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MILLENNIUM SUMMIT ADDRESSES FUZZY ISSUES BUT FAILS TO DELIVER COMMITMENTS

The general consensus emerging in the aftermath of last week's United Nations Millennium Summit is that although the Millennium Declaration addresses several pressing international issues -- globalisation, world poverty, human rights, sustainable development, peace and security and strengthening and democratising the UN -- the document lacks any real teeth as a binding set of principles. While African and other developing country leaders spoke eloquently of increased marginalisation in a globalising world and of the widening gap between rich and poor, the heads of state and government officials attending the summit signed only a goodwill final declaration at the conclusion of the event on 8 September.

Of the myriad issues discussed at the summit, globalisation and poverty were its most central. Despite abundant criticism of the present condition of global relations by several summit participants, most agreed that the globalisation process is vital to enhancing global security, eradicating poverty and meeting the objectives of sustainable development. Many delegates stressed that fundamental reforms to the international system are nevertheless required to ensure that the benefits of globalisation are equitably distributed.

Unemployment and unequal distribution of wealth and knowledge rang like a leitmotif through the speeches made by many heads of developing countries. Hitting on an issue that concerned many poor country leaders, Guyanese President Bharrat Jagdeo said that upon his return to Guyana he will most certainly be asked, "What has this summit brought to us? Will it serve to reduce poverty and create jobs? Will it help bridge the development and digital divides?" Said Colombian President Andres Pastrana: "We need to increase the flow of international trade and put an end to protectionist measures of the wealthier and more developed countries." Standing up for the interests of small island states, Saint Lucia's Prime Minister Kenny Anthony asked whether the UN has demonstrated in any way that it is a sanctuary for small island developing states. "Where is the hope when the WTO has orchestrated the destruction of the economies of some small Caribbean countries though a ruling that condemns the preferential marketing arrangements for their bananas in Europe as anti-free trade?" he asked. "Where is equity, justice and fairness when other developing countries participate in this attack on our livelihood?"

Summarising the first roundtable at the closing session, Singapore's Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong reported that, "Several leaders argued that the rules of the international financial institutions were written to favour strong, rich countries, and they complained that decisions made by the International Monetary Fund and the WTO have been undemocratic. In order to combat the negative effects of globalisation, a suggestion was made that the UN could offer training on how to negotiate and utilise trade agreements."

EU Commission President Presses for New WTO Round

Addressing the Summit, EU Commission President Romano Prodi said, "I see globalisation as an opportunity to be exploited. That is why I would welcome a new WTO round [which] would give people all over the world a share in the benefits of globalisation, bridging the wealth divide". Mr. Prodi also remarked that the WTO cannot undertake this task singularly, but called on strengthening the multilateral system to achieve the goals of social development and environmental sustainability.

State of the World Forum

While the Millennium Summit was underway at the UN in New York, members of the international community of non-governmental organisations were also in New York discussing the importance of increased civil society participation the globalisation process. Mikhail Gorbachev, Convening Chair of the State of the World Forum, captured the nature of the gathering, saying, "The strong and the powerful, the G-7, though in new conditions, continue to act in old ways, ignoring impulses from wider civil society." Also present at the State of the World Forum was George Soros, international financier and philanthropist. Soros voiced his scepticism regarding the UN process, stating that, "the UN is not a very good organisation for the kind of decisions that need to be made on economic matters, mainly because it is an organisation where every state has to agree...The UN has its limitations. One has to accept it and look for other institutions to address other areas."

Seattle Follow-up

Strategically timed to coincide with both the Millennium Summit and the IMF meetings in Prague later this month, a coalition of NGOs on Thursday, 7 September, released a proposal to scale back the powers of the WTO. The proposal calls for delimiting the list of products tradable on the global

market, including water rights, and rejects the international patent regime under the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), which currently allows the patenting of "life forms". In implementing the proposal's recommendations, Lori Wallach of Global Trade Watch has said her organisation's task will be to lobby the US Congress to "replace the old outdated fast-track trade system with a new inclusive trade policy-making system that will be the tool that will be able to further agenda items."

"General Assembly Press Release GA/9753 5th Meeting (AM) & September 2000" UN, 7 September 2000; "Millennium Forum Co-Chair Addresses the Millennium Summit," NEWS FROM THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT, 8 September 2000; "Commission President Romano Prodi Calls for New WTO Round," COMMUNICATION FROM EC DG-TRADE, 12 September 2000; "Millennium Summit: Delegates Adopt Ambitious List of UN Goals," UN WIRE, 11 September 2000; "Will the Summit Reduce Poverty and Create Jobs," IPS TERRAVIVA, 7 September 2000; "UN Projects New Global Vision for 21st Century," IPS TERRAVIVA, 11 September 2000; "Group Seeks to Scale Back WTO's Powers," UPI, 8 September 2000.

