



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

BRIDGES

Weekly Trade News Digest

25 October 1999

Volume 3, N°42

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Friends of the Round Struggle to Reach Consensus
- WTO Members Haggle Over Ag Direction
- WTO Members Ponder GMO Inclusion In Talks
- FTAA Civil Society Meeting Stalled Over Submissions
- North-South Divide Splits TRIPs Council
- Transatlantic Environment Dialogue Announces Priorities For WTO Ministerial
- In Brief
- WTO In Brief
- Ministerial Events
- Events & Resources

FRIENDS OF THE ROUND STRUGGLE TO REACH CONSENSUS

Trade ministers from 25 trading powers --informally known as the 'Friends of the Round' -- met for informal talks in Lausanne, Switzerland, from 25-26 October, and agreed to identify issues on which consensus could be reached during the forthcoming WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle from 30 November - 3 December. The meeting was held to clarify the positions of central WTO Members in the buildup to the Seattle Ministerial.

At the Lausanne gathering, ministers struggled to find a consensus on a wide range of key issues, particularly agriculture (see related story this issue) that have polarised much of the buildup to the Ministerial. The bulk of these are included in the latest draft Ministerial Declaration, released on 19 October (available at <http://www.ictsd.org/html/seattleministerial.htm>). In addition to agriculture, ministers discussed anti-dumping rules, development, labour and the environment. Lately press reports have indicated that time is running out for countries to reach consensus on these areas before Seattle. This was reinforced by WTO Director-General Mike Moore's comments to ministers on Monday and Tuesday, when he warned them that the Ministerial meeting could end in failure unless WTO Members demonstrated more flexibility.

U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, who was one of the attending representatives, acknowledged that gaps persist, but that "one of the great accomplishments of this meeting is to build a real sense that these gaps are absolutely bridgeable." Barshefsky also said she believed that

there was a "large degree of convergence" in the group as a whole, and that the launching of a new round is an "absolute necessity."

Canadian trade minister Pierre Pettigrew corroborated the U.S. position, indicating there was much accord among delegates on agriculture, services, industrial tariffs and non-tariff barriers, but division remained on competition, labour and investment.

India and other attending developing countries stated they would fight "tooth and nail" against any attempt by developed countries to link labour standards with trade. At a joint press conference of the trade ministers, Barshefsky and her EU counterpart Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy indicated that they would press hard for the trade-labour link at Seattle.

Another emphasis at the Lausanne meeting was the commitment to ensuring that developing countries are full partners in the multilateral trading system. Egypt's minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Youssef Boutros Ghali said he believed there was agreement at Lausanne that "there is a need to make sure this round is the round of developing countries, and that they are included, they are heard, and they are seen to be full participants in the multilateral trading system."

A communiqué from the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (SCDO) -- composed of Swissaid, Action de carême, Pain pour le prochain, Helvetas, and Caritas -- condemned the Lausanne meeting for its exclusion of the WTO's poorest Members. "The represented countries are always the same, that's to say the most influential from an economic and commercial perspective," the press release stated. "Yet again, the poorest countries are absent from WTO negotiations and the risk is great that they will be the losers when it comes to trade liberalisation." The communiqué further pointed out that developing countries represented in Lausanne, such as Mexico, Brazil, South Africa and Egypt represent the most developed amongst them.

On the issue of public concern, Charlene Barshefsky expressed concern that countries WTO Members are not doing enough to respond to public concerns about trade liberalisation. "I think there is a certain amount of denial on the part of some delegations with respect to the impact of public sentiment on trade liberalisation. Without positive public sentiment, the cause of further market opening is at risk."

WTO Members participating in the meeting were the 15-member EU, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Hong Kong China, Hungary, India, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, South Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, the U.S. and Uruguay.

According to the Chair of the Lausanne meeting, the Swiss minister for Economic Affairs Mr. Pascal Couchepin, ministers agreed that their representatives in Geneva should focus their efforts over the next few days on the identification of issues for negotiation essential for achieving a consensus at Seattle. Once this has been done, the Chair's report states, "the parameters of the negotiations to be conducted on each issue will have to be defined."

