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TRIPS COUNCIL DISCUSSES RELATIONSHIP WITH CBD

The WTO Council on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) met in Geneva from 27 November to 1 December. The meeting's agenda contained controversial issues such as the review of Article 27.3(b) (protection of inventions of plant varieties) along with informal consultations on the intersection between TRIPs and the UN Convention on Biodiversity (CBD). Further, several aspects of geographical indications were addressed, particularly the implementation of Articles 23.4 (establishment of a multilateral system of notification and registration) and 24.1 (negotiations aimed at increasing the level of protection), as well as Article 24.2 (review of the application of the provisions concerning higher levels of protection for geographical indications). Other items on the table were a request by the CBD for observer status at the Council, the handling of non-violation complaints, the implementation of Article 66.2 (technical transfer to least-developed countries (LDCs)), and the review of the implementation of the TRIPs Agreement as required under Article 71.1.

Brazilian Proposal Emphasises IP Responsibilities

As in the last TRIPs Council meeting in September (see *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest, Vol.4 No. 36, 26 September 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story1.26-09-00.htm>), Brazil continued to push for an expansion of TRIPs to cover areas beyond exclusively intellectual property concerns.

Its paper (IP/C/W/228; not yet available online) proposed specific amendments to Article 27.3(b) which would allow Members to set conditions on patentability when appropriate. The propositions include amendments that would encourage Members (a) to disclose the source of genetic material; (b) to disclose relevant traditional knowledge used to obtain the material; (c) to show evidence of fair and equitable benefit sharing; and (d) to show evidence that the patent applicant received consent from the government or local communities where the material was obtained. Brazil's paper also addressed technical issues relating to patent protection under 27.3(b); *sui generis* protection of plant varieties; ethical issues relating to patentability of life forms; conservation and sustainable use of genetic material; and concepts of traditional knowledge and farmer's rights.

Singapore called for flexibility, pointing out that this concept was written into the CBD (which allows parties to regulate access to genetic resources and thereby forms the basis for biotechnological innovations). Singapore further said that TRIPs should not be used to force common rules on Members. While it recognised the need for benefit sharing and proof of a genuine inventive step in the patent system, Singapore stressed that it is only fair to reward research and development with patent protection.

TRIPs-CBD

The relationship between TRIPs and CBD was addressed during informal consultations that took place during the week-long Council. In general the positions have not changed since the last TRIPs Council. Some developing countries (e.g. Brazil, India) think there may be a conflict between the two agreements and are in favour of addressing biodiversity issues under TRIPs. Other Members argue that governments can implement both agreements without facing any conflict, and want biodiversity concerns excluded from TRIPs. Australia suggested that the debate should not be seen as a division between two sides, but rather as a discussion about how to deal with shared objectives, taking the view that problems exist at the level of implementation and not in the provisions themselves. While views differ over whether the discussion of the CBD is adequately covered by the review of Article 27.3(b), general consensus exists on continuing this discussion under the 27.3(b) review.

However, no consensus was achieved on the request of the CBD Secretariat and a number of other organisations to join the TRIPs Council as ad hoc observers (ad hoc meaning the CBD would need to request observer status for each meeting of the Council). The US and Switzerland remain opposed to the request, and argued that the principles of granting observer status need to be sorted out first. The issue of observer status for inter-governmental organisations is currently being referred to the WTO's General Council for a decision on 7-8 December.

Geographical Indications

Addressing TRIPs Articles 24.1 and 24.2 (see first paragraph, above), the EC for the first time clearly came out in favour of an extension of the protection level for geographical indications, thereby supporting Switzerland, Central European countries, India, Sri Lanka, Turkey and others. The US and New Zealand countered that the higher level of protection -- as laid out by Article 23 and up to now only granted to wine and spirits -- had a purely political *raison d'être* and no legal meaning. They argued that it was set up in order to allow the EC to join consensus on the Uruguay Round package, and suggested that Article 23 could be scrapped rather than have its coverage

extended. The US' claim that its domestic laws already granted extensive coverage to geographical indications was countered by India, which stated that wider coverage of indicators in Article 23 was needed to provide legal certainty.

Non-violation, TRIPs Review, Technical Cooperation

Among the other issues addressed was the question whether or not so called non-violation complaints (the assertion that a measure nullifies or impairs the benefits of other Members) should be allowed under TRIPs. A moratorium on such cases under TRIPs expired at the end of 1999. Canada, the EC and developing countries argue that the concept is questionable under TRIPs, because the agreement does not grant any market access rights to Members and non-violation complaints should be limited to cases where a Member is deprived of access. The US insists that non-violation cases should be allowed and that the moratorium has already expired.