NAFTA METHANEX CASE COULD THREATEN PUBLIC HEALTH LAWS

Following hot on the heels of a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) panel's decision to award California-based Metalclad Corp. \$US16.7 million against the Mexican government (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest*, Vol. 4 No. 33, 5 September 2000 <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story4.05-09-00.htm>), another NAFTA tribunal opened hearings on 7 September on a \$US970 million case brought by Canadian company Methanex against the US government over a California decision to ban the gasoline additive MTBE.

Methanex is a major supplier of methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), a by-product of natural gas. In March 1999 the California government ordered the substance to be phased out by 2003 after studies showed that MTBE -- which was showing up in thousands of the states' groundwater supplies -- might cause cancer as well as neurological and dermatological problems. Methanex is arguing that under NAFTA's Chapter 11 it is owed \$970 million in lost profits should California ban MTBE.

Chapter 11 states that, with some exceptions (such as "for a public purpose"), no NAFTA Party may "directly or indirectly nationalise or expropriate an investment of an investor of another Party in its territory or take a measure tantamount to nationalisation or expropriation of such an investment".

The dispute will likely involve questions of sound science, with the burden of proof resting on the shoulders of the US to demonstrate that MTBE in the water supply is a threat to public health. The US government calls MTBE "a toxic chemical that is highly soluble in water" and difficult to clean up. Methanex counters that there is nothing wrong with MTBE, saying, "There is not a shred of clinical or epidemiological evidence to support the notion that MTBE has caused or will cause any human cancer."

NGOs voice opposition; ask to submit amicus briefs

A number of environmental organisations sent a letter to the US government on 6 September demanding that the US ensure that the dispute deliberations do not result in harm to the

environment, and that the US support the right of citizens to be heard in the process. In a first-ever occurrence, two non-governmental organisations, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and Earth Justice, have formally requested that the NAFTA arbitrators consider amicus curiae (friend of the court) briefs documenting their views on the case. While Methanex opposes these requests, the tribunal -- which has traditionally met only in secret without input from outside the parties -- has decided to delay a final decision in order to give all parties more time to submit arguments on the participation of public interest groups in the case.

IISD, Earth Justice, Canada and Mexico have been given until 13 October to submit their arguments on public interest group participation. The US and Methanex, as litigants in the dispute, will have until 27 October to submit their own arguments. "This decision is important on all fronts," said IISD President David Runnalls. "The fact that the tribunal is giving further consideration to IISD's request means that they have taken our arguments seriously. It also forces Mexico, Canada and the US to state their positions clearly on this important question."

Alaska, Connecticut, Maine and New York are also making moves to phase out MTBE.

"Billion dollar NAFTA challenge to California drinking water protection goes to trial," ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIA SERVICES, 7 September 2000; "\$1B Methanol battle fires up this week," NATIONAL POST (Canada), 5 September 2000; "NAFTA arbitration panel to consider opening its doors to Canadian NGO," IISD, 9 September 2000.

CHINESE WTO ACCESSION TALKS RESUME THIS WEEK

The WTO Informal Accession Working Party on China began this week on 12 September. The Working Party will be followed by two and a half weeks of consultations with small groups of Members to resolve outstanding issues on China's protocol of accession and working party report. These documents will outline in detail the market access concessions and domestic trade policy reforms China will undertake in exchange for WTO Membership.

Informal meetings on Chinese accession will continue until 27 or 28 September, at which point a formal Working Party session will convene.

It was originally intended by trade diplomats to finish the China accession negotiations in September in order that the country could be admitted before the end of 2000. However, certain areas -- such as the use of special safeguard measures against Chinese imports, Beijing's commitment to eliminate agricultural subsidies, and the imposition of tariff-rate quotas on certain imports into the country -- have remained sticking-points between China and other major WTO Members. In addition, China has yet to complete bilateral trade agreements with Mexico and Switzerland. As such, negotiations on China's entry are likely to continue through the fall.

US Senate Vote on PNTR for China

The United States' Senate is scheduled to vote on 15 September on extending Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to China. The House of Representatives voted on in favour of extending

PNTR to China in May in a 237-197 vote. The upcoming Senate vote, however, faces several challenges. Among these is one outstanding proposed amendment to the bill.

Senator Fred Thompson (R-Tenn) is pressing to have an amendment attached to the bill that would prevent China from trading its arms technology with American adversaries. According to Thompson, "We need, in the midst of this trade discussion, to remind the Chinese that they cannot have access to our capital markets, they cannot get our dual use materials and they cannot get our military equipment while they remain the most, or one of the most, prolific proliferators in the world."