The U.S. and the EU are attempting to establish common ground before a Wednesday, 27 October trade meeting between EC President Romano Prodi and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

"Barshefsky: Gaps on road to Seattle 'absolutely brideable'," U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, 26 October 1999; "Industrial powers struggle over trade talks agenda," REUTERS, 26 October 1999, "India, 24 other nations agree on common agenda at Seattle meet," ECONOMIC TIMES (INDIA), 26 October 1999, "Canada trade minister more optimistic on WTO agenda," REUTERS, 26 October 1999; "OMC: pas de négociations sans les plus pauvres!," SCDO, 26 October 1999.

WTO MEMBERS HAGGLE OVER AG DIRECTION

The WTO on 19 October circulated a revised draft WTO ministerial declaration (see BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest Vol. 3, No. 41, 18 October 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story1.18-10-99.htm> ; draft text available at <http://www.ictsd.org/html/seattleministerial.htm>).

The revised draft included a number of proposals to amend the draft language on agriculture, reflecting the major areas of disagreement among Members around what should be included in WTO talks on agriculture set to launch later this year.

During debate on the draft document last week, strong disagreement emerged between the EU and Japan on one side and members of the Cairns Group of agriculture exporting countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the other side over the EU-Japan demand to include the so-called 'multifunctionality of agriculture' in the revised draft ministerial text. The EU and Japan argue that Article 20 of the existing Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) dealing with Member's non-trade concerns should be expanded to include the multifunctional role of agriculture. The EU and Japan insist that Members consider the multifunctional role agriculture plays with regard to rural development, the environment and food security. Cairns and ASEAN Members argued that the EU and Japan are attempting to use multifunctionality as a protectionist mechanism. The U.S. argued that the EU-Japan concept of "multifunctionality" is not clear and cannot be considered until better understood. The U.S., Cairns and ASEAN Members argue that no agriculture products should be exempted from the agriculture negotiations and that the sector should be approached in the same manner as industrial goods. Meanwhile, Argentina and Uruguay -- both members of the Cairns Group -- have called for the Ministerial text to include mention of the multifunctional character of trade in other sectors, including services, intellectual property and trade in other non-agricultural goods.

Also addressed in the revised text is the issue of special and differential treatment (S&D) for developing countries with respect to agriculture. The rather limited language in the original draft Ministerial Statement with regard to (S&D) was expanded after strong complaints from a number of developing countries. Proposed amended language inserted in the 19 October revised document calls for S&D to "constitute an integral part of these negotiations in order to take fully into account the development and food security needs of developing countries."

Other proposed language calls for improved market access for developing countries' agricultural exports; for particular attention to be paid to net food-importing countries; and for increased assistance towards boosting agricultural production/productivity in developing countries. Among these proposals is one to construct a so-called "development box" (along the lines of the set of provisions under Article 6.5 of the AoA known as green, yellow, blue and red boxes related to subsidies) to help developing countries achieve objectives related to food security, rural development and poverty alleviation. The proposal of a Development Box was supported by a group of developing countries comprised of Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The revised draft text also calls for instituting disciplines on export credits. U.S. trade officials last week said that the U.S. would not be willing to cut U.S. export credits until other Members with similar regimes cut their export credit programs. Specifically, the U.S. pointed to Australian and Canadian state-trading enterprises.

"Ministerial Text: Revised Draft," WTO (JOB(99)5868/Rev.1), 19 October 1999; "USTR Barshefsky: US opposes farm products exemption at WTO," DOW JONES NEWSWIRES, 20 October 1999; "Agriculture tops US agenda for new WTO round," WASHINGTON TRADE DAILY, 21 October 1999; "Barshefsky nixes straight formula approach for WTO ag talks," INSIDE US TRADE, 22 October 1999; "Nations scrap over farming issues at trade body," REUTERS, 12 October 1999; "Farm exporters expressed concern about WTO document," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 22 October 1999; "Proposal under Paragraphs 9(a)(I)and 9(a)(ii) of the Geneva Ministerial Declaration," WTO (WT/GC/W/374), 15 October 1999; "WTO members differ on agri resolutions," ECONOMIC TIMES (India), 4 October 1999.