On the review of the implementation of the TRIPs Agreement under Article 71.1, both India and Australia submitted papers. Article 71.1 states that the Council for TRIPs should regularly review the implementation of the agreement, though this does not necessarily entail renegotiating or amending TRIPs. In its submission, India proposed that the review focus on the question of whether the objectives of TRIPs have been met, while Australia wanted the focus to be on implementation issues. Australia repeatedly took the line that most problems encountered under TRIPs have to do with implementation. The Council called on Members to submit further proposals on how the review should be handled until the end of February 2001.

Delegates also addressed the implementation of Article 66.2, which requires developed countries to provide incentives to enterprises and institutions for technology transfer to least developed countries (LDCs). The TRIPs Council invited the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the UN Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Bank, the UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), and the CBD Secretariat to supply information on their relevant technologies. Until the CBD and UNIDO have observer status at the Council, they will not be able to officially present their submissions. Up to now, no LDC has supplied a list of needs, as had been agreed at previous meetings.

Next year's meetings have been fixed tentatively for the week of 2 April, the week of 25 June, 20-21 September and the week of 26 November.

ICTSD Internal Files.

GATS UPDATE

The WTO Council for Trade in Services (CTS) convened throughout last week to discuss an extensive agenda ranging from emergency safeguard measures to Most Favoured Nation (MFN) exemptions. According to ICTSD sources, the Council made modest progress in a "business as usual" type meeting.

Of note was discussion on a US statement regarding Members' notification of regional and bilateral agreements that include services provisions to the CTS and the referral of these agreements to the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements (CRTA). This is a topical plea given the proliferation of

regional trade agreements in recent years. While Article V of the GATS requires notification to the CTS, some Members contended that referral to, and examination by, the CRTA was not mandatory since it was not specified in Article V.

On the issue of emergency safeguard measures, Members debated whether or not to extend the negotiations deadline on the question of emergency safeguards based on the principle of non-discrimination. Some Members, notably Thailand, asserted that without the emergency safeguard provision to protect domestic service providers, entire national economies may experience unforeseen negative consequences, such as the Asian financial crisis. The Council agreed to extend the deadline for an additional 15 months, from 15 December 2000 to 15 March 2002.

The Council also sought agreement on when next to review GATS Most Favoured Nation (MFN) exemptions. As per GATS Article II, when the GATS agreement came into effect each Member was allowed to set aside specific domestic policies to be excluded from the MFN principle for ten years. Members were subsequently obligated to review the conditions giving rise to these exemptions every five years. Having just reviewed the MFN exemptions, the Council is considering a proposal that further review of the MFN exemptions should be undertaken in 2004. Country MFN exemption lists can be downloaded from the WTO Document Dissemination Facility at: <http://www.wto.org/wto/ddf/ep/public.html> using the symbol GATS/EL/*.

As per GATS Article XIX, the Council for Trade in Services is mandated to undertake negotiations to further liberalise trade in services. The next Special Session of the Council for the Trade in Services, set up to carry out the services negotiations, are scheduled to begin this week on 5 December and will be reported on in the next edition of *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest.

"Services Safeguard Talks To Be Extended as ASEAN Pushes Proposal," *INSIDE US TRADE*, 1 December 2000; ICTSD Internal Files.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS: THE AMERICAS

US launches free trade talks with Chile

US President Bill Clinton last week announced the launch of free-trade negotiations with Chile aimed at expanding commercial ties between the two nations and North and South America. The proposed accord, which would phase out tariffs and other commercial barriers between the two countries, would include controversial provisions regarding workers' rights and environmental protection. Earlier this year, the US signed a free-trade deal with Jordan that for the first time incorporated labour and environmental standards in the text of a trade agreement (see *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest, Vol. 4, No. 41, 31 October 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.31-10-00.htm>).

Some analysts regard a bilateral agreement between the US and Chile as an attempt to revitalise Chile's efforts to join NAFTA, which had previously failed due to the US Congress' refusal to give Clinton "fast-track" authority to negotiate a trade pact, as well as an important step towards the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the hemisphere-wide trade zone that the Clinton Administration hopes will be approved by 2005. Brazil has expressed anger at Chile's bid to start negotiations with the US and has consequently suspended talks with Chile on its membership in the Mercosur trade bloc.

Jose Alfredo Graça Lima, Brazil's Foreign Ministry head of Economic Relations, said that the main sticking points would be whether the US insists on including labour restrictions in the accord and on imposing its antidumping laws. Chile opposes both points. Mexican President Vicente Fox has expressed support for the Chile-US talks, and said that a bilateral US-Chile free trade deal could only be beneficial for Mexico.