Others have condemned Senator Thompson's proposal on the grounds that, although it may highlight legitimate concerns, it will weaken China's chances of WTO accession. B. Timothy Bennett, vice-president of the American Electronics Association, a trade association which stands to benefit from China's WTO Membership, has said that the bill "addresses legitimate concerns that we understand, but this is an inappropriate manner in which to address these issues." Three other proposed amendments have already been rejected by the Senate for inclusion in the bill, including one promoting religious freedom in China, one calling on China to incorporate environmentally less intrusive fuels into its economy and one to review trade relations with Beijing. In addition to these obstacles, China has reiterated its position that Taiwan can only be accepted to the WTO if recognised as a separate customs territory of China and not an independent Member.

China-Indian Trade Relations

While trade between China and India is currently valued at less than \$US2 billion per year, China's accession to the WTO could potentially increase this number to \$10 billion. According to many trade analysts, this could greatly improve trade relations between the two rival powers.

Thus far, China has successfully negotiated bilateral trade deals with 35 of the 37 WTO Members who had requested negotiations (agreements with Mexico and Switzerland are pending). This points to the ever-increasing likelihood of China's successful accession bid by the end of 2000. China's Ambassador to India, Zhou Gang, has said that China has taken many steps since 1993 towards WTO compliance, but acknowledges its continued need to reform state-owned enterprises and upgrade its economic system and trade structure. Gang has also said that China will likely encounter many adjustment difficulties once it joins the WTO, notably in the manufacturing sector given large asymmetries in management practices and technology.

V.S Seshadri, Joint Secretary in India's Ministry of Commerce, has reiterated Gang's sentiment that China's accession will lead to greater cooperation between the two countries and ease tensions which have existed in the region for many years. It should be noted, however, that India and China do compete on many export fronts, specifically in mass-produced consumer goods, although India remains the dominant producer of computer software. In the period between 1995-2000, India's software exports have grown from \$US400 million to \$US4.4 billion, a whopping 70-80 percent growth rate.

Both countries also agree that their combined presence in the WTO will create a regional strategic alliance capable of blocking norms which favour wealthy countries, notably anti-dumping measures used by both the US and the EU.

"WTO Sets Dates for Working Party To Meet This Month on China's Accession," WTO REPORTER, 6 September 2000. "India and China Aim to Warm Trade Relations As Beijing Nears Entry in WTO," BNA, 16 August 2000; "Taiwan Can Join WTO as China's Separate Customs Territory," PEOPLE'S DAILY ONLINE, 6 September 2000; "US-China Trade Deal Clears Senate Hurdles," YAHOO NEWS, 9 September 2000; "Lott Expects Trade Measure To Pass Senate by Middle of Month," WTO REPORTER, 7 September 2000.

WORLD BANK RELEASES 2000/2001 WORLD DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The World Bank's 2000/2001 World Development (WDR) report, on the subject of 'Attacking Poverty', was released on 12 September. The report argues that large reductions in human deprivation are possible, including through harnessing economic integration and trade liberalisation and advances in technology.

In its chapter on International Actions, the report singles out expanded market access in high-income countries as a way of narrowing income, health and gaps in other economic and human developmental dimensions between rich and poor countries. Former Staff Director of the WDR Ravi Kanbur resigned four months ago, stating reservations on the emphasis of the main messages likely to emerge in the report. Bank staff told the Financial Times that Kanbur's emphasis on income redistribution brought him into conflict with other economists at the bank, who argued that the promotion of economic growth through liberalisation was a more effective instrument in combating poverty.

It is worth noting that the WDR 2000 emphasises -- as does the WTO's June 2000 Special Studies no. 5 on Trade, Income Disparity and Poverty -- the importance to poverty reduction of openness to international trade and trade with richer countries (pp. 49, 53 and 179). As a footnote on page 53 shows, this policy advice derives principally from a March 2000 paper entitled "Growth is Good for the Poor" by David Dollar and Aart Kraay. The Dollar/Kraay study defends a positive correlation between growth and trade openness. While the WDR reaffirms the growth-enhancing nature of openness to trade, its authors nevertheless remain conscious of the issue of a level playing field in the WTO for developing countries: it points out on p. 180 that annual welfare losses to developing countries from developed countries' agricultural tariffs and other distortions, such as subsidies, amount to \$US19.8 billion per year. Download the Dollar and Kraay report "Growth is Good for the Poor" at: <http://www.worldbank.org/research/growth/absddolakraay.htm>; see also <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/wdrpoverty/> for more information on the WDR 2000/2001.