WTO MEMBERS PONDER GMO INCLUSION IN TALKS

Earlier this month Canada tabled a proposal calling on the WTO to establish a working party on biotechnology at the WTO (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 40, 11 October 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story2.11-10-99.htm>). Canada wants the working party to assess WTO Members' ability to implement WTO rules related to biotechnology, in part to address developing countries' needs for technical assistance with implementation of WTO agreements. Canada called for the working party to report its findings within one year. Japan offered support for this proposal.

The Cairns Group of agricultural exporting countries, of which Canada is a member, has not yet agreed on a common biotechnology position amongst its 14 members. The grouping is expected to meet just prior to the WTO Third Ministerial to agree on how it thinks the WTO should address the biotechnology issue. The Cairns Group has agreed that it would not support renegotiating the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), which governs food safety and plant quality standards. The SPS has figured prominently in U.S.-EU trade disputes over hormone treated beef and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), specifically the provision prohibiting import restrictions with no scientific basis. The Cairns Group, joined by the U.S., worry that the EU would use a renegotiation of the SPS as an excuse to further delay compliance with the agreement.

"We would be reluctant to see [SPS] opened up, and subject to a lot of political forces that are based on misunderstanding and public hysteria," U.S. Commerce Department under-secretary for international trade David Aaron said last week. Mr. Aaron said that in Europe consumers are wary of GMOs primarily because of past food safety crises and a fundamental lack of confidence in food safety bodies there. "Those are really the underpinning issues that have created this situation in Europe where people don't trust not [sic] just the food but they don't trust their regulators. That's not exactly a WTO issue in our judgement," Mr. Aaron said. The U.S. is reportedly still trying to decide whether to back the call for a WTO working group on biotechnology, but a U.S. Agriculture Department official on 21 October said the Canadian proposal seemed too broad to make any significant progress on the issue.

The EU is likely to call for a "re-clarification" of the SPS Agreement, according to an EU official. Specifically, the EU is expected to seek clarification around the so-called precautionary principle. The principle, often used in environmental policy, is a principle used to allow preventive measures when scientific evidence lacking or is inconclusive.

Meanwhile, the EU Scientific Committee on Foods last week agreed on a labelling regime regarding GMOs. Under guidelines to be forwarded to the European Commission, a label indicating the presence of GMOs would be required if any ingredient in a product contained more than 1 percent of GMO material. The one percent threshold was adopted to account for the possibility that GMO residuals could contaminate products during transport, processing and manufacturing. The proposal only covers products containing GMO soybean and corn products. The proposals do not address GMO-free products and whether or how products could be labelled as such.

The environmental group Greenpeace criticised the proposed labelling guidelines, arguing that the one percent threshold is too high. Greenpeace also criticised the exclusion of oil and starches from the regime. If the European Commission adopts the recommendations, it is likely that the regime would face opposition in the European Parliament, which has co-regulating rights in the matter.

Also in the news, Thailand on 18 October announced a partial ban on imports of GMO seeds pending clear scientific evidence on their safety. The ban applies to imports of seed and foodstuffs for human consumption, but does not ban seeds intended for research and related experiments. Imports of corn and soybeans for use in animal feed would still be allowed. It was not clear how Thailand would address resulting meat products from animals fed GMO feedstuffs.

"Evolving debate over biotechnology," WORLD PERSPECTIVES, October 1999; "Administration wrestles with WTO approach on biotechnology," INSIDE US TRADE, 22 October 1999; "Cairns Group still undecided on how to approach biotech issue in WTO talks" INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 13 October 1999; "EU may tread fine line on GMOs in WTO talks- aide," REUTERS, 21 October 1999; "US seeks 'sensible proposal' on biotech foods at WTO," REUTERS, 19 October 1999; "EU sets out plan for modified food labels," FINANCIAL TIMES, 22 October 1999; "EU plans one percent 'GMO free' threshold," REUTERS, 11 October 1999; "Partial ban on GMO seeds," BANGKOK POST, 19 October 1999.

FTAA CIVIL SOCIETY MEETING STALLED OVER SUBMISSIONS

Ministers from 34 countries met from 12-13 October in Miami, Florida for talks on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a proposed hemispheric free trade area anticipated for 2005. Work focused on preparing a declaration for an FTAA ministerial meeting scheduled for 3-4 November in Toronto, Canada. Ministers failed to agree on a draft declaration amid disagreement over the role civil society should play in FTAA talks.