Mexico signs free trade deal with EFTA

Mexico has signed a free trade deal with the four nations that make up the European Free Trade Association (Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein). The accord, which covers trade in goods, services, investment, public procurement, competition, intellectual property, and dispute settlement, states that no tariff should exceed 5 percent by 2003 and that all tariffs will gradually be eliminated between the countries by 2007. Some 60 percent of EFTA goods will profit from duty-free access to the Mexican market and all industrial products that Mexico exports to EFTA members will be affected. Agricultural products will be exempted from the tariff reduction schedules, but will instead be covered by separate bilateral agreements due to the high subsidies they receive in Europe. Once the agreement enters into force -- possibly as early as 1 July 2001 -- EFTA countries will have the same access to the Mexican market now enjoyed by the US, Canada and the EU.

NACEC Update

The North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (NACEC) has requested a response from Mexico regarding claims that it had failed to effectively enforce provisions of its General Environmental Law and an Official Mexican Standard for Environmental Health with respect to pollutants emitted by the Mexican company Molybex. The request followed a submission by the Academia Sonorense de Derechos Humanos and Domingo Gutiérrez Mendiola that alleged that molybdenum trioxide produced by the plant through a roasting process affected the town of Cumpas north of the Mexican state of Sonora (see also *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest*, Vol. 4, No. 7, 22 February 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story5.22-02-00.htm>).

In related news, NACEC has received additional information from the US government regarding the Great Lakes Submission on Enforcement Matters. In December 1999, NACEC had received the initial US response to submissions that had claimed that the US Environmental Protection Agency's regulations to control airborne emissions of various substances from waste incinerators violated the US-Canadian treaties for the protection of the Great Lakes. As set out in Article 14 of the North American Agreement for Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) -- established under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) -- the NACEC Secretariat may consider a submission from any person or NGO asserting that a Party of the NAAEC is failing to effectively enforce an environmental law.

Japan offers trade, environmental, social support to Caribbean countries

At the first-ever ministerial conference between Japan and the Caribbean countries in Tokyo, Japan on 8 November offered its support and cooperation in such areas as environmental protection and living conditions for the disadvantaged to help Caribbean nations integrate into the global economy, a Japanese Foreign Ministry Official said. Japan intends, *inter alia*, to provide financial assistance to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency response Agency, to strengthen the Caribbean Community's

(CARICOM) capabilities, and to encourage trade and tourism in the region. The framework also calls for cooperation between Japan and the Caribbean countries in multilateral settings such as the UN and the WTO.

"NACEC requests response from Mexico on Molymex II submission," INFO CEC, 19 October 2000; "NACEC considers US response to Great Lakes citizen submission," INFO CEC, 30 November 2000; "Mexico Clinches Free-Trade Deal with EFTA; Tariffs to End by 2007 Except for Agriculture," INTERNATIONAL TRADE, 7 November 2000; "Clinton announces free-trade talks with Chile," REUTERS, 29 November 2000; "Brazil reacts to Chile's bid to join NAFTA," REUTERS, 2 December 2000; "U.S., Chile Begin Free-Trade Talks," AP, 4 December 2000; "Brazil: Chile/US Trade Talks Test Case for Latin America," DOW JONES, 4 December 2000; "Mexico backs Chile's free trade talks with US," REUTERS, 4 December 2000; "Japan offers various support to Caribbean countries," KYODO NEW INTERNATIONAL, 8 November 2000.

EU SET TO REFINES ITS TRADE NEGOTIATING POSITION

In an attempt to bolster support for a new round of multilateral trade negotiations at the WTO, European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy on 3 November announced the European Commission's intention to reformulate its trade agenda. During a recent press conference Lamy said, "I'm not saying anything on substance about what we could or would change in our position, this would come when we have tested this as careful negotiators...at this stage, the only signal I want to give is that the developing countries' position deserves serious consideration on our side." According to Lamy, "It could be a matter of clarifying the EU position rather than removing elements from it."

Lamy's statement is directed at a fundamental tension currently pressing the multilateral trade system, notably that developed countries have felt consistently marginalised from the WTO. Many attribute the WTO's failure to launch a new round of trade negotiations last year in Seattle to the argument that developing countries have not benefited from world trade to the extent the developed world has. Earlier this fall, Lamy sought to address this concern by unveiling the EU's "Everything But Arms" policy, a trade policy that, if ratified by the EU Parliament, would eliminate all duties and quotas on all non-military imports originating from the world's 48 least developed countries. The announcement from Lamy on Monday is a further attempt on the part of the Commission to generate support for world trade among developing countries.

The EU has also been paying closer attention to the concerns of civil society. As part of an ongoing dialogue with civil society and business groups, the EU recently hosted a public forum focusing on improving the capacity of these groups to participate in EU policy development. The discussion also touched upon the question of sustainable development as a policy objective. To this, Lamy informed the meeting that EC President Romano Prodi plans to release a paper in the spring of 2001 which will address the three pillars of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental development.