"World Development Report 2000/2001," WORLD BANK, 12 September 2000; "Author of key World Bank report resigns," FINANCIAL TIMES, 15 June 2000.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS: AFRICA

SADC FTA starts this month

The 1st of September marked the start of implementation of a Southern African Free Trade Area (FTA) under the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The trade agreement

comprises eleven members, namely Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Zambia is expected to join the grouping shortly, while the three remaining SADC members -- Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Seychelles -- may join at a later date (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 4, No. 31, 8 August 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story.08-08-00.htm>).

Signatories to the FTA will phase out at least 85 percent of their tariffs within eight years and all tariffs by the end of 2012. The deal has also simplified investment activities among members.

South Africa, by far the largest and most developed SADC economy, has pledged to boost industry in neighbouring poorer members, such as Mozambique. Said South African deputy president Jacob Zuma, "we ought to have a situation where the economy of the region benefits everybody."

Uganda is expected to apply for SADC membership in the near future, according to the country's regional cooperation minister, Amama Mbabazi. The minister added that the move would not conflict with its membership in other regional bodies, such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), but rather would "supplement" them. The country has recently been invited to join from other SADC governments.

COMESA en route to its own FTA

COMESA members are forging ahead with the implementation of a free trade area initiative of their own, despite Tanzania's withdrawal from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa at the end of August. The agreement is scheduled to be signed on 30 October in Lusaka, Zambia.

Tanzania has blamed logistical problems and the need to protect its industries -- particularly its fragile industrial sector -- from outside competition as the reasons for its pullout.

Although the 21-member COMESA Secretary-General Erastus Mwencha downplayed the impact of Tanzania's decision, he accused Tanzania of not being sincere. "In fact the Tanzanian business community have conducted a survey, whose findings confirm what we at COMESA have been saying for a long time, that Tanzania stands to lose from its decision to opt out of COMESA," he said.

According to Mwencha, the Common Market is modelled after that of the European Union. Member countries plan to boost their trade volume through tariff reduction, to be followed in 2004 by a Common External Tariffs agreement. Currently, tariffs remain high in the region, with levels ranging from 8 to 38 percent. Intra-COMESA trade accounted for \$US4.2 billion in 1998 compared to total foreign trade volume of \$US62 billion. Excluding Tanzania, COMESA's members are Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

With an estimated market of 380 million people and a combined GNP of \$US165 billion, COMESA is hoping to become one of the strongest trading blocs within the developing World.

"S. Africa won't swallow small economies under free trade pact: Zuma," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 23 August 2000. "Uganda to apply for SADC membership," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 29 August 2000; "COMESA Pushes On With Free Trade," PANAFRICAN NEWS AGENCY, 5 September 2000; "Egypt seizes over 1.5 tons of smuggled ivory," XINHUA NEWS AGENCY, 16 August 2000.

IN BRIEF

LYON CLIMATE CHANGE MEETING PREPS FOR COP-6. Delegates from 150 countries are meeting this week in Lyon, France, from 11-15 September to finalise preparatory talks on the Kyoto Protocol before the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's sixth Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP-6) negotiations in November. Under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, governments agreed to minimise risks associated with climate change. Consensus on key issues -- such as technology transfer, establishment of a compliance regime for monitoring implementation, and agreement on procedures for the operation of the Clean Development Mechanism and emissions trading -- is needed to trigger the necessary ratification to allow the agreement to enter into force. A central point of contention remains the extent to which developed countries can avoid reducing their emissions of greenhouse gases by financing projects in poor countries. The Kyoto Protocol will enter into force 90 days after it has been ratified by at least 55 parties to the Convention. Thus far, though 83 countries and the EC have signed the Protocol, only 23 countries -- all developing -- have ratified. Some 2-3,000 participants are expected at this week's meeting, which was addressed on Monday by French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin. Informal discussions and workshops were held last week. *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest will report on the meeting in our next issue. "Lyon meeting prepares for November summit," UN WIRE, 11 September 2000; "Lyon talks to set stage for major climate change conference," UNFCCC PRESS RELEASE, 1 September 2000.

