



ICTSD

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

BRIDGES

Weekly Trade News Digest

11 September 2001

ISSN 1563-003X

Volume 5, Number 30

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest is also available online and is updated every week. To subscribe to BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest, please visit the ICTSD website at

<http://www.ictsd.org/html/subscribe.htm>

If you require any assistance setting up your BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest subscription, please contact Hugo Cameron, Editor, by email at: hcameron@ictsd.ch, or by telephone at: (41-22) 917-8336.

• Little Progress In Doha Preparations.....	1
• Civil Society In Doha: Few Into The Glass Building, None Outside It.....	3
• UN Human Rights Body Criticises WTO Dispute Settlement Procedures.....	5
• Granting of Basmati Patent To US Firm Raises Traditional Knowledge Concerns.....	7
• GMO Update: Sri Lanka, China, EU-US.....	8
• In Brief.....	9
• WTO in Brief.....	10
• Events & Resources.....	12

LITTLE PROGRESS IN DOHA PREPARATIONS

A number of recent trade meetings, including a brief informal session of the WTO General Council (GC) on 4 September, has shown that much ground remains to be covered if WTO Members are to find convergence in views in the leadup to the WTO's Fourth Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar on 9-13 November. Most positions remain unchanged since Members last convened on Doha preparations on 30-31 July (see BRIDGES Weekly, 31 July 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/31-07-01/story1.htm>), and meetings in Mexico and Uruguay last week showed little rapprochement between Members' traditional demands.

GC Chair Stuart Harbinson used the 4 September meeting to further internal transparency and to call Members to order, and announced that he would hold a series of bilateral and plurilateral consultations that he expected would lead to a first draft of a Ministerial Declaration by the end of September. Referencing an article published in the Financial Times by former WTO Director-General and previous EU Commissioner Peter Sutherland, Harbinson called on WTO Members to be flexible and to work towards a broader approach that would allow for linkages and tradeoffs, particularly with respect to developing country concerns. Sutherland's article said that the 'Quad' group of developed country Members -- Canada, the EU, Japan, and the US -- must come up with a "worthwhile package" that could meet demands from developing countries or Qatar would be written off.

Harbinson said that implementation -- a central demand from developing countries -- would be a key element of his draft text. Implementation has been an ongoing source of friction between developed and developing countries, with many from the latter group saying that a number of elements from the Uruguay Round must be meaningfully resolved before negotiations can move forward around new issues. The EU, in particular, is pushing to have 'new' issues such as environment, government procurement, investment and competition brought into a new round of trade negotiations.

Key trade representatives meet in Mexico City

Implementation concerns figured squarely on India's agenda at a 31 August - 1 September meeting in Mexico City attended by 17 ministerial-level trade representatives from key WTO Members. In a press release issued following the meeting, India reaffirmed its position that "no new issues should be included in the negotiating agenda of the WTO, unless there is an explicit consensus on the subject, and that implementation concerns of the developing countries arising out of the non-fulfilment of the promises made in the Uruguay Round by the developed countries are addressed up front, before the Fourth Ministerial in Doha." The statement helped to dispel reports that suggested that India had succumbed to pressures from the Quad group to agree to a new round.

Talks on environment reportedly made some headway at the Mexican meeting. The EC held detailed conversations with others on what they would like to see emerge on environment in Doha, particularly with respect to the precautionary principle as it is embodied in the WTO's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Canada and the US, both of which have interests in exports of genetically modified agricultural products, would be likely to oppose strengthening this provision. "The EC wants to look at different provisions in different agreements," said one trade source. "They'd like to clarify environmental aspects of the WTO agreements with respect to jurisprudence, rather than support a separate agreement on environment. Surprisingly, this met with very little opposition from developing countries." Sources say agriculture and environment -- both of which continue to be contentious issues -- are expected to "go down to the wire" in Doha.

