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BANGKOK CONFERENCE URGES EQUALISATION OF TRADE BENEFITS

The 10th quadrennial policy summit of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) concluded in Bangkok on 19 February, where delegates adopted a Declaration (the Bangkok Declaration) and a Plan of Action to address the needs of developing countries in the context of globalisation (to view visit http://www.unctad-10.org/index_en.htm). Through the Bangkok Declaration, UNCTAD was able to secure agreement that the benefits of trade liberalisation and globalisation must be more widely distributed and market access for the products of least developed countries (LDCs) increased. "A series of financial crises, including the recent Asian crisis, has highlighted the need to strengthen international cooperation efforts to improve the existing international financial system, with the view to pre-venting recurrence of crises, providing better mechanisms for crisis management and making it more conducive to trade and development," the plan of action stated.

UNCTAD was created in 1964 to promote trade and investment as a means to economic growth in poor countries. Unlike the WTO, it does not set or oversee any trading rules, focusing instead on research, technical assistance and capacity building. The quadrennial UNCTAD meeting is the

organisation's highest policy-making body, bringing together ministers from 188 countries to formulate major policy guidelines and deciding on the UNCTAD programme of work. The theme for UNCTAD X was "applying the lessons of the past to make globalisation an effective instrument for the development of all countries and all people".

Despite the absence of senior trade or diplomatic delegations from industrialised countries, the UNCTAD X meeting made clear that the North-South divisions that led to the failure of the Third WTO Ministerial in Seattle last November-December still exist. Algerian president Abdel Aziz Bouteflika, chairman of the Organisation for African Unity, criticised the current state of international trade relations, noting: "The have-nots are funding the haves."

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also commented on the imbalances in trade agreements and negotiations. "Currently, we think the developed countries are being extremely hypocritical," Oxfam senior policy advisor Michael Bailey said. "They are committed preachers of liberalisation for everybody else, but when it comes to the domestic markets a whole new series of arguments appear for why they shouldn't open up," he said. Martin Khor of Third World Network, a leading non-governmental organisation, left UNCTAD disappointed: "Lots of nice words but really no action on the things that really matter, like poverty," he stated.

On 13 February at the conference, trade ministers of the least developed countries (LDCs) met to discuss the challenges of globalisation. In a joint communiqué, they endorsed the need for a rules-based multilateral trading system to provide predictability and security of market access that would benefit LDCs. Ministers stressed that WTO agreements must take into account LDCs' special development needs and their limited capacity to implement resulting agreements. Further, Ministers called for thorough consideration of the problem of implementation of existing multilateral trade agreements faced by the LDCs with a view toward adopting corrective measures, including binding provisions on technical assistance. Ministers also called for the acceleration of the WTO process for LDCs seeking accession, calling for clear, simplified procedures that would allow for speedy completion of their accessions applications. The 48 least developed countries account for 0.5 percent of all world trade.

Amidst repeated disclaimers that UNCTAD X is not an appropriate forum for an official trade negotiating session, officials from industrialised countries weighed in on language within a joint plan of action on market access for LDC products. Mirroring previous proposals on the subject, they pushed for -- and received -- language that calls for duty-free access for "essentially all" LDC goods. Some developing countries said this language would inevitably limit the number of products granted duty-free access, and urged the US and EU to make a "moral commitment" to grant all LDC products duty-free market access. Talks on a draft plan of action also stumbled on the issue of EU agricultural subsidies, which UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero said were devastating LDC economies.

Summing up UNCTAD X, a number of observers noted that the conference showed the resilience of developing economies in pressing for a world trading system that addresses the needs of poor countries. "This was a good exercise in reality checks. No country in its right mind could be against a multilateral trading system that puts checks on the powerful, but the WTO also has to deliver for us too," said Nacer Benjelloun-Touimi, chair of the Group of 77 developing countries plus China.

"Communiqué by the ministers of trade of the least developed countries," 13 February 2000; "ESCAP wants social issues off trade talks," REUTERS, 16 February 2000; "West balks at specific

trade concessions at UN meet," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 17 February 2000; "UN trade meeting brings rich and poor no closer," NY TIMES, 20 February 2000; "UNCTAD no place to talk trade rules -US, EU officials," DOWN JONES NEWSWIRE, 13 February 2000; "UN meet tackles debt relief, market access for poorest nations," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 15 February 2000; "UNCTAD talks end in Bangkok," FINANCIAL TIMES, 21 February 2000.