The FTAA would link economies from Alaska to Patagonia into an estimated US\$10 trillion economy. Negotiations are proceeding under nine working groups, including *inter alia* those addressing market access, intellectual property rights and agriculture. The Committee of Governmental Representatives for Civil Society (CGR) was also created to facilitate public participation in FTAA negotiations in which governmental representatives will receive, analyse, and present for ministerial consideration input from all sectors of civil society, including business, labour, environmental and academic groups.

Meeting from 12-13 October, the CGR failed to agree on how best to handle civil society participation in the FTAA and therefore was unable to forward recommendations for consideration at the Toronto ministerial. 70 submissions were received from various civil society groups at the meeting. Mexico led opposition to forwarding a summary of submissions received, arguing that the submissions did not reflect the views of the hemisphere. Mexico argued that 40 submissions should be disregarded for not following submission instructions exactly. Mexico's stand was supported by the Andean Community countries (Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela) and by some Central American countries.

Mexico is vehemently opposed to any process under FTAA that could bring international pressure on a country for domestic environmental policies. Mexico argues that its experience in negotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has been that U.S. special interest groups abuse labour and environmental forums such as the CGR in an effort to protect U.S. jobs. The CGR has no obligation to incorporate any environmental (or other) recommendations put forward; however, the U.S. and Canada are under heavy political pressure to address labour and environmental concerns in FTAA negotiations.

Ministers also disagreed over the work programmes of the nine working groups. Meanwhile, trade ministers did agree on a number of customs facilitation measures that will be adopted at the Toronto ministerial.

In related news, a "Workshop on Environmentally-Sound Trade Expansion in the Americas: A Dialogue of Technical and Policy Experts," will be held from 28-29 October on Miami. The meeting will explore the advantages of integrating environmental sustainability into production and marketing strategies and the long-term benefits for trade and international competitiveness. The workshop is jointly sponsored by the Dante B. Fascell North-South Centre, the Unit for Sustainable Development and the Environment at the Organisation of American States, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and ICTSD.

For information on the workshop contact the North-South Centre, P.O. Box 248205, Coral Gables, Florida 33124-3027, Ph: +01/305/284/6868; fax: +01/305/284/6370, email: stross@miami.edu, web: <http://www.miami.edu/nsc/>.

"Vice ministers fail to agree on draft FTAA ministerial text," *INSIDE US TRADE*, 22 October 1999; "Hemisphere trade talks wrap up," *MIAMI HERALD*, 16 October 1999; "Hemispheric plan seeks faster customs clearance," *JOURNAL OF COMMERCE*, 18 October 1999.

NORTH-SOUTH DIVIDE SPLITS TRIPS COUNCIL

The WTO Council on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) met from 20-22 October. *Inter alia*, the agenda for the meeting included a review of the provisions of Article 27.3(b) of the TRIPs Agreement.

Article 27.3(b) of TRIPs calls for WTO Members to protect intellectual property over plant varieties either by patent or by an effective sui generis system, or by a combination of the two. Developing countries have until January 2000 to comply with TRIPs obligations to protect the rights of developers of new plant varieties. As part of the Uruguay Round, WTO Members agreed to review Article 27.3(b) in 1999 -- in advance of developing countries' implementation deadline.

Developing countries are under pressure to adopt the 1991 International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV 1991) as the mechanism to fulfil their 27.3(b) obligations (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Volume 3, No. 15 & 16, 26 April 1999).

At the meeting, the U.S. and India each submitted a major paper concerning Article 27.3(b). The U.S. recommended their own patent-based model to other Members, arguing that an effective intellectual property protection system has been beneficial in stimulating research and development. The U.S. warned other Members that any sui generis model for plant variety protection not modelled on UPOV-1991 would need to be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

India's paper focused on aspects of traditional knowledge and the problems associated with handling intellectual property in this area due to its strong oral tradition, as opposed to many developed countries' focus on text-based intellectual property. With respect to the forthcoming review of Article 27.3(b), India advised developing countries to wait before implementing sui generis systems, as the only model offered so far was that of the developed countries.