The next EU-civil society dialogues will be held this week and will cover agriculture 6 December, services 7 December and environment and sustainable also on 7 December. Specific details on the dialogues thus far and for event registration can be obtained at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/2000_round/3meetig.htm. Many trade analysts, however, are of the

mind that the EU's trade agenda is driven less by altruism than by its own strategic interest in launching a comprehensive round of trade negotiations that it hopes will alleviate mounting international pressures on its agricultural subsidies regime. Some argue that a comprehensive round of trade talks would give the EU a degree of flexibility and negotiating space to maintain its subsidy regime.

"EU Trade Commissioner Takes Stock Of Effort To Launch New Round," IPS, 5 December 2000; "WTO Round: Lamy Plans Soundings On Fresh Agenda," EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESS RELEASE, 5 December 2000; ICTSD Internal Files.

FAO EXPECTS REVISED IU BY NOVEMBER 2001

At the 119th UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Council meeting in Rome, Italy on 20-25 November 2000, delegates took notice of ongoing difficulties in the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (IU), the body currently addressing the safeguard of genetic resources for food supplies, including farmers' rights. The revision is occurring in order to harmonise the IU with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Ambassador Fernando Gerbasi (Venezuela), Chairman of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) -- the body responsible for the revision process -- reported to the FAO Council on the latest developments, including a hectic 12-17 November meeting of the Inter-sessional Contact Group in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. In order to give the countries time to evaluate the situation politically, the Council called for a final text of the IU to be submitted to the 31st Session of the FAO Conference scheduled for November 2001.

Setback at Neuchâtel

The Neuchâtel meeting brought a considerable setback to negotiations on some crucial issues. Discussions around a draft on benefit sharing from commercialised plant genetic resources for food and agriculture from the Multilateral System (MS) were the most divisive. The MS is designed to ensure access and fair and equitable benefit sharing of profits arising from plant genetic resources, meeting the specific needs of agriculture, and the provision in question is closely related to the WTO TRIPs Agreement. The article addresses mandatory payment of royalties for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA). The progress made at the last meeting of the Contact Group held in Tehran in August this year was jeopardised as several developed countries, including the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, said they could not accept the provision in its current form for several reasons, including potential conflicts with TRIPs.

Several developing countries reminded the Neuchâtel meeting that only the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) could provide advice on whether a provision is consistent with the trade rules. Analysts say, however, that the DSB could not decide on the issue until a dispute is raised, even though a dispute could not be raised until the revised IU has entered into force. Observers at the meeting expressed hope that the perfect will not be the enemy of the good: just as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety contains ambiguities regarding implementation of the precautionary principle under the WTO's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS), the final version of the IU may contain ambiguities regarding TRIPs which will have to be resolved in order to harmonise these agreements.

The revision of the IU to harmonise it with the CBD has been underway since 1993. The agreement's objective is to ensure that Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture are explored, collected, conserved, evaluated, utilised and made available for plant breeding and other scientific purposes. In its original form as a non-binding agreement, dating from 1983, it was based on the principle that such resources should be "preserved [...] and freely available for use, for the benefit of present and future generations" as part of the common "heritage of mankind." FAO Resolution 3/91 subsequently subjected this principle to "the sovereignty of States over their plant genetic resources." A decision emanating from the COP 5 Meeting of the CBD in Nairobi in May this year noted that the IU "is envisaged to play a crucial role in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity." COP 5 delegates also affirmed their willingness to eventually accept the IU as a legally binding instrument.

Additional Resources

To obtain a copy of the IU Draft Text for the Neuchâtel meeting visit: <http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/FAOINFO/AGRICULT/cgrfa/docscg4.htm>. Also see IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin for a comprehensive report of the Neuchâtel meeting at: <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/iucg4/>.

"Fourth Inter-Sessional Contact Group Meeting on the Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, in Harmony With the CBD: 12-17 November 2000", IISD EARTH NEGOTIATIONS BULLETIN, Vol. 9, No. 167, 20 November 2000; "Seedy 'Screw-up' in Switzerland", RAFI NEWS RELEASE, 20 November 2000; ICTSD Internal Files.

IN BRIEF

EMISSIONS TRADING EXCHANGE LAUNCHED. A new global Internet exchange for trading greenhouse gas emissions was launched at the Hague last month by consultancy Pricewaterhouse Coopers and financial brokers Cantor Fitzgerald. Emissions trading is one of the methods states will use to meet their obligations under the Kyoto Protocol. Already such trading in the US is worth an estimated \$US50-100 million, and the US government predicts that it could be worth \$US3 trillion by 2010. The new Internet Exchange, to be called CO2e.com, will begin trading in carbon dioxide emissions, but plans to expand to include other greenhouse gases in future. "PwC launches internet emissions trading bourse," REUTERS, 21 November 2000.