MOORE DEFENDS WTO DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Addressing the UNCTAD X conference in Bangkok, WTO Director-General (D-G) Mike Moore called for more flexibility among WTO Members toward a new round of trade negotiations and defended the WTO process of decision-making by consensus. Mr. Moore said that WTO Members had made only limited progress on bridging their differences since the Third WTO Ministerial meeting in Seattle last November-December ended in failure. "Can I report to you I believe there has been a fundamental change of position since Seattle? No I can't. I believe there has been a mellowing and a softening but...until we are much closer and flexibility is shown will we be able to reconvene [for a new Ministerial]," Mr. Moore told UNCTAD X delegates.

Mr. Moore went on to address so-called institutional issues at the WTO, defending the WTO process of decision by consensus. He noted that a review of institutional transparency and other confidence-building measures are underway: "The consensus principle which is at the heart of the WTO system -- and which is a fundamental democratic guarantee -- must be upheld," Mr. Moore said.

At the Seattle WTO Ministerial, developing countries balked at the so-called Green Room process used by the D-G to build consensus among leading WTO Members. Some developing countries -- particularly the smaller delegations -- argue that the process lacks transparency, effectively excluding them from much of the bargaining process that results in agreements being handed to them as a fait accompli by major trading powers. The WTO is currently undertaking a review of institutional transparency expected to be completed by Easter.

Mr. Moore also announced that a package on capacity building and technical assistance for developing countries would be forthcoming by Easter.

At a high-level meeting last week on 17-18 February between US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, the two ministers agreed to develop a short-term action plan designed to convince developing countries that the WTO can address their needs. EU and US officials said they expect the package to be developed by April.

The EU and US also announced that they are working on a plan to help facilitate developing countries' implementation of WTO agreements on intellectual property, investment rules and customs valuation. US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky said any assistance would likely be provided for countries that have made an effort to implement the agreements, but have yet to be successful. For those developing countries that have made no effort towards implementation, Ms. Barshefsky warned that the US would not shy away from bringing complaints to the WTO dispute settlement system.

In parallel but separate discussions to those held at the UNCTAD X conference, Ms. Barshefsky said she and Mr. Lamy discussed a package of "enhanced duty-free treatment of least developed

country imports and treatment that is consistent with current practice in the US, which is largely quota-free." The two sides were silent on the issue of imbalances in existing Uruguay Round agreements, which developing countries say have delivered disproportionate benefits to developed countries.

"Moore defends decision by consensus," THE NATION (Thailand), 17 February 2000; "WTO chief defends decision-making by consensus," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 17 February 2000; "Le patron de l'OMC veut dépasser le clivage Nord-Sud," LA TRIBUNE, 17 February 2000; "WTO to have trade proposal package by April," JOURNAL OF COMMERCE, 15 February 2000; "WTO chief defends globalisation," BBC NEWS, 16 February 2000; "US, EU to work out WTO market access, implementation package," INSIDE US TRADE, 18 February 2000; "EU's Lamy to discuss WTO reform, trade rows in US visit," DOW JONES NEWSWIRE, 16 February 2000; "No new round in sight: WTO's Moore," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESS, 16 February 2000.

UNEP AND UNCTAD LAUNCH TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT TASK FORCE

At the UNCTAD X conference on 15 February, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) announced the launch of a capacity-building task force to assist developing countries in integrating their trade, environment and development policies so that they are mutually supportive of sustainable development. The Task Force also aims to contribute to consensus-building between developed and developing countries on complex trade and environment issues.

Among the new unit's key objectives are helping developing countries and economies in transition to better understand the linkages between trade, environment and development; assess the environmental, economic and social effects of trade liberalisation, as well as the impact of environmental policies on trade and development; develop and implement integrated trade and environment policies which promote trade expansion in order to maximise the net benefits to developing countries; and to participate effectively in trade/environment deliberations at the international level.

To reach its objectives, the Task Force will undertake joint research to address critical and emerging issues related to trade and environment. It also will convene joint seminars and briefing sessions for decision-makers on the linkages and complementarities between trade and environment. In addition, the group aims to hold joint national and regional training workshops and seminars for trade and environment officials and civil society. Finally, the Task Force will implement demonstration projects to assess the impacts of trade liberalisation and will develop and execute policy packages for promoting sustainable trade and economic policies.

