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ES, US MEET IN ADVANCE OF AG TALKS; MOORE PUSHES LDC PACKAGE

As the first meeting of the WTO's Special Session on agriculture (set for 23-24 March) approaches, the EU and US held talks from 9-10 March to work out procedural details and attempt to resolve some of the differences that exist between the two sides. The Special Sessions are aimed at carrying forward the already-mandated negotiations in agriculture in the WTO. US Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman and EU farm commissioner Franz Fischler met in London, where Mr. Glickman renewed calls for the EU to reduce export subsidies to farmers, noting that some progress must be made on the issue lest the US Congress respond with its own subsidies programme.

"There has been great pressure on me to substantially expand the use of our export programme...Congress won't let me resist it forever if they don't see some progress on reducing export subsidies in Europe," he said.

The EU has faced extensive criticism from the US and the Cairns Group of agriculture-exporting countries to reduce or eliminate its export subsidy regime. These countries argue that the subsidies distort trade by making their products less competitive on the world market.

At a later meeting with WTO Director-General (D-G) Mike Moore in Geneva on Monday, Fischler indicated that the EU wants serious negotiations on agriculture to begin this year regardless of whether a broad round of trade talks is launched. His comments are the strongest indicators yet since the WTO Ministerial in Seattle in November-December 1999 that the EU will not attempt to stymie upcoming talks on agriculture at the WTO.

Also in the UK last week, the D-G addressed the International Development Committee of British Parliament on 7 March. Moore reiterated his call for more flexibility among WTO Members -- particularly rich countries -- in order to move forward with a new round of global trade talks. Mr. Moore called for quota and tariff-free access for exports from the 48 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to developed countries.

"The LDC [issue] is vital to retaining our credibility. It is for the wealthy countries to show sensitivity. It would not be an enormous sacrifice for them", Mr. Moore said. LDC exports account for only half a percent of annual world trade. The D-G has been outspoken about the need for a short-term action package addressing both improved market access and improved technical assistance for developing countries and has called for Members including the US, Japan, EU and Canada to come forward with proposals by the Easter holiday.

Mr. Moore's proposal was amongst the topics discussed last week when Japanese and US trade officials met to discuss a number of WTO-related issues, which also involved a discussion on the US-Japan disagreement over whether antidumping measures should be included in a proposed new round of global trade talks. Regarding LDCs, the US and Japan discussed some details of a plan and are expected to meet again on the issue in a few weeks. Japan had suggested that the Quad countries (EU, US, Japan and Canada) meet to craft a joint proposal on LDCs; however the US argued instead for separate proposals to be submitted to Mr. Moore directly for his co-ordination and advocacy so as to avoid the impression that "the Quad would be imposing its will" on the developing world.

For its part, the US has indicated that it will support the convening of another ministerial meeting only after it has reached agreement on an agenda for a new round of trade talks with other major WTO Members. Speaking at a hearing of the US Senate Finance Subcommittee on International Trade on 7 March, US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky stated: "We're in active consultations with our Quad partners to see if it is possible to develop some notion of a round more in keeping with a sensible agenda [than that proposed by the EU], but one that is far broader than simply agriculture and services."

"WTO chief says rich must open markets to poor," REUTERS, 7 March 2000; "US, Japan launch senior dialogue on short-term, broad WTO issues," INSIDE US TRADE, 10 March 2000; "Japan, US to assure developing nations over global trade," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 6 March 2000; "US farm chief in EU for talks," FINANCIAL TIMES, 10 March 2000; EU keen to start farm

trade talks, FINANCIAL TIMES, 14 March 2000; "US wants Quad members to agree on agenda before new WTO meeting is held," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 9 March 1999.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ORGANISE TO RAISE PROFILE

The grouping of 71 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) last week announced it would open an office in Geneva "to co-ordinate actions of the ACP countries themselves and those of the ACP in concert with the EU" with the WTO. The ACP as a grouping has long engaged with the EU through a preferential trade arrangement called the Lomé Convention; its leaders are now keen to establish a dialogue with other trade powers in Geneva. ACP secretary-general Jean-Robert Goulongana said on 8 March that the forum was important for the mostly African ACP countries to organise and communicate effectively within international forums such as the WTO. On 29 February -- the date of expiry of the Lomé Convention -- the European Union requested a WTO waiver for its new EU-ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) partnership agreement, which was concluded on 3 February 2000 (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest*, Vol. 4 No. 3, 25 January 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story5.25-01-00.htm>).