BARSHEFSKY HINTS AT ALTERNATIVES TO WTO DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR EU-US CLASHES. In comments to the US Council on Foreign Relations on Wednesday, US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky hinted that the next US Administration might consider "less confrontational" methods of dispute resolution than those currently available through the WTO for US-EU disputes. At present, the two sides are embroiled in several long-running stand-offs over bananas and beef, and a trade war looms over the US corporate export tax scheme. Barshefsky also used her speech to address the future accession of China and Russia to the WTO. Russia is expected to put forward offers on agriculture and services in the new year, and the USTR urged that the next US Administration should make it a priority to bring Russia into the WTO. As for the Chinese, working group meetings on accession are to resume next week, and Barshefsky expects that China will continue to show cooperation on a number of as yet unresolved issues. The US Congress's vote to normalise trade relations with China in September was hailed by Barshefsky

as proof that the absence of fast-track negotiating authority for the US President is not an obstacle to future trade negotiations and agreements. According to Barshefsky, "Most countries don't care about fast-track; they care about getting a trade agreement with the U.S." "USTR Barshefsky: US-EU disputes need new resolution way," DOW JONES, 30 November 2000.

WTO IN BRIEF

CHAIR'S TEXT ON IMPLEMENTATION SPURS DIVIDED REACTIONS. At informal meetings held on Implementation last week, WTO Members hotly debated a draft proposal forwarded by General Council Chair Kåre Bryn that attempted "to find broadly acceptable solutions, where possible, to implementation-related issues and concerns raised by Members." The draft text was criticised by developing countries and the US, though for different reasons. Developing countries -- in particular the Like-Minded Group including India, Pakistan and Malaysia -- claimed that the proposed implementation changes do not go far enough in meeting key demands (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest*, Vol. 4, Number 40, 24 October 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.24-10-00.htm>). For its part, the US urged that the Chair refer the various implementation issues to the respective subordinate WTO bodies. Developing countries reject this idea, as they are concerned that their demands will get bogged down in the various technical committees, and are pushing for movement on implementation at the political (General Council) level instead. Other developing countries, the EU, and Japan came out in support of the Chair's text, saying that it was the best that could be considered in the current situation. Further consultations will be held between now and a Special Session on Implementation to be held on 14 and 15 December, though WTO sources indicate that the issue is likely to drag on into next year. "US puts crimp in implementation effort," WASHINGTON TRADE DAILY, 1 December 2000; ICTSD Internal Files.

QATAR, CHILE INDICATE INTEREST IN HOSTING 2001 MINISTERIAL. Qatar has renewed its interest in playing host to the next WTO Ministerial Conference -- scheduled for late next year -- after announcing on 30 November that it was prepared to make 4,440 rooms available for attendees, as opposed to its original offer of just 2,800. The announcement comes just as WTO officials are reviewing possible sites in Chile after that country informally expressed interest in hosting the Conference. According to Qatar's finance ministry, the extra 1,600 rooms "will be provided in terms of luxury villas and cruise ships." The additional rooms would be needed in order to make space for the thousands of delegates, journalists and NGO representatives expected at the event. The last Ministerial Conference in Seattle in 1999 hosted over 7,000 accredited individuals. Qatar has also indicated that it will provide a room in its Exhibition Centre in Doha for 400-500 non-governmental representatives. The topic of dates and venue for the 2001 Ministerial will be discussed at this week's 7-8 December meeting of the General Council; sources indicate that the date will likely be before the Muslim holiday Ramadan, expected in the latter half of November. "Qatar again interested in hosting Ministerial, Chile also a possibility," WTO REPORTER, 4 December 2000; ICTSD Internal Files.

CROATIA BECOMES 140th MEMBER of WTO: After seven years of negotiations, on 30 November Croatia became the 140th Member of the WTO. In 1998 Croatia's exports amounted to \$4.5 billion with trade in primarily textiles, chemicals, foodstuffs, and fuels. In the same year it imported roughly \$8.4 billion in machinery, transport and electrical equipment, chemicals, fuels and lubricants, and foodstuffs. Croatia's GDP in 1999 was \$23.9 billion with agriculture accounting for

10%; industry, 24%; and services, 66%. WORLD FACT BOOK 2000, <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>; WTO PRESS RELEASE, 30 November.