For more information on the Task Force contact: Hussein Abaza, UNEP, tel: (41-22) 917-8298, e-mail: hussein.abaza@unep.ch; or Rene Vossenaar, UNCTAD, tel: (41-22) 917- 5679, email: rene.vossenaar@unctad.org

"United Nations launches capacity-building task force on environment, trade, and development," UNEP PRESS RELEASE, 15 Feb 2000; ICTSD Internal Files.

WTO ACCESSIONS UPDATE: CHINA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

EU and Chinese officials met in Beijing from 21-22 February to continue negotiations toward a bilateral accord on China's WTO accession. If the talks progress well, a third day may be added and EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy is on standby if there is a need for higher-level presence at the talks. In addition, on 22 February India and China signed a bilateral trade agreement, bringing China's accession to the WTO even closer.

China must still conclude agreements with about 20 WTO Members, including (in addition to the EU) Thailand and Switzerland. Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister and WTO Director-General-in-waiting Supachai Panitchpakdi earlier this month said he expects Thailand to conclude an agreement with China in March.

Meanwhile, a group of US lawmakers are expected to introduce on 28 February a non-binding resolution calling for Taiwan to be accepted into the WTO at the same time as China. The resolution also calls on the US Trade Representative to build support for concurrent admission of China and Taiwan amongst other WTO Members.

China is adamantly opposed to Taiwan's accession before its own as it considers Taiwan a rogue state. Taiwan has completed all its bilateral negotiations for WTO accession, with the exception of Hong Kong. Hong Kong is believed to be waiting for China's accession to be complete before signing off on a bilateral accession agreement with Taiwan.

Iran last week criticised the WTO for failing to launch negotiations around its accession to the organisation. WTO Members failed to reach the required consensus to establish a working party on Iran's WTO accession, the necessary first step in the formal WTO application process. Iranian officials criticised the process of decision-by-consensus at the WTO as lacking transparency and damaging the credibility of the global trade institution. "It is a case of an utmost lack of transparency in the WTO," Iran's deputy Minister of Commerce Mohammad Nahavandian said on 16 February. Mohammad Shariatmadari, Iran's Minister of Commerce, told UNCTAD X conference delegates that Iran had "arrived at the definite conclusion that political matters are influencing the prevention of accession of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the WTO." WTO Director-General Mike Moore denied rumours that the US had blocked the establishment of a working group on Iran's accession.

Oman trade officials on 5 February said that they anticipate the Sultanate's WTO accession to be concluded at a 29 February meeting of the WTO working party on Oman's accession. Oman launched its accession bid in 1996. Since then it has, amongst other measures, liberalised its foreign investment rules and agreed to open its financial services sector from 2003. Oman and Saudi Arabia remain the only two Arab states outside the WTO.

Regarding Saudi Arabia, a senior US trade official said the US supports Saudi Arabia's accession to the WTO. However, the official gave no indication as to how the two countries would resolve differences over what the US alleges are unfair subsidies provided by Saudi Arabia to the Saudi petrochemical industry. Saudi Arabia has thus far concluded bilateral accession talks with only one WTO Member - Japan.

"EU, China WTO talks set for February 21," REUTERS, 9 February 2000; "Thailand backs bid by China," BANGKOK POST, 15 February 2000; "Resolution to seek simultaneous WTO entry by

China, Taiwan," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 15 February 2000; "House resolution will urge Taiwan WTO accession with China's," INSIDE US TRADE, 18 February 2000; "Lamy on standby to secure EU-China deal on WTO," FINANCIAL TIMES, 22 February 2000; "Iran steps up attack on barriers to WTO membership," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 16 February 2000; "Oman confident of WTO membership after WTO meet," REUTERS, 5 February 2000; "US supports Saudi Arabia's bid for WTO accession," REUTERS, 15 February 2000.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS: NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE

A grouping of US environmental organisations, including the Centre for International Environmental Law, Friends of the Earth, the Sierra Club, and Defenders of Wildlife have issued a formal response to the US Trade Representative's requests for comment on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The FTAA would link economies from Alaska to Patagonia into an estimated US\$10 trillion economy. In a joint letter to the USTR, the groups stated that: "Ongoing negotiations for a [FTAA] will be one of the first tests of whether governments have learned the lessons of Seattle...We expect the US government to push for significant changes to both the negotiating process and the substantive trade rules being negotiated."

"The US government should break down the walls of secrecy and privileged corporate access that skew our government's trade agenda in an anti-governmental direction," said the group. The FTAA Committee on Civil Society -- which consists of official FTAA representatives only -- meets on 21-22 March in Miami, Florida.