In related news, trade ministers from Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa on 5 March announced the creation of a new trade grouping intended to bulk up developing countries' negotiating weight at the WTO.

"We have ideas on how to get the multilateral trading system to improve. One of the reasons why [the WTO Ministerial in Seattle] didn't succeed was the internal governance of the WTO. It has exclusion features that all of us want to address," Youssef Boutros-Ghali, Egypt's trade minister said.

The forum was born out of an initial idea by South African Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin for a Southern Hemisphere bloc of countries to address developing countries' interests in the next round of global trade talks. The grouping will remain informal and open to all developing countries and work more as a forum for exchanging views between developing countries rather than co-ordinating demands. "What we seek today is just to convey what our views are," Mr. Erwin said. "We are not going to replace other groupings like the G-77. That's why we chose it to be very loose."

India and Brazil are also expected to join the forum.

"ACP countries want to be heard on world scene," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 8 March 2000; "African states to set up pressure forum," REUTERS, 5 March 2000; "Mediterranean region facing marginalisation," FINANCIAL TIMES, 9 March 2000.

WTO FOCUSES ON DEVELOPMENT, S&D TREATMENT

On 7 March the WTO held a seminar on "Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT) for Developing Countries." The seminar was organised under the auspices of the WTO Committee on Trade and Development (CTD), and covered the various WTO provisions which come under this heading in terms of: their limitations, technical assistance needs, implementation under key WTO agreements, impacts on economic reform programmes, and the case for the development of economic indicators for the application of S&DT.

The seminar produced a frank exchange of views that included calls from developing countries to rectify inequalities between developed and developing countries in future negotiations. Specifically, developing country Members focused on the need to reduce export subsidies, address implementation problems and increase technical assistance.

Noting that most developing countries consider adjustment periods and technical co-operation insufficient for overcoming structural limitations in their production and trade, Venezuela's Ambassador to the WTO Werner Corrales suggested that S&DT provisions should be complemented by the creation -- and / or preservation -- of 'spaces' for policies. According to Amb. Corrales, market-oriented policies could be used within these spaces to help developing countries promote competitiveness and dynamism of exporting sectors. Pakistan's Ambassador to the WTO Munir Akram, who was a panellist in the seminar's final session on the "Future of Special and Differential Treatment," suggested that non-binding trade commitments and "best endeavours" in S&DT be made legally binding. He further urged that a mechanism be established under the CTD or General Council to monitor the further elaboration or implementation of such changes.

Ambassador Abbott of the European Commission was the only panellist from a developed country. He spoke of the EC's commitment to both increase market access for least developed countries -- warning that this may imply increased competition -- and to intensify technical assistance and capacity building.

Following up on the seminar, Chair of the CTD Amb. Ransford Smith (Jamaica) presented a note on the seminar to a meeting of the CTD on 10 March. A number of countries, including Kenya, Mauritius and Chile, said that there had not been enough time for discussion during the seminar.

Following the Chair's presentation, CTD delegates discussed a note by the WTO Secretariat on "Participation Of Developing Countries In World Trade: Recent Developments, And Trade Of The Least-Developed Countries (LDCs)". Responding to the report, the US said that the note shows that those countries most integrated into the world economy via regional and multilateral forums had experienced increasing levels of market access. Building capacity to trade was very important, the US delegate stated, who continued saying it would be interesting to see how developing countries could "leapfrog" their economies through such technological means as e-commerce.

India pointed out that while developing countries' share of trade in merchandise goods had increased from 20 percent in 1973 to 28 percent in 2000, it was still a long way off from a high of

33 percent in 1948. India indicated three reasons for this "disappointing" figure: first, that technology and knowledge has bypassed developing countries and the gap is widening; second, that those markets where developing countries are competitive (e.g. textiles and agriculture) remain very closed; and third, that developing countries themselves have not done enough in terms of adjusting their national policies to take advantage of global markets.

In response to the Secretariat note, the European Communities (EC) focused on the needs of the LDCs, pointing out that LDCs are at a disadvantage in the global economy, but that despite this there seemed to be a positive trend in their ability to integrate and gain from trade.

ICTSD Internal Files.