ON THE MOVE

On 30 November, Liette Vasseur was elected chair of the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (NACEC)'s Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) for the year 2001. Ms. Vasseur is Associate Professor in the Department of Biology and Environmental Studies and coordinator of the Environmental Studies Program at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada. "We are fortunate to have a great team and I am sure that under the leadership and the experience of Ms. Vasseur, the year 2001 will be hugely successful," stated outgoing JPAC Chair Regina Barba. JPAC is an independent, volunteer body composed of 15 representatives from all three parties of the North American Free Trade Agreement (Canada, the US and Mexico). It provides advice and public input to NACEC's Council (made up of the three NAFTA environment Ministers) on any matter within the scope of NAFTA's environmental side-agreement. "Liette Vasseur elected chair of the JPAC," Info CEC, 30 November 2000.

EVENTS

ICTSD-Related Events

6 December, 10h00 to 13h00, Palais des Nations Room IX, Geneva, Switzerland: ICTSD/UNCTAD/South Centre PANEL DISCUSSION ON BIOTECHNOLOGY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES. The event, which precedes the First Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Cartagena Protocol in Montpellier on 11-15 December, is open to government delegations in Geneva, NGOs, academic and business communities. Panellists: Mr. Calestous Juma (Centre for International Development, Harvard University); Mr. Arturo Martinez (Department of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Argentina); Mr. A.H. Zakri (University of Kebangsaan Malaysia). For information and to RSVP contact: Jeanette Tantillo, ICTSD; tel: (41-22) 917-8356; email: jtantillo@ictsd.ch.

Coming Up This Week

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

4-9 December, Johannesburg, South Africa: PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS INC-5. This is the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee for an International Legally Binding Instrument for Implementing International Action on Certain Persistent Organic Pollutants; delegates will aim to finalise a treaty on persistent organic pollutants. For information contact: UNEP Chemicals (IRPTC); tel: (41-22) 979-9111; fax: 797-3460; email: dodgen@unep.ch; Internet: <http://irptc.unep.ch/pops/>. From IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal>.

5-7 December, Port of Spain, Trinidad: CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR. Event organiser is the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF). The Conference will focus on the importance of the international financial sector, with

emphasis on the Caribbean Region. For information contact: Calvin Wilson, CFATF; tel: (1-868) 623-9667; fax: 624-1297; email: cfatf@cfatf.org or calvin.wilson@cfatf.org.

7-8 December, Geneva, Switzerland: UN ECE MEETINGS. The UN Economic Commission for Europe will conduct preliminary meetings in advance of the Financing for Development high-level meetings that will take place in 2001. For information contact: Federica Pietracci, FFD Secretariat, United Nations; tel: (1-212) 963-1267; email: pietracci@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/analysis/ffd>.

7-8 December, Nice, France: INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL. The Intergovernmental Conference, which is now in its closing stages, has a very clear mandate, namely to prepare the Union for enlargement by amending the Treaty in four key areas: size and membership of the Commission; weighting of votes in the Council; extension of qualified-majority voting; and closer cooperation. Among the most contentious agenda items is an EC proposal to overhaul the current EU machinery for handling trade negotiations. For information visit the EC website at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/nice_council/index_en.htm.

11 December, New Delhi, India: LINKAGES BETWEEN TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT, TRADE AND LABOUR STANDARDS. For information contact: Srinivas Krishnaswamy, CUTS; D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302 016, India; tel: (91-141) 207-482-85; fax: 207-486 or 203-998; email: cutsjpr@jp1.dot.net.in ; Internet: <http://www.cuts-india.org> (This seminar was postponed from 12 October to the date stated).

11 December, 10 am, Room XX of the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland: 10TH RAUL PREBISCH LECTURE: "MARKETS, POLITICS AND GLOBALIZATION: CAN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY BE CIVILIZED?". Sponsored by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The lecture will be delivered by Gerald Karl Helleiner, Professor Emeritus, Department of Economics, University of Toronto, Canada. To obtain an invitation contact: Christine Cattell, Public Information, UNCTAD, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: (41-22) 917-5788.

11-15 December, Montpellier, France: FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL. For information contact: Cyrie Sendashonga, CBD Secretariat, World Trade Center, 393 St. Jacques Street, Suite 300, Montreal, Quebec H2Y 1N9, Canada; tel.: (1-514) 288-2220; fax: 288-6588; email: cyrie.sendashonga@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/> From IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal>.

11-15 December, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: 12TH MEETING OF THE PARTIES OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL. For information contact: the Ozone Secretariat; tel: (254) 262-1234; fax: 262-3601; email: ozoneinfo@unep.org; Internet: <http://www.unep.org/ozone/meet2000.htm>. From IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal>.

11-22 December, Bonn, Germany: FOURTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION: COP-4 For information contact: the CCD Secretariat, P.O. Box 260129, D-53153 Bonn, Germany; tel.: (49-228) 815-2800; fax: 815-2899; email: secretariat@unccd.de; Internet: <http://www.unccd.de>. From IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal>.