IISD RELEASES STATEMENT ON TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. On 11 September, the Winnipeg, Canada-based International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) released its 4-page position on trade and sustainable development. The statement is aimed at those working on international trade, development and environment, and advocates a pressing need for reform of the WTO. It is intended to be a rallying point for like-minded organisations and a foundation for constructive efforts at reforming the WTO. Specifically, IISD advocates the following reforms for the world trade body: (a) Openly address and give priority to the range of impacts which result from trade liberalisation; (b) Find ways for developing countries to participate more equitably in the WTO's work; and (c) Greatly increase the capacity of both governments and civil society -- particularly in developing countries -- to promote trade policies and reforms in the WTO that support and advance sustainable development. IISD further states that while not all economic growth supports sustainable development, "sustainable development cannot be achieved - especially in the developing countries -- without substantial growth and changed patterns of investment. "There are many critics of the WTO who are glad to see that international trade negotiations have been derailed so successfully since Seattle. We are not," said IISD Director of Trade and Investment Mark Halle. "We believe trade liberalisation is an essential component of sustainable development." To view the full text of the IISD statement, visit: <http://iisd.ca/./trade/statement.htm>. "IISD statement on trade and sustainable development," IISD, 11 September 2000. "IISD calls for reform of WTO," IISD, 11 September 2000.

CEC SECRETARIAT DETERMINES A FACTUAL RECORD IS NEEDED IN THE CASE OF A MEXICAN SHRIMP FARMER. The Secretariat of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) -- the institution responsible for overseeing NAFTA's trade and environment aspects -- has informed the environment Ministers of Mexico, Canada and the US that a 'factual record' is warranted in the case of the Granjas Aquanova shrimp farm located in San Blas, Nayarit, Mexico. The allegations were brought forth by Grupo Ecológico Manglar state on the grounds that Mexico has not enforced its General Law on Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection. The action follows Article 14 of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), which instructs the CEC Secretariat to consider submissions from organisations or individuals if a Party to the NAAEC is not enforcing its environmental laws. If deemed necessary, the Secretariat may develop a factual record on the matter if two thirds of the Council (made up of the three Parties' environment Ministers) agree that the action is warranted. "Submission on Mexican Shrimp Farm Warrants Factual Record," CECNEWS, 7 September 2000.

WTO IN BRIEF

ALBANIA NOW NUMBER 138. On 8 September, Albania became the WTO's 138th Member. As such, Albania has agreed to assume its WTO obligations as well as sign two plurilateral agreements on government procurement and trade. The accession agreement included market-access commitments on goods and services. WTO Director-General Mike Moore commented on the accession saying, "I welcome Albania into the multilateral trading system. Membership promises a more prosperous future and raised living standards for all Albanian citizens." Moore went on to suggest that increasing trade within south-eastern Europe will bring greater peace and stability to the region. Ermelinda Meksi, Albania's Minister for Economic Cooperation and Trade, welcomed the event by saying that WTO Membership "presents us with a new role in the international community" and will help bring "improvement of the well-being and prosperity of my people." Albania first applied for GATT membership in 1992, but never began serious negotiations with the WTO until 1998. Currently, 30 additional countries are seeking WTO membership. "WTO: Albania Joins the WTO," M2 COMMUNICATIONS, 8 September 2000.

PANEL ESTABLISHED IN CANADA-US LUMBER DISPUTE. At the 11 September meeting of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body, Canada submitted its second request to have a panel established to rule on the case "US - Measures treating export restraints as subsidies". Under WTO rules, a panel is automatically set up after a second request. Canada wants the WTO to determine whether Canadian export restraints on lumber constitute a subsidy under the WTO Agreements. Ottawa is eager to discover its export restraints' status under the WTO before the US-Canadian Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA) expires on 31 March 2001. Sources indicate that the US would almost certainly seek to bring a countervailing duty case against Canada when the SLA runs out, as Canadian environmental standards in forestry -- such as stumpage fees for licensing timber cutting on provincial land -- tend to be lower than those imposed on US forestry companies (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 4, No. 31, 8 August 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.08-08-00.htm>). The panel has six months to decide the case. The EU, Australia and India have reserved their third party rights in the dispute. "US - Measures treating export restraints as subsidies: Canada's second request (WT/DS194/2) for a panel," WTO PRESS RELEASE, 11 September 2000.

ON THE MOVE

At the 1-2 September General Assembly of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) in Basel, Switzerland, Gunnar Rundgren was elected the organisation's new president. Rundgren is Chief Executive Officer of GroLink, a Swedish organic foods consultancy. With 700 member organisations in more than 100 countries, IFOAM represents the worldwide movement of organic agriculture and provides a platform for global exchange and cooperation. Rundgren's priority list includes further development of organic agriculture in developing countries. "Organic agriculture on its own can't solve the problem with food security, as food security is mainly a social and economic problem, but organic agriculture is a good basis for a food security policy. In particular, organic agriculture can be a strong alternative to use of synthetic inputs and genetically-modified organisms."

For more information on IFOAM visit: <http://www.ifoam.org>.

"Gunnar Rundgren elected President of IFOAM," GROLINK INFORMATION DEPARTMENT, 7 September 2000.