In NAFTA-related news, the Commission for Environmental Co-operation (CEC) announced receipt of a submission on enforcement matters alleging a failure on the part of the Government of Mexico to enforce air pollution laws. The party submitting the complaint alleges that public health in Cumpas, Sonora, Mexico is being adversely affected by emissions of sulfur dioxide and particulate matter from the Molymex plant operating in that area. The CEC was established in 1994 to foster public participation in NAFTA affairs, including the review of US, Mexican and Canadian citizens' complaints of environmental infringements resulting from NAFTA.

Also in the news, the US and Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia agreed earlier this month to co-operate on the development and use of clean energy supplies. According to the Joint Statement on Development and Use of Sustainable Energy and Co-operation in Support of the Environment and Climate Change, the countries agreed to co-operate in three key areas: the development of new market-based power generation and improvements to existing energy infrastructure; the removal of barriers to energy trade and investment; and the promotion of institutional and infrastructure development to implement and measure climate change national action plans in an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and comply with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Baltic countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, and Romania earlier this month agreed to establish a Regional Steering Committee for Trade and Transport Facilitation in Southeast Europe (TTSFE), a program sponsored by the World Bank. The aim of the TTSFE is to reduce costs of trade and transport in the region and reduce smuggling and corruption at border crossings.

Meanwhile, the EU on 10 February unveiled plans for a so-called polluter pays law which would seek compensation from firms responsible for damage caused by environmental accidents, such as

the December 1999 oil spill off the coast of France. According to the EU white paper, all "dangerous or potentially dangerous" activities regulated by EU law will be subject to the liability regime. "We have now laid the foundations for an environmental liability regime for Europe. Polluters will effectively be held responsible for environmental damage they cause," EU Environment Commissioner Margot Wallstrom said. Environmental groups criticised the EU proposal for containing many loopholes that could render the regime impossible to implement. Ms. Wallstrom said a law to implement the polluter pays regime would likely be introduced in the second half of 2000.

Next week in News From The Regions: updates on regional news from Africa and Asia

"Mexico's final trade deficit \$5.36 billion in '99, as exports rose faster than imports," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 17 February 2000; "Six Balkan countries sign memorandum of understanding;" "Energy Secretary Richardson and Baltic leaders agree to cooperate on sustainable energy development," TRADE COMPASS, 11 February 2000; "Citizen submission update," CEC PRESS RELEASE, 10 February 2000; "US environmentalists take aim at Americas trade agreement," IPS, 10 February 2000; "Europe defines financial responsibility for environmental damage," GALLON ENVIRONMENT LETTER, 15 February 2000; "Europe defines who should pay for eco-damage," ENS, 11 February 2000.

TEXTILES: BRAZIL ROPES ARGENTINA INTO WTO DISPUTE

Brazil on 11 February notified the WTO that it will request the establishment of a dispute settlement panel to rule on its complaint against Argentina regarding temporary import quotas imposed by Argentina on cotton textile products. The Brazilian request will be considered at the 24 February meeting of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body.

The Brazilian complaint was first heard by the WTO's Textile Monitoring Body (TMB), which ruled in October 1999 that Argentina had failed to demonstrate serious damage to its textile industry from Brazilian cotton textile imports. Because the TMB has already ruled in the Brazilian complaint, Brazil can request the dispute settlement panel without having to go through the bilateral consultation process usually required before the establishment of a panel.

In related news, in a decision made public on 2 February, the TMB ruled that Argentina had failed to demonstrate serious damage to its textile industry from Pakistani imports and called on Argentina to lift import quotas imposed on Pakistani woven cotton fabrics. The TMB ruled that Argentina failed to show serious damage to its domestic producers in four of the five categories that it had targeted with import restrictions.

Under the WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing, importing countries are allowed to impose immediate provisional import restrictions on textile imports if an import surge threatens to cause "serious damage or actual threat thereof" to domestic industry. However, the importing country must show factual evidence of the damage to justify the imposition of restrictions.

In other news, Pakistani officials said earlier this month that Pakistan would make an attempt to take over as Asia's fifth-largest textiles exporter within three years, up from its present ninth place ranking. Textiles account for more than half of the country's US\$8 billion in export revenues. "A

market driven and globally competitive textile policy will be announced in April-May," Pakistan's commerce minister Razzak Dawood said on 9 February.