CHINA MOVES TOWARD ACCESSION DESPITE US MFN DEBATE

The Clinton Administration on 8 March submitted legislation to the US Congress seeking permanent most favoured nation trade status (also called permanent normal trade relations, or PNTR) for China. The US and China concluded talks late last year on a bilateral WTO accession package outlining the terms for market access and other areas as part of China's bid to join the WTO. PNTR is a necessary next step by the US in the accession process as it would put China on par with the US' other WTO trading partners.

It is unclear how the PNTR bill will fare in the US Congress. The only certainty is that the debate in the House and Senate will be heated. US business groups, including the so-called Business Round Table and the US Chamber of Commerce, are pushing hard for PNTR, while US labour and environmental groups remain opposed to the deal. Business groups argue that China offers an incredible opportunity for US exports of goods and services. Labour advocates are opposed to China's PNTR status because, these groups argue, China has a poor record on upholding labour rights. Most environmental organisations oppose China's entry to the WTO due to that country's unwillingness to link trade to the environment.

China has indicated that it will continue to seek entry to the WTO whether or not the US Congress approves PNTR. Said China's Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation Shi Guangsheng: "Whether China can join the WTO is completely up to a two thirds 'yes' vote by WTO Member countries at the multilateral level and following the completion of the bilateral agreements, while PNTR is an issue affecting the implementation of Sino-US bilateral arrangements." Mr. Guangsheng emphasised that PNTR for China was the basis for implementing the 1999 market opening agreement between the US and China.

On the EU-China front, European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy will travel to Beijing in the week of 27 March to continue talks aimed at concluding a bilateral EU-China agreement opening the way for China's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Lamy's decision to take a personal role in the process for the first time since EU-China talks began in January is a sign that a deal is likely close at hand. "We are going there in the hope that we will be able to finalise a bilateral deal," Lamy spokesman Anthony Gooch said on 10 March. EU-China accession

negotiations stalled in late February, as the EU was still seeking an improved package on telecommunications, insurance and financial services (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 4, Number 8, 29 February 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.29-02-00.htm>).

China inched closer to WTO accession after signing a market access deal with Argentina on Saturday, 11 March, on China's entry into the WTO. The deal follows hot on the heels of similar agreements with Thailand (on 10 March) and Colombia (8 March). There are now only 9 Members left -- including the EU -- for China to broker bilateral agreements with to pave its way for entry into the 135-Member WTO.

"Trade legislation ready for Congress," SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST, 9 March 2000; "More calls to release China deal, Hollings seeks extended debate," INSIDE US TRADE, 10 March 2000; "Call waiting," FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW, 9 March 2000; "'Clinton takes gamble on China trade legislation," FINANCIAL TIMES, 9 March 2000; "Clinton set to unveil China trade legislation," REUTERS, 7 March 2000; "China invites EU trade commissioner to sign WTO deal," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 2 February 2000; Argentina signs agreement on China's WTO entry," JAPAN ECONOMIC NEWSWIRE, 12 March 2000; China signs more WTO pacts, awaits EU envoy," REUTERS, 10 March 2000.

BIOSAFETY: US BARS GMOS FROM ORGANIC FOODS

The US Department of Agriculture on 7 March announced new guidelines for organic foods. Under the rules, foods containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) would not be considered organic. The guidelines also prohibit the use of pesticides on crops, ban the use of sewage sludge as fertiliser and heavily restrict the use of antibiotics in livestock.

This is the second attempt by the USDA to issue comprehensive organic guidelines. Two years ago the agency was flooded by complaints by organic farmers, environmental and consumer groups for being too loose. Those guidelines permitted the use of GMOs in organic agriculture.

"Last time, the USDA wasn't even close. The rules didn't look like an organic program at all, and it became an international embarrassment," according to Michael Sligh of the Rural Advancement Foundation (RAFI). RAFI and other groups are more optimistic about the USDA guidelines, noting that the USDA seemed to have responded to the complaints issued last time round. US biotechnology industry officials said they disagreed with the USDA decision to exclude GMOs, arguing that the decision was not based on scientific evidence, but are prepared to accept the decision.

Other observers note that the new guidelines could also help to resolve the ongoing EU-US disputes over the EU ban on hormone-treated beef and GMO crops. The USDA guidelines agree with EU farming practices (regarding antibiotics and non-use of GMOs in organic goods) and thus the EU could now begin accepting US organic exports.

