been awarded to a team from the University of Manchester. "Sustainability assessment of trade negotiations: impact study launched," EC PRESS RELEASE, 14 July 1999.

## **ON THE MOVE**

Pascal Lamy of France has been named as the new EC trade commissioner, to replace Sir Leon Brittan. Mr. Lamy is currently Director-General of Crédit Lyonnais, and from 1985-1994 served as chief of staff to former EC President Jacques Delors. The nomination must still be approved by the European Parliament, probably in September. "Les 20 commissaires proposés - Profils et attributions," EC PRESS RELEASE, "New trade commissioner seen as 'intellectual paratrooper'," FINANCIAL TIMES, 13 July 1999.

## **EVENTS & RESOURCES**

### **▪ EVENTS**

For a more complete list of events, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar at <http://www.ictsd.org/html/calendar.htm>

**WTO Meetings**

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at <http://www.wto.org/wto/about/meets.htm>. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of different WTO bodies.

26-27 July: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY. For information contact Nuch Nazeer, WTO, 739-5393.

29-30 July: SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL. For information contact Nuch Nazeer, WTO, as above.

**Other Events**

21 July 1999, 15:30 to 17:30, Geneva: INFORMAL MEETING (CAFÉ & CROISSANTS) TO REVIEW THE RECENT WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT (CTE) OF THE WTO. Hosted by ICTSD. This meeting will cover two main issues related to the CTE's work: (1) the current interaction between different MEAs and the WTO; (2) the state of the CTE's discussions relating to market access. For information contact Miguel Jiménez-Pont, ICTSD, tel: (41-22) 917-8478, fax: 917-8093, email: [mjimenez@ictsd.ch](mailto:mjimenez@ictsd.ch)

18-19 August, Bangalore, India: SOUTHERN AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MILLENNIUM: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY. Held in parallel to the 17-18 August G-15 Trade Ministers Meeting, this conference will deliberate on current international trade policy issues from civil society's perspective so as to promote South-South civil society co-operation and to take forward well-argued viewpoints on sustainable development in the South to the WTO's Seattle Ministerial Conference. For information contact Bipul Chatterjee, CUTS Centre for International Trade, Environment & Economics, D-218, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302 016, India, tel: (91-141) 20-2940/20-5802, fax: 20-2968/20-3998, email: [cutsjpr@jp1.dot.net.in](mailto:cutsjpr@jp1.dot.net.in)

2-3 September, Miami, Florida: MEETING OF THE FTAA COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SOCIETY. This will be the fourth meeting of the Trade Negotiating Committee sub-group on civil society participation (CGR). For information contact the Free Trade Area of the Americas Secretariat, 100 Chopin Plaza, Plaza Level, Miami, Florida 33131-2140 U.S.A., tel: (1-305) 381-9043, fax: (1-305) 381-8390, email: [ftaa-alca@ftaa-alca.4tz.com](mailto:ftaa-alca@ftaa-alca.4tz.com)

**▪ RESOURCES**

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 1999. 12 July 1999. By the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report is published in 10 languages, including English. To order visit <http://www.undp.org/hdro/Ordering.htm#L1> or contact Oxford University Press, 2001 Evans Road, Cary, North Carolina 27513, USA, fax: (1-919) 677-1303 (US and Canada); fax: (1-212) 726-6453 (orders from other countries) web: <http://www.oup-usa.org>

LES INFORMATIONS VOLATILES. Numéro 17 juin 1999. French-language e-paper on trade and the environment, with particular emphasis on genetically-modified organisms. Published by the Programme Environnement-Biodiversité de Solagral. To receive a copy contact Tristan Le Cotty,

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ASPECTOS JURIDICOS RELEVANTES A UN REGIMEN DE ACCESO A RECURSOS BIOLOGICOS Y A MECANISMOS DE COMPENSACION. EL CASO DE LA ARGENTINA. Online paper published by Fundacion Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN). To access visit: [http://www.farn-sustentar.org/docs/publicaciones\\_f.html](http://www.farn-sustentar.org/docs/publicaciones_f.html)

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