India's views were for the most part supported by a Kenyan paper and by a group of developing countries that included Pakistan, Egypt, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Paraguay.

Siding for the most part with the U.S., the EU argued that there is no conflict between TRIPs and Members' commitments under the UN Convention on Biodiversity (CBD). The CBD obliges its signatories -- of which the U.S. is a non-party -- to respect, preserve, and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities. The EU disagreed with India that traditional knowledge was within the scope of Article 27.3(b), and pointed out that the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) was currently working on this area.

The EU-U.S. side was supported for the most part by developed countries, including Switzerland, Canada, Japan, Australia, and Korea.

Overall, Members agreed to continue the Article 27.3(b) review process in 2000, with the TRIPs Council Chair holding periodic informal meetings with delegates in an attempt to broker broad-based agreement.

Many proposals relating to negotiations on TRIPs have been included in the latest draft of the WTO Seattle Ministerial Declaration. Amongst these is a 12 October proposal from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Peru on protection of IPRs relating to the traditional knowledge of local and indigenous communities. The proposal advocates for negotiations to establish a multilateral legal framework "that will grant effective protection to the expressions and manifestations of traditional knowledge."

Also in the news, India is reported to be considering contesting a U.S. patent on a plant-based treatment for diabetes. The U.S. granted a patent in July to a U.S.-based pharmaceutical company for a diabetes remedy based on eggplant, bitter gourd and jamun. Indian officials say the remedy has been used as a treatment in diabetes in India for years, and has been well documented in a number of Indian texts on medicinal plants. The Indian Minister of State and Agriculture and Water Resources Shri Sompal called the U.S. patent an "onslaught on the traditional knowledge and practices prevalent in the developing countries," and called on the WTO to institute rules protecting indigenous products and knowledge from poaching by foreign companies.

"India may contest U.S. patent on diabetic remedy," ENS, 27 August 1999. ICTSD Internal Files.

TRANSATLANTIC ENVIRONMENT DIALOGUE ANNOUNCES PRIORITIES FOR WTO MINISTERIAL

The Transatlantic Environment Dialogue (TAED) held its bi-annual meeting from 12-15 October where it briefed government officials on its priorities for the upcoming WTO ministerial and other global issues. The TAED, an independent NGO initiative composed of more than 50 U.S. and European environmental groups, was able to agree on priorities and strategy to influence trans-Atlantic debate in five key areas.

On trade, the TAED agreed that the EU and U.S. lacked sufficient commitment to negotiate progressive and strong environmental, sustainable development, and animal welfare objectives for inclusion in the Seattle Ministerial declaration. The TAED stressed that the EU and U.S. must collectively put forth substantive proposals and seriously press the issues on the agenda.

In regards to biosafety, the TAED urged the U.S. and EU governments to support a strong protocol which would adequately regulate the Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) released into the environment; support the mandatory labelling of any products that contain GMOs; and comprehensively address the impact of agriculture policy on the environment, sustainability, rural development, and animal welfare. The TAED opposed the introduction of biotechnology at the WTO, stating that it is not the appropriate forum to effectively regulate GMOs.

The TAED urged the U.S. and EU governments to show their commitment to dealing with global climate change by implementing domestic policies that result in greenhouse gas reductions and to act upon the recognised urgency of the upcoming climate change negotiations.

On the issue of biodiversity, the TAED noted its disappointment with the U.S. for its non-ratification of international environmental conventions, specifically the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity). TAED members opposed the proposal in the WTO to accelerate tariff liberalisation in sectors that affect forests, on the basis that tariff liberalisation increases logging, threatens the rights and livelihoods of indigenous peoples, undermines environmental standards, and threatens the well-being of communities.

Finally, on industry, the TAED urged the European Commission to stand firm on its waste directive, which would phase out heavy metals and halogenated flame retardants. In contrast, the U.S. government supports the AEA's (American Electronics Association) position that the phase-outs are unnecessary and constitute a barrier to trade. The TAED advocated that the U.S. abstain from its pressures against the EU plan.