REUTERS news agency reported that a document obtained from the UN Food and Agriculture Agency (FAO) indicates the agency is prepared to take a precautionary approach to GMO foods. While the FAO said it recognises the tremendous opportunity GMO products could play in addressing the issue of world hunger, the agency said GMOs raise legitimate concerns about the implications for human and animal health. The FAO said it was especially concerned about the risk of allergens in the food supply and the potential imbalances in ecosystems from the introduction of new plant varieties.

In other related news, the Standing Veterinary Committee (SVC) of the European Commission (EC) is expected to announce on 15 March its decision on whether to permanently prohibit beef imports from the US. Exports of hormone-free beef to Europe have been banned since last year when the US voluntarily suspended shipments to Europe after EU inspectors found traces of growth hormones in 12-20 percent of US beef samples -- samples that were supposed to be hormone-free -- in April 1999. This has posed a significant obstacle to resolving the broader WTO dispute between the EU and US over the EU ban on US (and Canadian) hormone-treated beef. On 25 February an EU official indicated that the US and the EU expect to conclude by mid-March an agreement that would allow US cattle raisers to increase significantly exports of hormone-free beef to Europe.

"EU accepts US hormone-free beef controls," REUTERS, 10 March 2000; "Gene-altered food would lose 'organic' label in US," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 6 March 2000; "Nouveau projet de réglementation de l'agriculture bio," LA TRIBUNE, 8 March 2000; "UN agency says favours caution on GMOs," REUTERS, 3 March 2000; "US, EU expect agreement by mid-March on increasing exports of hormone-free beef," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 2 March 2000.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS: MIDDLE EAST

The World Bank held its third Mediterranean Development Forum in Cairo from 5-8 March. Economists warned that the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions face growing marginalisation in the world economy. The region accounts for 2.6 percent of world trade and attracts only one percent of foreign direct investment.

"MENA is becoming increasingly marginalised as the globalisation of goods and capital markets accelerates," according to John Page, chief Bank economist for the MENA region. "While other developing economies are successfully advancing on a ladder of dynamic comparative advantage, towards human capital and technology-intensive goods, the MENA region risks becoming increasingly specialised in energy exports and in labour intensive, low-skilled manufactures," Mr. Page told the conference.

Economists and other participants at the conference cited the need for regional regulatory rules and structures and in particular for strong competition legislation. Mr. Page also called on the Arab League of 22 countries to accelerate plans for a regional free trade area. The Arab League anticipates a 2007 completion of a free trade zone, which Mr. Page noted was too long to wait, arguing the region would lose "an extraordinary opportunity." The Arab League began reducing by

10 percent per year customs duties on members' exports for eventual elimination by 2007. Inter-Arab trade is currently worth about US\$160 billion annually.

Egypt on 7 March said it wants to increase trade and economic ties with Latin America as a way to deal with the challenges of globalisation. "The world is growing ever smaller, and our interaction with the various regions that make it up must be both extensive and comprehensive," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa told a business conference. "We [Egypt] would like to open up our gates to the NAFTA, the MERCOSUR and Andean blocs," he said. Mr. Mussa noted that trade between Egypt and Latin America has never exceeded US\$800 million annually, showing that the region offers great potential for increased trade.

Saudi and Australian trade ministers met late last month to discuss Saudi-Australian trade and economic co-operation. Trade between the two countries is estimated at about US\$1 billion annual. Australian officials said Australia strongly supports Saudi Arabia's bid to join the WTO and noted that Australia was looking to increase exports to Saudi Arabia for agribusiness, mining and services.

Next week In News From The Regions: Europe and Latin America.

"World Bank urges Arabs to speed up free trade area," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 6 March 2000; "Mediterranean region facing marginalisation," FINANCIAL TIMES, 9 March 2000; "Egypt wants to open gates with Latin American trade blocs," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 7 March 2000; "Saudi, Australian commerce mins discuss trade co-operation," DOW JONES NEWSWIRES, 26 February 2000.

LAMY COURTS INDIA FOR NEW ROUND

European Union Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy wrapped up an eventful six-day trip to India on 7 March. Lamy's visit was partly aimed at rallying India's support for a new round of WTO trade negotiations. Despite continued developing country mistrust of the EU's desire to include 'new' issues such as investment, competition, and environment on the WTO negotiations agenda, the EU trade representative was confident that he had gained Indian support for a new round of talks. "They told me that they were in favour of launching a new round," he said following discussions with Indian ministers of foreign affairs, finance and trade.