On 31 August, Swiss trade diplomat Ambassador William Rossier took over from Kjartan Johannsson of Iceland as secretary-general of the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Ambassador Rossier is a former 1996 chair of the WTO General Council and has served as the chair of the WTO working party on Russian WTO accession since 1993. EFTA -- launched in 1965 as a counterweight to the European Economic Community -- is made up of Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. Former members Austria, Finland and Sweden left the trade area in 1995 to join the European Union. Over the last few months, Johannsson had been working to forge the first-ever transatlantic free trade agreement between Canada and EFTA, an initiative that is still pending. EFTA is also seeking similar deals with Latin American and Asian countries.

"Swiss official replaces Iceland at head of EFTA," REUTERS, 31 August 2000.

EVENTS

Coming Up This Week

11-15 September, Lyon, France: 13TH SESSION OF THE UNFCCC SUBSIDIARY BODIES: SB-13. The meeting will be preceded by one week of informal meetings, including workshops. For information contact: the UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: (49-228) 815-1000; fax: 815-1999; email: secretariat@unfccc.de; Internet: <http://www.unfccc.int>. From IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal>.

12 September, Geneva: WTO INFORMAL ACCESSION WORKING PARTY ON CHINA. The meeting will be followed by two and a half weeks of consultations. For information contact: Keith Rockwell, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5007.

12-15 September, Geneva: WTO TEXTILES MONITORING BODY. For information contact: Luis Ople, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5374.

13-14 September, Singapore: APEC WORKSHOP ON TRADE FACILITATION: NEW DIRECTIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE. Workshop Objectives: To contribute to a renewal of APECs trade facilitation agenda - including exploration of obstacles and opportunities for developing member economies in APEC - by identifying the most effective measures for action in four areas: a) regulatory reform and standards; b) customs procedures; c) mobility of business persons; and professional accreditation; and d) electronic commerce. For more information, visit: http://www1.worldbank.org/wbiep/trade/new_standards.html#seminars.

18-19 September, University of Leeds, United Kingdom: BUSINESS STRATEGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE. The Conference will be a workshop on papers from researchers and practitioners in the fields of corporate environmental management and business strategies for sustainable development. For more information contact: ERP Environment, tel: (44) (0) 127 453-0408; fax: 127 453-0409; email: elaine@erpenvironment.co.uk.

18-19 September, Vienna, Austria: MEETING OF THE TASK GROUP ON DEBT AND STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT. For information visit: http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/2000_round/timetable.htm.

18-20 September, London, United Kingdom: COMMONWEALTH BUSINESS FORUM. The Forum will concentrate on globalisation policies, strategies and partnerships at both national and corporate levels. For more information contact: The Commonwealth Business Council, tel: (44) (0) 207 747-6344; fax: 747-6530; email: cbc@commonwealth.int.

18-20 September, Vigo, Spain: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON AUTHENTICITY OF SPECIES IN MEAT AND SEAFOOD PRODUCTS. The Congress will cover a wide range of aspects involved in food authenticity. The Congress also includes the symposium "Food labelling for transgenic organisms" that will address the problems related to the production and detection of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in foodstuffs. For information visit: <http://www.iim.csic.es/~qpmfsi>.

18-21 September, Rome, Italy: 26th SESSION OF THE FAO COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY. For information contact: Barbara Huddleston, email: Barbara.Huddleston@fao.org.

18-22 September, Uruguay: UNEP WORKSHOP ON MANAGEMENT OF DIOXINS. Workshop on the management of dioxins, furans, and PCBS, organised by UNEP. For information contact: Murray Newton or Heidi Fiedler, UNEP Chemicals (IRPTC); tel: (41-22) 979-9111; fax: 797-3460; email: mnewton@unep.ch or hfriedler@unep.ch; Internet: <http://irptc.unep.ch/pops>. From IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal>.

18-22 September, Cape Town, South Africa: GLOBAL INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAMME SYNTHESIS. For information contact: Laurie Neville, Conference Coordinator, Global Invasive Species Program, Stanford University; tel: (1-650) 728-2614; fax: 723-1530; email: lneville@leland.stanford.edu; Internet: <http://jasper.stanford.edu/gisp/>.

19-20 September, Madrid, Spain: SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CEPHALOPOD TRADE CONFERENCE. The conference will look at squid and octopus fisheries, a review of cephalopod resources, world consumption and the influence of the WTO on trade in these seafood products. For more information email: conferences@agra-europe.com.

19-21 September, Geneva, Switzerland: SECOND EMERGING MARKETS INTERNATIONAL FAIR. This fair will include interaction booths and presentations as well as a forum with workshops, roundtable discussions and interministerial conferences. For information visit: <http://www.ema2000.ch/>.