South African and Malawi trade officials continue efforts to resolve a trade dispute over Malawian textile exports to South Africa. S. Africa accused Malawi of acting as a transshipment point for garments produced in Asia which enter S. Africa with a "Made in Malawi" label. Under terms of a bilateral trade agreement between S. Africa and Malawi, 25 percent of Malawi textile exports to S. Africa enjoy duty-free access. S. Africa recently took steps to block imports of Malawian textiles, which Malawi textile officials argue is threatening the Malawi textile sector with collapse.

Taiwan's textile industry hopes its accession to the WTO (see related story in this issue) would help the sector recover from the export slump begun during the 1997 Asian economic crises. "After we join the WTO, market demand will increase," secretary-general of the Taiwan Textile Federation Liu Jai-tu, said last month. "The markets will open up and tariffs will be down," Mr. Liu said, referring to the eventual elimination of textile import quotas by the US, EU and other developed countries. The EU and US are large importers of Taiwanese textiles. More important, China's WTO accession would open up that market to more Taiwanese textiles. Already, over 30 percent of Taiwan's textile exports are sold to China. Taiwan's textiles producers are also hoping to benefit from its investment in value-added textile production, such as fibre producing, dying, spinning and weaving, which are more capital and technology intensive.

"Brazil seeks WTO panel ruling on Argentine cotton textile limits," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 17 February 2000; "WTO hits out again at Argentine textile restrictions; upholds Pakistani complaints," REGULATION, LAW & ECONOMICS, 4 February 2000; "Pakistan pledges to build up textile industry," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 9 February 2000; "Malawian textiles pose a problem," BUSINESS DAY (Johannesburg), 21 January 2000; "Taiwan's textile industry pins hopes on WTO accession," DOW JONES NEWSWIRE, 20 January 2000.

CORRIGENDUM

Last week's issue of *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest indicated in "Scepticism Over Ag Clouds Upcoming High-Level Meeting" that: "New Zealand minister of agriculture Bruce Ross said that substantive talks are not likely to get underway until summer 2001...Mr. Ross told the New Zealand parliament on 10 February." Please note that New Zealand's minister of agriculture is James Sutton, not Bruce Ross as reported. Bruce Ross is the Chief Executive Officer of New Zealand's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and was not speaking to the parliament but rather to a parliamentary select committee.

IN BRIEF

The Marine Stewardship Council on 11 February announced it has opened a US office based in Seattle, Washington. The MSC was set up in 1996 as a joint initiative by the World Wildlife Fund and consumer-goods giant Unilever to promote sustainable fisheries and responsible fishing practices worldwide. Its goal is to develop long term, market based solutions that meet the needs and objectives of both the environment and commercial interests. MSC currently exists as an independent entity based in London. In 1999 it launched the first global certification system for the sustainable management of fisheries. MSC officials said that a number of US west coast fisheries

would meet MSC certification standards for sustainable fishing. "Marine stewardship council opens US office," FISHLINK SUB-LEGALS, 11 February 2000.

In a brief filed with the US Supreme Court last week, the Clinton Administration said that the US must speak with "a single, national voice" in the global economy, and called on the Supreme Court to uphold a Federal Court ruling against a Massachusetts state law which imposes sanctions on firms doing business with Burma (Myanmar). In November 1998 a US Federal Court found the Massachusetts law unconstitutional, arguing that it intrudes on the federal government's exclusive authority to conduct foreign affairs. The Massachusetts law assesses a "pricing penalty" in the government bidding process against foreign firms doing business with Burma. The state instituted its penalty policy in protest against what it alleges are consistent, extensive human rights abuses by the governing regime in Burma. The law has been the subject of a now-suspended complaint by the EU and Japan, who argue that the Massachusetts' state law violates US commitments under the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA). The GPA -- to which the US is a party -- stipulates that government procurement decisions, including those at the state and local level, must be made on economic grounds only. "US blasts Mass. Action," BOSTON GLOBE, 16 February 2000.

Ecuador's President Jamil Mahuad warned domestic producers last month that the government would lower import tariffs to spur competition and help control prices of a range of locally produced goods. "If prices aren't reduced, the government is ready to permit free competition among quality products from neighbouring countries," Mr. Mahuad said. "Ecuador contemplates reductions on import tariffs," DOW JONES NEWSWIRES, 17 January 2000.

WTO IN BRIEF

US Republican lawmakers on 15 February said they were confident the US Congress would reject legislation calling on the US to withdraw from the WTO. Although no such legislation has yet been put forward, under Congressional rules a resolution may be introduced to Congress every five years calling for US withdrawal from the WTO. A resolution on the matter is widely expected within the next few months. "US Congress expected to re-affirm WTO membership," REUTERS, 15 February 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 Meetings**

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.