While in Delhi, Lamy also met with civil society in a meeting chaired by Pradeep Mehta of the CUTS Centre for International Trade, Environment & Economics. Lamy took the opportunity to announce the setting up of an Indo-EU network of think tanks, which would consist of a dual track process with the goal of resolving differences between the two trading partners. Mr. Lamy envisioned his visit as "building a bridge" not only between Europe and India, but also between North and South. As part of the carrots offered, the EU announced on 7 March that it would allow India to exceed its current textile export quota by 3 500 tonnes per year. Pending further talks, that figure could rise to 8 000 tonnes. Textiles account for nearly 48 percent of all EU imports from India.

"Lamy clarifies EU stance on social, environmental, competition, etc. chapters of envisaged new round of international trade negotiations," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 10 March 2000; "EU grants India textile concession in push for fresh WTO talks," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 7 March 2000; "Can Mr. Lamy succeed in breaking the ice?" CUTS, 8 March 2000.

DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BRIEFS

A WTO dispute settlement panel on 3 March issued a confidential interim ruling finding a portion of Canada's Patent Act inconsistent with international trade rules. The ruling could impose significant constraints on Canada's generic drug industry. The US brought the case to the WTO, arguing that Section 45 of Canada's Patent Act (dealing with duration of patents) violated the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs Agreement).

Section 45 states that the duration of every patent issued under the Patent Act on the basis of an application filed before 1 October 1989 is 17 years from the date on which the patent is issued. The US argued that Article 33 of the TRIPs Agreement requires WTO members to grant protection for patents for at least 20 years after the filing date. The US also argued that Article 70 of the TRIPs Agreement requires each member to grant the minimum 20 year term to all patents existing as of the date of the application of the TRIPs agreement to that member.

The ruling is expected to have a serious effect on Canada's generic drug manufacturers as it could delay for up to three years the introduction of generic versions of popular drugs on the Canadian market. Canada's drug manufacturers criticised the ruling and said it could cost Canadian consumers up to US\$140 million annual in additional prescription costs by delaying the availability of lower-cost generic versions. Canadian trade officials have yet to comment on the ruling.

The WTO decision follows a ruling issued last month upholding Canada's law allowing generic drug manufacturers to stockpile generic drugs six months before a drug's patent expires, and to begin preparations to make the generic version at any time (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 4, No. 5, 8 February 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.08-02-00.htm>).

The Philippines last month called on Australia and Belgium to settle separate disputes affecting tropical fruit and fish exports worth an estimated US\$1 billion annually. Citing sanitation problems, Australia has banned Philippine mango, banana and pineapple exports. Belgium has implemented a ban on canned Philippine tuna citing concerns that the tin can packaging contains a known carcinogen. "The issue of market access of Philippine products into the Australian and Belgian markets is being discussed both at the bilateral and multilateral level, i.e. the WTO," a Philippines spokesman said on 28 February.

"World Trade Organisation patent ruling hurts Canada's generic drug," OTTAWA CITIZEN (Canada), 4 March 2000; "WTO issues preliminary ruling against Canadian patent protection rules," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 9 March 2000; "Philippines hopes to settle trade disputes with Australia, Belgium," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 28 February 2000.

IN BRIEF

Singapore trade officials last week said they expect Singapore and New Zealand to sign a free trade agreement by the middle of this year. The agreement could signal the first of a series of bilateral accords designed to drive forward liberalisation in the Asia- Pacific region amid stalled efforts by the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum to forge a regional free trade area. Singapore is also holding talks with Japan and has agreed to launch free trade talks with Mexico and Chile (also APEC members). "Singapore to sign free trade agreement with NZ," FINANCIAL TIMES, 9 March 2000.

EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy will hold an Internet discussion on 5 April from 6-8 pm (CET). Mr. Lamy will take questions and suggestions regarding, *inter alia*, what direction the world trading system should take and what are the right starting principles for real international economic governance. The chat address is: chat.europa.eu.int. Questions submitted in advance will be answered during the discussion period. Send your advance questions (256 characters maximum) to: chat.Lamy@cec.eu.int. "Internet chat with European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy," EU PRESS RELEASE, 9 March 2000.