The TAED is comprised of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from the U.S. and EU that are concerned about the impact of policy on environmental protection and sustainable development. It is composed of five working groups – climate change, agriculture, trade and environment, biodiversity, and industry. TAED was created in May 1999 with the aim of increasing co-operation between NGOs on both continents, delivering NGO concerns to decision makers, ensuring that environmental priorities are included in trans-Atlantic discussions, and keeping members and the public informed of U.S. and EU policies and their impact on the environment. For further

information contact Rex Carney, EMS, tel: (1-202) 463-6670, email: cameron@attglobalnet or taed@eeb.org

"Environmental Groups From the US and Europe Announce Joint Priorities for WTO, Climate Change," TAED Press Release, 15 October 1999.

IN BRIEF

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation on 14 October released its report on The State of Food Insecurity in the World 1999 (SOFI). The report finds that the number of hungry people in the developing world remains at an unacceptable level of 790 million. The report warns that despite some modest progress on decreasing the rates of hunger and malnutrition since 1992, the World Food Summit goal of reducing the number of hungry people in the world by half by 2015 will not be reached. SOFI also includes data on hunger in industrialised countries, reporting that around 34 million undernourished people live in developed countries. The report is available in its entirety at <http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/DEFAULT.HTM> . "Number of hungry in developing world down by 40 million in five years but increasing in many poor countries -- FAO issues first report on world hunger," FAO PRESS RELEASE, 14 October 1999.

Earlier this month the provincial government of the Canadian province of Newfoundland approved a plan to export drinking water. Final approval now rests with Environment Canada, the federal environment ministry. Newfoundland's environment ministry wants a federal opinion on the plan's impact on Canada's ability to control the national water supply. Canada is home to 20 percent of the world's fresh water supply, which could be tapped by companies looking to sell Canada's water resources to the U.S. and other regions with diminishing water supplies. It is not clear whether Environment Canada would rule in the case, as a spokesperson for the administration indicated the ownership of resources rested with provincial governments. "Nfld. exports final decision on water project to Ottawa: 52b litres may be shipped," THE NATIONAL POST, 2 October 1999.

WTO IN BRIEF

At an 18 October meeting of the Committee on Trade and Development (CTD), Members adopted the Committee's annual report (WT/COMTD/22), which will be forwarded to the General Council for consideration. The report -- which covers the principal themes addressed by the Committee since its previous report -- can be found on the WTO's document dissemination facility on the WTO website <http://www.wto.org> . Also at the meeting, the WTO Secretariat presented a report on technical assistance for developing countries, which pointed out that further technical assistance may need to be scaled back due to a lack of funding. Currently WTO Director-General Mike Moore is looking to have technical assistance included as part of the WTO's normal budget rather than its current method of relying on individual donations. ICTSD Internal Files.

Ecuador has submitted a proposal to the General Council for inclusion in the forthcoming Seattle talks for the setting up of a Working Group to examine the relationship between trade and the external debt of developing countries. "After more than 20 years of adjustments to try and solve the problems caused by the heavy burden of external debt servicing," the proposal states, "the growth and economic development of a large number of developing countries remain subject to serious constraints and their progress could be curbed even further." Ecuador argues that debt has

repercussions on the trade payment system and on economic transactions between individual countries and the rest of the world. Together with other proposed working groups (on trade and finance, transfer of technology, and biotechnology), reference to Ecuador's proposal is found in the Ministerial Draft Declaration under the section entitled "Other Elements of Work Programme." ICTSD Internal Files.

MINISTERIAL EVENTS

For a more complete list of events taking place around the WTO's Ministerial Conference in Seattle from 30 November - 3 December 1999, please refer to <http://www.ictsd.org/html/seattlecalendar.htm>

Please note that the contact person for last week's announced SEATTLE SYMPOSIUM ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES IN THE FIRST DECADES OF THE NEXT CENTURY on 29 November was mistakenly noted as Alain Frank. The correct contact for this event is Bernard Kuiten, WTO External Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5676, email: bernard.kuiten@wto.org

27 November – 12 December, Moore Theatre, Seattle: A MAP OF THE WORLD. Sponsored by the International Repertory Theatre of Seattle. A humorous play by David Hare set against the background of a UNESCO conference shows the necessity of cultural understanding and global trade. For tickets contact: Aaron Levin, tel : (206) 526-2466.