12 December, London, England: REAPING THE WHIRLWIND: ECONOMIC LIBERALISATION AND FOOD SECURITY IN ZIMBABWE. The case study is sponsored by CIIR. The guest speaker will be Mrs. Beatrice Mutetwa, Minister Counsellor at the Zimbabwe Permanent Mission to the UN and WTO. The speaker will offer her insights on Zimbabwe's negotiating position at the upcoming discussions on the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. For information contact: Fatima Jawara, Policy Officer, CIIR; Unit 3, Canonbury Yard, 190A New North Road, Islington, London N1 7 BJ; tel: (44-207) 354-0883; fax: 359-0017; email: ciir@ciir.org; Internet: <http://www.ciir.org>

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO 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.

5-8 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO CHINA ACCESSION WORKING PARTY. For information contact: Hans-Peter Werner, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5007.

6 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO SERVICES COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION (NEGOTIATIONS). For information contact: Nuch Nazeer, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5393.

6 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO SUB-COMMITTEE ON LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. For information contact: Lucie Giraud, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5075.

7-8 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING. Final annual session. On the agenda, *inter alia*: waiver requests; internal transparency and effective participation of Members -- preparation and organisation of Ministerial Conferences; DSU amendment proposal from 12 Members; date and venue of the fourth session of the Ministerial Conference; reports of the Special Sessions of the Committees on Agriculture and Services; and review of the reports from various WTO bodies. For information contact: Keith Rockwell, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5007.

11-13 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TEXTILES MONITORING BODY. For information contact: Luis Ople, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5374.

12 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY. On the agenda, *inter alia*: status report by the EC on bananas; request by Canada for recourse to Article 22.7 of the DSU (compensation and suspension of concessions) in the Brazil-Canada aircraft dispute; and request for establishment of a panel by the EC in the Chile-Swordfish dispute. For information contact: Nuch Nazeer, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5393.

Other Forthcoming Events

14-15 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING, SPECIAL SESSION ON IMPLEMENTATION. For information contact: Keith Rockwell, WTO Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5015.

15 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON BALANCE OF PAYMENTS - BANGLADESH. For information contact: Hans-Peter Werner, Information and Media Relations; tel: (41-22) 739-5286.

18 & 19 December, Geneva Switzerland: WTO WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF RUSSIA. For information contact: Hans-Peter Werner, Information and Media Relations; tel: (41-22) 739-5286.

22-24 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TEXTILES MONITORING BODY. For information contact: Luis Ople, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5374.

24 & 26 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TRADE POLICY REVIEW BODY - MOZAMBIQUE. For information contact: Lucie Giraud, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5075.

25-30 January, Porto Alegre, Brazil: WORLD SOCIAL FORUM. The goal of the Forum will be to strengthen South-North alliances between NGOs, unions and social movements. The four themes for the conference are: production of wealth and social reproduction, access to wealth and sustainability, civil society and the public arena, and democracy and citizen's power. For information contact: Secretaria do Forum Social Mundial, Rua General Jardim, 660 sala 81, CEP 01223-010, Sao Paulo - Capital- Brasil; tel: (55-11) 258-8914; fax: 258-8469; email: fsm2001@uol.com.br.

RESOURCES

If you have a relevant resource (books, papers, bulletins, etc.) you would like to see announced in this section, please forward a copy for review by the *BRIDGES* staff to hcameron@ictsd.ch . Submissions of publications to ICTSD's documentation centre would also be welcome (contact mgalvin@ictsd.ch).

WARNING: THE BASEL CONVENTION IS POORLY EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH POPs DESTRUCTION. By the Basel Action Network (BAN), 2000. In the lead up to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee meeting in Johannesburg (INC 5) which aims to finalise a treaty on persistent organic pollutants, BAN, an NGO watchdog on the Basel Convention, has released a Briefing Paper warning the POPs treaty negotiators that the Basel Convention alone will not be able to provide adequate environmental protection with respect to the destruction of POPs wastes and stockpiles. To obtain a copy contact: Basel Action Network (BAN), Secretariat, c/o Asia Pacific Environmental Exchange, 1827, 39th Ave. E., Seattle, WA, 98112, USA, tel/fax: (1-206) 720-6426; email: info@ban.org; Internet: <http://www.ban.org>.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES: CHALLENGING NEOLIBERAL ECONOMIC GLOBALISATION. By Friends of the Earth International (FOEI), 2000. This briefing is the result of a two-year dialogue within FOEI with participation by groups from across the globe. The paper argues that the neoliberal theory underlying so-called "free trade" is based on several false assumptions. To obtain a copy visit: http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/sustainable_development/publications/trade/. For a 5-page summary visit <http://www.foei.org>.