The Protocol for Liability and Compensation for Damage Resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, adopted by government ministers in December, was opened for signature on 9 March in Bern, Switzerland. The Protocol will be available for signature from 1 April - 10 December in New York. Countries must then ratify the accord: the agreement will enter into force after it has received 20 ratifications (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 48, 15 December 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story2.15-12-99.htm>). "Liability regime for hazardous wastes accidents opens for signature in Bern," UNEP PRESS RELEASE, 9 March 2000.

WTO IN BRIEF

At a Special Session of the WTO's General Council on 13 March, Members agreed to appoint the chairperson for the sub-committees of the Goods Council at the same time as the Chair of the Council on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs). The chairs for these committees will be selected at another Special Session later on this week (no date had yet been set at time of publication). Delegates also agreed to extend the time limit for the protocol of accession for Georgia until 15 May 2000. Georgia's parliament has yet to rule on joining the WTO. Georgia is expected to become the WTO's 137th member after Jordan, who is expected to accede in the near future. In addition, Chair of the General Council Kåre Bryn presented a proposal that -- if supported by the WTO's current 135 Members -- would allow those countries currently in accessions processes to both attend the informal negotiations process as observers and participate in ongoing negotiations on agriculture and services. There are approximately 30 countries engaged in WTO accessions proceedings, including China and Russia. ICTSD Internal Files.

The Ukraine announced on 7 March it would seek WTO admission this year, according to Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister Yevhen Bersheda. Mr. Bersheda said WTO admission would be part of

the country's efforts toward becoming an associate member of the EU. "Ukraine tells EU envoys it wants to join WTO this year," DOW JONES NEWSWIREs, 7 March 2000.

ON THE MOVE

The World Bank on 8 March appointed Nicholas H. Stern as the chief economist for the Bank. Mr. Stern replaces Joseph Stiglitz who left in February. Mr. Stern is currently a professor at the London School of Economics and Chairman of the London Economics consultancy and a member of the International Advisory Council of IDEAglobal.com. Mr. Stern has previously served as chief economist for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. He has also served on various committees, including for OXFAM and for the Economic and Social Research Council. As part of his duties Mr. Stern will form and chair an Advisory Committee of distinguished economists and policy experts, including Joseph Stiglitz and Nobel Prize-winning development economist Amartya Sen, intended to keep the Bank closely connected with the global economic community's base in knowledge and ideas. "World Bank Appoints New Chief Economist," WORLD BANK PRESS RELEASE, 8 March 2000.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

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

- **WTO Events**

An updated list of forthcoming World Trade Organisation meetings is posted at: <http://www.wto.org/wto/about/meets.doc> . 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.

20 March: WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY. For information contact Nuch Nazeer, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5393; email: nuch.nazeer@wto.org

20 March: INFORMAL WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF CHINA. A formal Working Party on China accession will take place on 21 March. For information contact Lucie Giraud, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5075; email: lucie.giraud@wto.org

21 March: SUB-COMMITTEE ON LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. For information contact Lucie Giraud, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5075; email: lucie.giraud@wto.org

22-23 March: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE. The Ag Committee meeting on 23 March will be followed by a Special Session on Agriculture that is expected to extend to 24 March and possibly to 27 March. During the Special Session Members will begin mandated negotiations on Agriculture as per the WTO's built-in agenda. For information contact: Peter Ungphakorn, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5412; email: peter.ungphakorn@wto.org

28 [possibly also 29] March: WTO INFORMAL GENERAL COUNCIL. Members will discuss the issue of transparency. For information contact Nuch Nazeer, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5393; email: nuch.nazeer@wto.org

29 March: WTO GENERAL COUNCIL. For information contact Nuch Nazeer, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5393; email: nuch.nazeer@wto.org

- **Other Events**

20-21 March, Miami, Florida, USA: GLOBALIZATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN LATIN AMERICA: NGOS, MULTILATERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, HEMISPHERIC SUMMITS. Co-sponsored by the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLASCO), the University of Miami School of International Studies, and the Dante B. Fascell North-South Center. For information contact: William C. Smith or María P. Rigorizzi, N-S Center, tel: (1-305) 284-5092; web: <http://www.miami.edu/nsc/>

20-24 March, Beijing, China: CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES AND CONTAMINANTS (32ND SESSION). Meeting code: CX - 711 32. For information see web: <http://www.fao.org/events/default.htm>

31 March, 10:30 - 12:30, International Environment House, Geneva: ROUNDTABLE ON THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL. The roundtable will take place in meeting room 2, ground floor. Owing to the limited number of seats available, please confirm your participation by 22 March at the latest by contacting: Aniket Ghai, GEN, UNEP, Maison internationale de l'environnement, 11-13 Ch. des Anémones, CH-1213 Chatelaine/Genève, fax: (41-22) 797-3464; email: aniket.ghai@unep.ch. There will be a coffee reception at 10:00.