1 December, 15:00-18:00, Seattle: BRINGING THE ANTI-WTO MESSAGE BACK TO YOUR CAMPUS. Sponsored by Campus Green Vote, WashPIRG, STARC, the Sierra Student Coalition, the Centre for Campus Organising and the Campus Greens-University of Washington. Students and young activists from across the nation will be gathering for this workshop focusing on WTO follow-up activities to further engage students in environmental and social activism on campus. The workshop will consist of a Media Skills Training and a Divestment/Socially Responsible Investment campaign training. Location to be Announced. For more information or to register contact Doug Israel, Campus Green Vote, 2021 Third Avenue Seattle, WA 98121, tel: (1-206) 256-6429, fax: 729-1563, email: cecnw@envirocitizen.org, web: <http://www.envirocitizen.org>

1 December, 10:00-13:00, NGO Centre, Renaissance Madison Hotel, Seattle: THE VEXED ISSUE OF LINKAGES. Organised by the CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. A Panel Discussion on the issue of linkages of trade with labour standards or with environmental standards etc. Eminent speakers of opposing views will debate on the issues. For more information (until 28 November) contact Mr. Raghav Narsalay, India, tel: (91-141) 20-2940, fax: 20-2968, email: cutsjpr@jp1.dot.net.in

2 December, 10:00-13:00, NGO Centre, Renaissance Madison Hotel, Seattle: ANTI-DUMPING AND THE WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT SYSTEM. Organised by the CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. A Workshop on the issue of anti-dumping and the dispute settlement system at the WTO. For more information (until 28 November) contact Mr. K.S. Sajeev, India, tel: (91-141) 20-5802, fax: 20-3998, email: cutsjpr@jp1.dot.net.in

EVENTS & RESOURCES

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. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, Rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland.

29 October: SEATTLE MINISTERIAL NGO BRIEFING. The WTO will be holding NGO briefings on the preparation for the Seattle Ministerial meeting. For information contact Bernard Kuiten, External Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5676, email: bernard.kuiten@wto.org

12 November: SEATTLE MINISTERIAL NGO BRIEFING. For information contact Bernard Kuiten, External Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5676, email: bernard.kuiten@wto.org

17-18 November: COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE. For information contact Peter Ungphakorn, WTO, tel (41 22) 739-5412

19 November: SEATTLE MINISTERIAL NGO BRIEFING. For information contact Bernard Kuiten, External Relations Division, tel: (41 22) 739 5676, email: bernard.kuiten@wto.org

▪ OTHER EVENTS

28 October, New York, NY: NORTH AMERICAN TOUR RALLY - INTERNATIONAL ACTIVISTS TOUR TO COUNTER THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION. The People's Global Action Caravan will kick off its international activist caravan tour of North America. The caravan will be crossing the U.S. en route to the WTO Ministerial in Seattle, stopping in various communities to raise awareness about the downsides of globalisation. For more information contact PCAN at (1-610) 478-1888 email: pgacaravan@aol.com

30 October - 1 November, New Delhi, India: BRAINSTORMING WORKSHOP ON WTO AGREEMENTS AND PEOPLE'S CONCERNS. Organised by the Centre for Study on Global Trade System & Development and the National Working Group on Patent Laws (India), experts from all over the world are being invited to debate how best the implementation process of WTO agreements should be moderated and undertaken pending a full scale review of these agreements. Topics to be discussed include TRIPs, agriculture, and foreign direct investment. For information contact B.K. Keayla, Managing Trustee, Centre for Study of Global Trade System & Development and National Working Group on Patent Laws, A-388, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi 110 044 (India), tel: (91-11) 694-7403, 681-3311, fax: 694-7403, 694-2222, email: wgkeayla@ndf.vsnl.net.in

1-2 November, Burkina Faso: ANNUAL MEETING ECONDAD-ECOWAS NETWORK ON DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT. Organised by the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), the meeting will include the WTO Ministerial Conference as part of the Agenda. For information contact the Econdad Secretariat, Ecowas Network on Debt and Development, C/O

ANEEJ Secretariat, 61 Second Cementry Road, Uzebu Quarters, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, tel: (234) 52-258748, fax: 52-250668, email: aneej@rcl.nig.com