Assessments of the Mexican talks were mixed. While US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick and EC Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy referred to the meeting as an important step in the Doha process, one developing country ambassador said, "I don't think the Mexico meeting added anything substantial." WTO Director-General Mike Moore said that while he thought countries made attempts to accommodate each other, "there are still substantial differences in many areas." Trade sources furthermore indicated that the Mexico meeting was also notable for showing some softening in the line taken by the EC on agriculture. According to one WTO official, "they seem to be showing a bit more flexibility. The EC is now saying they'd like to see something that would change agriculture a little bit."

Cairns Group meets in Uruguay

Ministers from the 18-member Cairns Group of agriculture-exporting countries met on 4-5 September in Uruguay, and sent the message that they would continue to push strongly for agriculture reforms at Doha. Ministers stated that they would seek the "elimination" of export and other types of farm subsidies, as opposed to the EC's traditional stance that it will only agree to a "reduction" in subsidies. Cairns Group members said that the US -- which attended the talks but is not a member -- shared much of their approach.

An EU official speaking on behalf of EC Commissioner Lamy played down the Cairns Group's approach, saying that the positions of the EU and the US on this issue were much closer than they were at the last Ministerial Conference in Seattle in 1999, where Members were unable to agree on a final negotiating text. "Mr. Lamy has always thought that people won't show their full hand until Doha. It is not surprising to see other groups at this stage positioning themselves for the moment of truth in Doha," he said.

A meeting of ministers from a number of developing country Members later this month may serve to forward a cohesive developing country stance before Doha. In addition, a meeting in Singapore on 6 October will re-convene many of the Ministers who met in Mexico in a further attempt to forge consensus around a Doha text that would outline whether or how trade negotiations will proceed in future.

"Cairns group fails to dent Brussels' trade round targets," FINANCIAL TIMES, 7 September 2001; "Talks achieve progress, but differences remain on new trade round," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 1 September 2001; "US, EU see advances on road to new trade round," REUTERS, 1 September 2001; SAARC forges common front on WTO issues," INDIA EXPRESS, 23 August 2001; "Maran reiterates stand on no new round of talks at WTO," STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE, 5 September 2001; "Southeast Asian nations warn EU to keep environment, labour off WTO agenda," 16 August 2001; ICTSD Internal Files.

CIVIL SOCIETY IN DOHA: FEW INTO THE GLASS BUILDING, NONE OUTSIDE IT

On 10 August, WTO Director General Mike Moore sent a letter to 647 applicants eligible for representing the community of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) at the Forth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, on 9-13 November. Despite the warm welcoming words of the Director General, many civil society representatives expressed frustration and dissatisfaction about the limitations for participation and the allocation of slots.

According to a Friends of Earth International (FOEI) report on the WTO list circulated on 15 August, 'business initiated' NGOs (termed "BINGOs") outnumber 'public interest' NGOs ("PINGOs"). Of the 647 slots granted, less than 25 percent are allocated to developing country representatives. The presence in the list of some 35 'government-appointed' trade advisory committees ("GONGOs") drew strong criticism by some NGOs, including FOIE, which has issued an open letter to the WTO asking to refuse accreditation to these organisations seen as "commercial arms of the US government and [...] US industry".

According to several observers, another shortcoming of the list refers to multiple accreditations. In fact, some entities in the list have been offered multiple places while the great majority will only be allowed to bring one single representative to Doha. Nine organisations will share 53 places. In the end, due to multiple accreditations, the actual number of organisations invited to register for the Ministerial meeting is around 600.

During a recent tour in Latin America, Moore stated that "the difference [between Qatar and Seattle] is this: Qatar will not allow people to enter unless they have a visa, and you can't get a visa unless you have accommodation, and we only have 4 400 rooms." Moore also rejected rumours concerning the choice of Qatar as been motivated by security reasons or by the need of confidentiality during the talks. At the time when Doha was chosen as the base for the Ministerial, many NGOs had expressed concern regarding the difficulties anticipated in accessing the Arab nation (see BRIDGES Weekly, 30 January 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story4.30-01-01.htm>).

A Joint Civil Society Delegation to Doha?