TOP 200 REPORT. By Sarah Anderson et al., Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), 2000. The report assesses the impact of the 200 largest corporations on economic activity. To obtain a copy visit: <http://www.ips-dc.org/top200.htm>. To receive a paper or email version contact: Sarah Anderson, tel. (1-202) 234 9382, email: saraha@igc.org.

THE QUALITY OF GROWTH. By Vinod Thomas et al, 2000. The book advocates broadening the policy framework to include human and natural capital in addition to physical capital and the agenda for action to go beyond the pace of growth to include the qualitative attributes of the growth process. To obtain contact: World Bank; tel: (1-800) 645-7247; fax: (1-703) 661-1501; email: books@worldbank.org; Internet: <http://www.worldbank.org/publications>.

THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR: REALIZING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF TRADE LIBERALIZATION. By Centro de Investigación y Planificación del Medio Ambiente (CIPMA), and World Resources Institute (WRI). The paper investigates the shift from an inward-looking development strategy toward an export-oriented, open trade regime, bringing along with it sustained high growth rates and significant increases in foreign direct investment. In order to analyse the issue, a new methodology, an expanded version of the traditional Domestic Resource Cost Approach, had been developed and is applied in a preliminary way to three Chilean export sectors. The study and its related hyperforum site (see the Electronic Resources Section) can be found at: www.cipma.cl/hyperforum/index.htm.

"Sovereignty and Multilateralism." By Kal Raustiala in **CHICAGO JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**, no. 1 & 2 (Fall 2000). The article is part of a symposium on "Trends in Global Governance: Do they threaten American sovereignty?" which took place in Washington DC last spring. The article comments on trade and environment agreements with regard to questions of sovereignty and democracy in international law-making.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WAYS FORWARD ON INSTITUTIONAL REFORM OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION. A discussion paper compiled by ActionAid, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Consumers International, FIELD, Oxfam, RSPB, WDM, 2000. The paper offers proposals for institutional reform of the WTO in six different areas. In addition, the UK NGO trade network offers its reservations about the substance, implementation and objectives of WTO agreements. To obtain a copy contact: Claire Melamed, Senior Policy Officer, Christian Aid, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT; tel: (44-207) 523-2148; fax: 902-0647; email: cmelamed@christian-aid.org.

Electronic Resources

INTERNET FORUM ON EXPORT MARKETS AND THE ENVIRONMENT - FOCUS: MINING IN LATIN AMERICA, created by CLAES - Centro Latino Americano de Ecología Social. The central goal of this forum is to discuss and identify policy, institutional, and governance reforms in

Latin America that can ensure that export industries yield positive benefits net of environmental impacts. The forum opens on 6 December. To access visit: <http://www.cipma.cl/hyperforum/>.

ENHANCING CIVIL SOCIETY INPUT INTO THE CGIAR. Electronic Conference in January 2001 in preparation for a workshop to be held in South Africa in May 2001. Organised by the Non-Governmental Organisations Committee (NGOC) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) with the support of the Ford Foundation. CGIAR is the key international body charged with research related to food production in developing countries. The objective of the Conference is to initiate a process to encourage and allow key actors in civil society to

participate in the discussions and debates about the future direction of the CGIAR system and to influence the system's research agenda. For registration send an email to: majordomo@rimisp.cl. For further information visit: <http://www.rimisp.cl/ngoc>.

EQUITY WATCH. Online climate change newsletter by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE). This newsletter continues after COP 6 to analyse the events and deals made, offering as well editorials and opinions. Equity Watch with a Southern perspective is designed to inform on issues pertaining to global warming, the COP negotiations and much more. To access visit: <http://www.cseindia.org/html/cmp/climate/ew/index.htm>.

FORUM ON ECOLIFESTYLES. Virtual discussion forum by the Sustainable Europe Research Institute. The goal is to create an open debate in the area of sustainable lifestyle. The forum is open until 15 January. To access visit: <http://www.seri.at/eis/forum>. For further information contact: Francois Schneider, SERI, Schwarzspanierstr. 4/8, A-1090 Wien, Austria, tel/fax: (43-1) 969-0728, email: francois@seri.at.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The SUSTAINABILITY IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY Conference (10-12 October 2001, ETH Zurich, Switzerland) is calling for papers on the issues "Environmental Information Processing" and "Sustainability in the Information Society". Abstracts must be submitted by 31 January 2001. For information contact: Regula Fussenegger, EMPA St.Gallen, Lerchenfeldstrasse 5 CH-9014 St.Gallen, Switzerland, tel: (41-71) 274-7441, fax: (41-71) 274-7862; email: regula.fussenegger@empa.ch; Internet: <http://www.empa.ch/iep01/>.

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