19-22 September, Geneva, Switzerland: THE WORLD MEETING OF THE REAL ECONOMY. Hosted by the EMA Foundation. Topics to be addressed include: direct investment, sustainable development, and investment funds. For information visit: <http://www.ema2000.ch/uk/program.html>.

19-28 September, Prague, Czech Republic: WORLD BANK/IMF JOINT ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARDS OF GOVERNORS. A program of seminars will run from 23-26 September; the plenary sessions of the Boards of Governors will run from 26-28 September. For information visit: <http://www.worldbank.org> or <http://www.imf.org>.

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming World Trade Organisation meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/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 the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, Rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland.

26 September, Geneva: WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY. For information contact: Gabrielle Marceau, tel: (41-22) 739-5519; fax: (41-22) 739-5788.

27 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE. For information contact: Peter Ungphakorn, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5412.

27 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO WORKING PARTY ON GATS RULES. For information contact: Lucie Giraud, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5075.

28 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN SERVICES. This meeting will focus on air transport services. For information contact: Lucie Giraud, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5075.

28-29 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE -- SPECIAL SESSION (negotiations). For information contact: Peter Ungphakorn, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5412.

Other Forthcoming Events

22-25 September, Mammoth Hot Springs, WY, USA. CONFERENCE: CHANGING LANDSCAPES OF RURAL AMERICA. Supported by NASA LCLUC, Montana NASA EPSCoR, Montana State University, and Gallatin Writers, Inc. Rural areas in the United States are changing as the country transitions to a service and information economy. These socioeconomic trends are dramatically altering patterns of land use and land cover, with important consequences for ecosystems and human communities. For information contact: Dan Brown, University of Michigan; Internet : <http://www.homepage.montana.edu/~hansen/hansen/lab/documents/conference.htm>; email: danbrown@umich.edu;

26 September, Montreal, Canada: GLOBALISATION: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT. Hosted by the International Research Collective (IRC), the conference seeks to share knowledge and analysis about the FTAA leading up to next spring's Summit of the Americas. For information contact: the IRC, tel: (1-514) 937-3200; email: lombrenoire@tao.ca.

27 September, Prague, Czech Republic: WTO: SHRINK OR SINK -- A CITIZENS' TURNAROUND AGENDA. The objective of the conference is to foster better co-ordination of European activities to roll back the power and authority of the WTO and to develop a joint European strategy. For information contact: Alexandra Wandel, Trade and Sustainability coordinator (FoEE), 29, rue Blanche - B-1060 Brussels, Belgium; tel: (32-2) 542-0185; fax: 537-5596; email: alexandra.wandel@foeeurope.org; Internet: <http://www.foeeurope.org/trade/about.htm>.

28 September, Geneva Switzerland: LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN AT THE CROSSROADS: CAN POVERTY BE ERADICATED? Organised by the World Bank office in Geneva. The main objective is to exchange views with Mr. David de Gerranti, Vice President, Latin America and the Caribbean Region, on issues of common concern. Seating is limited. The Seminar Series will take place at Palais des Nations, Conference Room V. For information contact: Ms. Vania Keller, World Bank-Geneva; tel: (41-22) 799-8872; email: vkeller@worldbank.org.

1-8 October, Santiago, Chile: SEMINAR ON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN. Sponsored by the Latin American Energy Organization and the German Government, among others. A sub-regional seminar for Mercosur, Chile and Bolivia on Energy and Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and approaches to energy policy. For information contact: Francisco Figueruera, Latin American Energy Organisation (OLADE), Av. Mariscal Antonio Jose de Sucre, P.O. Box 17-11-6413, Sector San Carlos, Quito, Ecuador; tel: (593) (2) 59-8280/8122; fax: 53-1691; email: figueroa@olade.org.ec.

2-6 October, Loctudy, France: WORLD FORUM OF FISH-HARVESTERS AND FISHWORKERS (WFF). The conference aims at stopping the spread of multinational-owned factory trawlers and industrial aquaculture operations as well as addressing the impacts of new trade agreements on traditional fisheries and fish conservation. For information contact: WFF Organising Committee; email: peche.dev@wanadoo.fr; Internet: <http://assoc.wanadoo.fr/peche.dev/>.

2-6 October, Rome, Italy: FAO TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING. Organised by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation. For

information contact: D. Doulman, Senior Fishery Liaison Officer International Institutions and Liaison Service (FIPL), FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla; 00100 Rome, Italy; tel: (39) (0) 657-051; fax: 657-053-152; email: fi-inquiries@fao.org; Internet: <http://www.fao.org/fi/meetings/meetings.asp>. From IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal>.