Despite proposals by some NGOs to boycott the Ministerial meeting, 'public interest' NGOs seem unwilling to leave the entire representation of the non-governmental community to the 'business initiated' NGOs. Alternatively, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) has proposed to pool NGO slots together and give room to a Civil Society Delegation to Doha. The formal proposal (available at http://www.wtowatch.org/library/admin/uploadedfiles/Proposal_for_a_Civil_Society_Delegation_to_Doh.htm) suggests that "some of the criteria for such a delegation could include North-South balance, ensuring expertise in the core issues, and a balance from different constituencies, as well as advocates, activists, media experts, etc."

Although the proposal was enthusiastically welcomed by some, others have pointed out the difficulties of achieving a balanced and all-encompassing delegation. Steve

Krezman, of the Institute of Policy Studies in Washington commented "the devil is in the details". If a unified delegation is to work, he said, "it needs to be handled in an extraordinarily careful way".

Protests might pave the road to Doha.

According to the Arab NGO Network for Development, 3000 delegates of civil society organisations will convene in Beirut from 5 to 8 November for the World Forum on the WTO (see <http://www.worldforumbeirut2001.org/>) for three days of meetings, workshops, teach-ins and cultural events concerning the WTO.

The Lebanese Platform on the WTO, which is co-hosting the Forum, gathered more than 200 NGOs around signing "Our world is not for sale. WTO: Shrink or Sink" petition (available online at: <http://www.canadians.org/campaigns/campaigns-trade-notforsale.html>). Under this flag, hundreds of organisations -- Third World Network, Friends of the Earth and Public Citizen are among the signers -- are planning coordinated actions before and during the Doha Ministerial.

Greenpeace International will send its flagship, the Rainbow Warrior, to Doha during the Ministerial. The boat will probably cross the Qatari water together with an "Our world is not for sale Flotilla" funded by FOEI, International Forum on Globalisation, Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, Via Campesina and the World Forum of Fisher People. The Common Front on the WTO (CFWTO) will shortly send "Quebec to Qatar" caravans across Canada, with the goal of awakening grassroots towards the "Day of Action" on 9 November.

"647 Non-Governmental Organisations eligible to attend the Doha ministerial," WTO press Release, 10 August 2001; "The WTO ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar: Note on the General Composition of NGO Representation", FRIENDS OF EARTH INTERNATIONAL, 15 August 2001; "No room at the inns of Qatar for visaless WTO protestors," REUTERS, 31 August 2001; "A Proposal for a Civil Society Delegation to Doha," IATP, August 2001; "'All-star protest team at WTO? Groups would unify as Åß voice against globalisation," CHICAGO TRIBUNE, 20 August 2001; "International Call of Action, Our world is not for sale," Friends of Earth Europe; "Greenpeace criticises WTO over NGO restrictions at its fourth ministerial conference" GREENPEACE PRESS RELEASE, 13 August 2001; "Curb on WTO charity reps," THE GUARDIAN, 14 August 2001. ICTSD Internal Files.

UN HUMAN RIGHTS BODY CRITICISES WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES

In a report issued at its 53rd Annual Session (30 July - 17 August), the UN Subcommission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights concluded that the WTO's dispute settlement procedure is in flagrant violation of basic legal tenets such as equal access to justice, impartiality and independence. In separate resolutions on globalisation, services liberalisation, and intellectual property rights (IPR), the UN body also called upon the WTO and its Members to take human rights implications of globalisation more into consideration, particularly when convening for the Doha Ministerial in November this year.

In its report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/2001/10) the Subcommission elaborates that, as of March 2001, out of 228 complaints submitted to the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) only 59 came from developing countries, while Least-Developed Countries had not submitted any complaints. According to the report, these figures "reveal the reality that it is the developed countries that are the main stakeholders and protagonists in the trade arena." This is supported by the "current tendency to appoint government officials, including diplomatic representatives of Members serving in Geneva, as panellists". This is seen as "a serious flaw that gravely erodes the credibility of the DSB" because these government officials tended to be from developed countries as only those governments generally had the resources to pay the appointed officials. Furthermore, the report states that appointing government personnel to a judicial body violates fundamental principles of natural justice and division of power.