10-12 November, Varese, Italy: THE CHALLENGES OF MATURE AND EMERGING CLUSTERS. The annual conference of The Competitiveness Institute (TCI) will discuss recent findings and experiences in working with mature clusters that might be under threat as well as new and emerging clusters that could well become growth engines in the future. Speakers will assess the needs of clusters at different stages of development and the policy and strategy tools necessary to improve their competitiveness. For information contact The Competitiveness Institute, Valles Technology Park, 08290 Barcelona, tel: (34-93) 582-4483, fax: 582-4486, email: competitiveness@competitiveness.org, web: <http://www.competitiveness.org>

14-17 November, North Carolina: SUSTAINABILITY: WAYS OF KNOWING/WAYS OF ACTING. This 8th International Greening of Industry Network Conference is organised by the University of North Carolina's business School. The conference is designed to be a forum for the exchange of ideas to develop new relationships, visions and business practices related to environmental management and sustainability. For information contact Monica Touesnard, tel: (1-919) 843-9731, email: greening99@unc.edu, web: <http://www.greening99.bs.school.unc.edu>

▪ RESOURCES

OECD AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK 1999-2004. 1999. This OECD publication provides valuable information on market trends and commodity projections, shows how these are influenced by government policies, and highlights potential pitfalls that may influence the outlook. 151pp. US\$51.50. Also available in French. To order contact Renouf Publishing Co. Ltd., 53369 ch. Canotek Rd., Unit 1, Ottawa, ON K1J9J3, tel: (613) 745-2665, fax: 745-7660, email: order.dept@renoufbooks.com, web: <http://www.renoufbooks.com>

PURCHASING POWER: AID UNTYING, TARGETED PROCUREMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION. September 1999. By Jeffery Chinnock and Sarah Collinson. This report was released to coincide with an official complaint by over 40 European-based NGOs to the European Commission regarding the illegal Member State use of tied aid. This paper suggests numerous workable alternatives and recommendations in order to increase the impact of aid on poverty reduction, enhance southern ownership of development, and bolster self-reliance. 48pp. £4.95. ISBN 1 872502 61 X. To order visit the ActionAid website: <http://www.ActionAid.org>

WHOSE TRADE ORGANIZATION? 1999. By Lori Wallach and Michelle Sforza, Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch. This publication documents the WTO's impact on democratic governance, wages, jobs, economic growth, food security, access to healthcare, food safety, labour rights, and environmental protection. It is designed to make the WTO's trade rules accessible and understandable to the common citizen and advocates the improvement of public safeguards and corporate/governmental accountability standards. US\$18.50. To order contact Public Citizen, Publications Department, 1600 20th Street, NW, Washington DC, 20009, USA, tel: (1-800) 289-3787, web: <http://www.citizen.org/pctrade/publications/wtobook.htm>

THE STATE OF FOOD INSECURITY IN THE WORLD 1999. 1999. By the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). This publication provides data on hunger by region, looks at a broad range of factors that contribute to food insecurity, and presents data on hunger in industrialised regions as well as statistics on the number of undernourished people in developed and

developing countries. This report also provides the first statistics on progress and reversals during the 1990s, and contrasts countries that have achieved the greatest gains or suffered the most severe setbacks over the past two decades. To view a summary or the full report see: <http://www.fao.org/NEWS/1999/991004-e.htm> . For further information contact May Bredt, tel:(44-171) 630 1981; John Riddle, tel: (39-06) 570 53259.

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) with support from the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). This issue has been researched at ICTSD by Joe DiMauro and Dara Edmonds; written by Judy Brienza (IATP) and edited by Hugo Cameron, hcameron@ictsd.ch. The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 13, ch des Anémones, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland. Tel: (41- 22) 917- 8492; fax: (41-22) 917- 8093. Excerpts from **BRIDGES** Weekly Trade News Digest© may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editor or the Director.

To subscribe to **BRIDGES** Weekly Trade News Digest©, send an email to: listserv@iatp.org Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message type: subscribe bridges. To unsubscribe, please send an email to listserv@iatp.org. In the body of the message type:
unsubscribe bridges

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© can also be found at the ICTSD web page: <http://www.ictsd.org/html/newsdigest.htm> and at the IATP web page: <http://www.newsbulletin.org>