24 April - 5 May, New York, NY: EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-8). Main discussion themes are: Integrated Planning and Management of Land Resources; Financial Resources, Trade and Investment, Economic Growth; and Agriculture. For information contact the CSD Secretariat, United Nations Plaza, Room DC2-2220, New York, New York 10017, USA, tel: (1-212) 963-3170; fax: 963-4260; email: dsd@un.org http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd8/csd8_2000.htm

22-26 May, New York: MILLENNIUM FORUM. This UN forum will assemble innovative ideas and proposals of NGOs and civil society from all levels, seeking to create not only a new vision for the future but also an organizational structure whereby the peoples of the world can participate effectively in global decision-making. For information contact: The Millennium Forum Executive

Committee, 866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 120, New York, New York 10017-1822; tel: (1-212) 803-2522; fax: 803-2561; email: mngof@bic.org; web: www.millenniumforum.org

- **Resources**

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS (MEAs). 9 February 2000. Note by the WTO Secretariat (ref. code: WT/CTE/W/130) for 29 February - 1 March meeting of the Committee on Trade and Environment. This 7-page document is meant to provide WTO Members with an update of recent developments in two MEAs: the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; and the Basel Convention on Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their disposal. To download visit <http://www.wto.org/wto/ddf/ep/public.html> and search with the reference code above.

THE BRICKELL REPORT: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HEMISPHERIC DIALOGUE ON ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND TRADE EXPANSION IN THE AMERICAS. March 2000. This report is a component of the ongoing project on "Environmentally Sound Trade Expansion in the Americas," co-sponsored by the Organisation of American States (OAS), the North-South Centre, and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD). It is supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Participating experts have identified in this report a list of areas for recommended action in promoting sustainability and environmentally sound trade expansion in connection with the FTAA process. Available in pdf format at: <http://www.ictsd.org/English/Brickell.pdf>

A "CRITIQUE" OF THE EC'S WTO SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE III. March 2000. By Oxfam GB, WWF-European Policy Office, Save the Children, and ActionAid. Copies are available from Anni Long, Oxfam Policy Department; tel: (44 (0)-1865) 312-127; fax: 312-245; email: along@oxfam.org.uk

- **Biotechnology-Related Resources**

BIOTECH -- FROM SEATTLE TO MONTREAL AND BEYOND: THE BATTLE ROYALE OF THE 21ST CENTURY. March 2000. By Kristin Dawkins of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). This article appears in the March edition, (Vol. 7 No. 1) of SEEDLING, the quarterly newsletter of Genetic Resources Action International (GRAIN). For related information check the websites of GRAIN: <http://www.grain.org>; and IATP: <http://www.iatp.org>

THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY: AN ANALYSIS OF RESULTS. February 2000. By Aaron Cosbey and Stas Burgiel. Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). The paper examines the contributions of the five major negotiating groups and the chief elements of the Protocol, focusing on Advanced Informed Agreement, the Precautionary Principle, Liability, and the Protocol's relationship to the WTO. Available at: <http://iisd.ca/pdf/biosafety.pdf>

"Modified Treaty," a review of the Biosafety Protocol, in DOWN TO EARTH, Vol 8, No. 19, 29 February 2000. By the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), India. Available at: http://www.oneworld.org/cse/html/dte/dte20000229/dte_srep.htm

- **Electronic Resources**

The US Department of Agriculture website has a great deal of information on the US-China trade deal, including the text of the agreement on agriculture reached on 10 April 1999. To view visit: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/itp/china/accession.html>

THE WORLD BANK'S ELECTRONIC TRADE NEWSLETTER. Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/research/trade/newletter.htm>

"A NEW COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY FOR A NEW CENTURY". Speech delivered by Dr. Franz Fischler, European Commissioner responsible for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries at the 19th European Agricultural Outlook Conference in London, 9-10 March 2000. The text of the speech is available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/fischler/speech_en.htm

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