With a view to transparency the report goes on to criticise that panel hearings are principally closed and that the opinions expressed by individual panellists are anonymous. Regarding equal legal access, the report argues that due to high costs of specialised international law firms the poorest countries are de facto blocked from making use of the DS regime at the WTO. Although Article 27.2 requests the WTO Secretariat to provide legal advice to developing countries involved in a dispute, the report regards this assistance as inadequate since "providing such services is at odds with the requirement of neutrality of the WTO staff". These services are also only available after a dispute has arisen, but not beforehand. Therefore, the paper concludes, a "neutral scheme providing 'legal aid' and technical know-how has to be made available" for developing countries.

A WTO official responded to this criticism by saying that upon request by a developing country party to a dispute with a developed country, at least one of the generally three panellists will be from a developing country - as provided by the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU) Article 8.10. Regarding the imbalance between developed and developing countries' submissions of complaints the official pointed to the fact that there was also a corresponding disparity in the two camps' participation in world trade.

TRIPs/GATS and human rights

The Subcommission reiterated that the implementation of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) is in conflict with other basic rights such as the right to self-determination, food, housing, work, health, education, as

well as technology transfer to developing countries. Moreover, the Subcommission stressed the need to protect traditional knowledge, cultural values of indigenous people, in particular against 'bio- piracy' and reduced access for indigenous people to their own genetic, natural, and cultural values.

Regarding the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), the Subcommission emphasised the importance of the "availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of basic services" such as medical services, education, and other social services. The UN body thus called upon WTO Members to integrate human rights considerations in their domestic IPR legislation and to ensure -- particularly in the context of the forthcoming November Ministerial -- that the implementation of the TRIPS and GATS Agreements at the WTO did not negatively affect the "enjoyment of human rights".

In addition, the Subcommission requested the UN Human Rights High Commissioner to seek observer status with the WTO TRIPS and Services Councils.

The Subcommission's documents can be viewed at <http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/FramePage/Docs+53SubCom?OpenDocument>.

"Developing Countries: WTO Challenges UN Subcommission Report On Dispute Settlement Panels, TRIPS Accord," WTO REPORTER, 10 August 2001. ICTSD Internal Files.

GRANTING OF BASMATI PATENT TO US FIRM RAISES TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE CONCERNS

In an ongoing dispute at the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) between the Texas-based company RiceTec and the Indian government, India lost its battle against the patenting of the world famous Basmati (fragrant earth) rice when the USPTO granted patents to three hybrid strains developed by the US firm.

On 14 August, the USPTO finally upheld a patent granted to RiceTec for three "novel rice lines", which -- according to USPTO -- are "similar or superior" to Basmati traditionally grown in India's and Pakistan's Himalayan foothills. Although USPTO's order does not allow for the use of the word 'Basmati' as a trademark, RiceTec can now sell its product as "Bas 867" and label it a "superior basmati rice".

The US biotech firm was granted a patent by the USPTO in 1997 for its aromatic 'Basmati' rice, which it grows and exports, but warnings from several NGOs concerning the protection of biodiversity resources and traditional knowledge led the Indian government to challenge RiceTec's patent (see BRIDGES Weekly, 23 February 1998; <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/23-02-98/story4.htm>). Due to this opposition, RiceTec

is now only left with five out of originally 20 claims relating to the three new rice lines and their features such as the method of cooking and their starch properties.

The patented invention is now regarded to be free of "prior art" -- a general condition for patentability of an invention --, although India provided evidence that not only the grain but also the seeds and plants which produce the grain have been bred and cultivated in India and Pakistan. "No variety of basmati rice can be developed without the original germplasm. At the very least, India should get a share as royalty of any such variety," a member of the India's Planning Commission stated.