25 February: SPECIAL SESSION FOR THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN SERVICES. For information contact: Nuch Nazeer, WTO, tel: (41-22) 739-5393; email: nuch.nazeer@wto.org

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

- **Other Events**

6-8 March, Quito, Ecuador: INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS MEETING ON SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT OF TRADE LIBERALISATION. Organised by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in collaboration with Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano. For information contact: Mireille Perrin, WWF International, Trade and Investment Unit; tel: (41-22) 364-9026; fax: 364-8219; email: mperrin@wwfnet.org

14-15 March, Chiba, Japan: JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO HOST CODEX AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON BIO-ENGINEERED FOOD. The Committee aims to set up international rules that can promote fair trade through rational risk assessment based on scientific evidence. During the meeting, Japanese NGOs are organising to hold the "Codex NGO Forum in Chiba." The Codex NGO Forum will include demonstrations, panel discussions, press briefings and celebration of food diversity. To apply for public observer status contact: the office of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, email: codex@mhw.go.jp. For information on NGO activities contact: Mika Iba or Yoko Takase, email: mika@mb.kcom.ne.jp

27-31 March, Harare, Zimbabwe: THIRD SEATINI REGIONAL WORKSHOP. This workshop, hosted by SEATINI (Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Initiative), will analyse the aftermath of the WTO's Third Ministerial Conference in Seattle for Africa. It will examine multilateral trade agreements within the region and the dissemination of analytical and educational material on current trade negotiations in Geneva. For information contact: SEATINI, tel: (253-4) 792-681-6 ext. 276; fax: 251-648; email: seatini.zw@undp.org

April 17-28, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA: PARTICIPATORY PRACTICE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. Hosted by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) at Colorado State University, the course focuses on planning, project implementation, networking and evaluation. Participants learn techniques of mobilising community effort, generating appropriate technologies, building organisations, and establishing communication systems. Registration deadline outside of the US is 13 March; for US it is 27 March. Tuition for the course is \$US 1950 per each participant. To register contact: David Bartecchi, Registrar IISD, Civil Engineering Department, E.R.C., Room W108, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, 80522-2034, USA; tel: (1-970) 491-5754; fax: 491-2729; email: csvbd@villageearth.org; web: <http://www.villageearth.org/IISD/upcoming.htm>

- **Resources**

THE CHINA BUSINESS REVIEW, Jan/Feb 2000: This is a special WTO edition of the periodical. For subscriptions contact: The magazine of the US-China Business Council, 1818 N St., NW Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036-2470; tel: (1-202) 429-0340; fax: 833-9027 or 775-2476; web: <http://www.chinabusinessreview.com>

MAKE TRADE WORK FOR THE POOR. February 2000. This is Oxfam GB's position paper on UNCTAD on the occasion of its Tenth Conference in Bangkok. It posits that there is an urgent need for UNCTAD to take a lead in promoting new approaches to development that favour poorer people and countries, to act as a political counterweight to the WTO and to help developing countries promote reform of trade agreements. To order contact: Anni Long, Oxfam GB, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford, United Kingdom; tel: (44-1865) 312-127; fax: 312-245; email: along@oxfam.org.uk

UNCTAD HANDBOOK OF STATISTICS ON CD-ROM. 2000. This publication provides a comprehensive collection of data relevant to the analysis of world trade, investment and development. \$US 120, UN Sales No. E/F.00.II.D.1. To obtain contact: United Nations Publications/Sales Section, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; fax: (41-22) 917-0027; email: unpubli@un.org; web: <http://www.un.org/publications>; or from United Nations Publications, Two UN Plaza, Room DC2-853, Dept. PRES, New York, N.Y. 10017 USA; tel: (1-212) 963-8302; fax: 963-3489; email: publications@un.org; web: <http://www.unctad-10.org>

AGRICULTURAL TRADE BARRIERS, TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, AND THE INTERESTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. By Hans Binswanger and Ernst Lutz, The World Bank, Washington DC, USA. This paper was presented at a high-level round table at UNCTAD X. Available in pdf at: http://www.unctad-10.org/pdfs/ux_tdxrt1d8.en.pdf

Web Resource

For information about the WTO and congressional procedures involving China's accession to the WTO and the granting of permanent normal trading rights, see Tom Barry, "What's This Organisation (WTO): Glossary of Terms and Concepts about the World Trade Organisation," Part III, China and the WTO. Available at: http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org/wto_china.html

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