3-4 October, Amsterdam, Netherlands: WORLD POVERTY: A CHALLENGE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR. The conference looks at how business activities and joint ventures between public and private sectors are affecting poverty throughout the world. For information contact: UvA Conference Office, P.O. Box 19268 1000 GG Amsterdam; tel: (31-20) 525-4791; fax: 525-4799; email: congres@bdu.uva.nl.

Call For Papers

22 September: PROPOSALS DUE FOR SYMPOSIUM ON ARBITRATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL DISPUTES. The GCC Commercial Arbitration Centre is organising a symposium for February 2001. Authors should submit papers dealing with environmental dispute resolution. Papers should contain original views, ideas and analysis. Languages accepted: Arabic and English. For information contact: Yousif Zainal, secretary general, GCC Commercial Arbitration Centre, P.O. Box 2338, Manama, Bahrain; tel: (973) 214-800; fax: 214-500; email: arbit395@batelco.com.bh; Internet: <http://www.gccarbitration.com>.

RESOURCES

BIODIVERSITY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE. Produced for CBD COP-5, Nairobi, May 2000. A CD-ROM containing national information, regional maps and text documents and information on international processes related to the implementation of the UN Convention on Biodiversity. For more information contact: Biodiversity Service, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, 15 ch. des Anémones, CH-1219 Geneva-Châtelaine, Switzerland; tel: (41-22) 917-8310; fax: 917-8024; email: alla.metalitsa@unep.ch.

COOPERATIVE SOVEREIGNTY: FROM INDEPENDENCE TO INTERDEPENDENCE IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW. Published by Kluwer Law International, The Hague; September 2000. Written by Franz Perrez. Focusing on international environmental law, the book looks into the evolving definition of sovereignty as not only independence but also as a responsibility to cooperate. For information contact: Franz Perrez, email: franz.perez@seco.admin.ch; Internet: <http://www.kli.com/plweb-cgi/fastweb?getdoc+kluwer+kluwer17+6+waaa+%26%28%2>.

SUGAR, TRADE AND EUROPE. A discussion paper produced by SUSTAIN (the alliance for better food and farming). 2000. The paper focuses on the impact of European sugar policies on poor countries. This document looks at how the EU sugar regime has affected both ACP and non-ACP countries. Case studies from Kenya, Fiji and the Philippines illustrate the findings of the report. For information contact: SUSTAIN, email: sustain@sustainweb.org; Internet: <http://www.sustainweb.org/homefra.htm>.

REPORT OF ACP-EU CIVIL SOCIETY STRATEGY WORKSHOP IN GENEVA. This report, produced by the Dutch organisation INZET, follows up on the Workshop on Enhancing Civil Society Involvement in the Implementation of the New ACP - EU Agreement, held in Geneva on 28 and 29 June 2000 and organised by Eurostep, in cooperation with INZET Association and the Liaison Committee of EU NGDOs. For a copy of the report contact: the Eurostep Secretariat; 115 Rue Stévin, 1000 Brussels, Belgium; tel: (32-2) 231-1659; fax: 230-3780; email: dsegaar@inzet.nl. Deadline to receive a copy is 18 September 2000.

COMPETITION POLICY IN SMALL ECONOMIES. SAWTEE Briefing Paper No. 4, March 2000. The paper presents the case for designing an instrument for competition in small economies, where size of the country may warrant a completely different approach than that being followed in relatively bigger economies. To obtain contact: Ratnakar Adhikari, PRO PUBLIC, P.O. Box 14307, Gautam Buddha Marg, Anam Nagar, Kathmandu, Nepal; tel: (977-1) 268681; fax: 268022; email: rmadi@propublic.wlink.com.np or propublic@wlink.com.np.

Electronic Resources

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT. By The World Bank Group. This site is devoted to providing information about government regulation and standards which impact trade, economic development, the environment and health and safety so as to strengthen the understanding of the regulatory and technical barriers to trade of interested parties. To access visit: <http://www1.worldbank.org/wbiep/trade/Standards.html>.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS ON THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR: A SYNTHESIS. A recent European Commission study on the economic impact of GMOs. The document may be accessed free of charge at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg06/publi/gmo/gmo.pdf>

THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT GATEWAY. The Global Development Gateway is a development portal which aims to offer an easy pathway to information and knowledge on development activities. To learn more about the Global Development Gateway, visit: <http://www.worldbank.org/gateway/>. To visit and contribute to the Food Security and Food Policy Topic page (under construction, a temporary page), visit: http://boot0107-001-tel.arsdigita.com:8109/gdg/gdgcore?page_id=19.

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