Indian Government officials furthermore expressed their concerns that, technically, RiceTec could now block Indian exports of genuine Basmati rice by claiming infringement of the granted patent. RiceTec, however, disputed this concern explaining that the USPTO's order "had resolved the dispute favourably for both India and RiceTec: the order had provided to RiceTec protection from domestic competitors, while assuring India and Pakistani Basmati exporters that their interests won't be hurt." Indian Minister of State for Commerce, Mr. Digvijay Singh, principally shared this view by saying the Basmati case did "not prevent India from selling improved strains of the grain" allowing it to "also develop their own variety of basmati rice and export it."

According to an Indian food security campaigner, however, the granted patent is a "blatant case of biopiracy and threatens the genetic material, biological resources and indigenous innovation of farmers around the world." Henceforth, the "surviving claims by RiceTec now need to be challenged as part of the larger movement against patents on life forms," he added -- alluding to the discussion at the WTO on how to revise TRIPS Article 27.3(b) [Patentable Subject Matter]. Intellectual Property Rights activists furthermore criticised that the USPTO allowed RiceTec to amend two of its claims before giving its ruling without providing the Indian government with the possibility to respond to these changes.

Activists also claim that the basmati case is a clear violation of the geographical indication clause of TRIPS (Article 22) which covers the protection of goods whose "quality, reputation or other characteristics" are "essentially attributable" to their geographical origin. India is now in the position to make all-out efforts to protect its products of specific geographical indications such as Basmati rice through the legal framework available under the recently adopted Geographical Indications Act. However, qualified protection under TRIPS Article 23 is only granted to wines and spirits although Article 24(1) provides for renegotiations of Article 23 in order to expand its protection to further geographical indications. But according to food security experts, such an extension to products such as Basmati and Darjeeling tea "have so far been opposed by the developed countries."

"Govt Allays Fears Over Basmati Patent," THE TIMES OF INDIA, 21 August 2001; "India Still Sifting Grain From 'Basmati' Chaff," SUNS, 28 August 2001; "Basmati Rice Patent Battle," IPSNEWS, 20 August 2001; ICTSD Internal Files.

GMO UPDATE: SRI LANKA, CHINA, EU-US**Sri Lanka puts GM ban on hold**

Sri Lanka's Health Ministry last week announced its decision to indefinitely postponed plans to restrict imports of genetically modified (GM) foods. The ban requiring 21 categories of food imports to be GM free was supposed to enter into force on 1 September after it had been suspended on 1 May following a request by the WTO that the country should give its trading partners 60 days to prepare for the restrictions (see BRIDGES, 3 July 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/03-07-01/story4.htm>). "We don't know whether it will ever see the light of day," a senior Health Ministry official said. Local business groups had urged the government to wait until 2003 when the UN Codex Alimentarius Commission is scheduled to release international standards for GM foods. The proposed ban had also been strongly criticised by US officials as not scientifically credible.

China likely to gradually phase in GM rules

According to China's top trade negotiator Long Yongut, China is likely to allow grace periods for compliance with its rules on GM food while authorities will work out the details of the policy. "We have to take some time to lay out the detailed implementation rules," he said. "Until that, we are going to make sure this law will not become a hurdle to trade." China's rules, which came into effect on 23 May, require mandatory safety assessment of GM products before they are approved, as well as labelling of such products. When the rules were announced, however, Beijing had failed to issue implementation details, frustrating traders at home and abroad who have been reluctant to book orders until the rules are spelt out more clearly. Some traders have speculated that China might use the new rules to control imports after its WTO accession, which is expected to result in a flood of grain imports due to easing tariffs.

US attacks EU GM labelling proposals

The US has sharply criticised the European Commission's proposals for labelling and traceability of GM products which US officials say could cost US companies up to US\$ 4 billion a year in export earnings. Undersecretary of State Alan Larson described the proposed rules as "trade disruptive and discriminatory". For instance, the regulations would required soybean oil to be labelled as a GM product, which European cheeses and wine made with biotechnology enzymes would not be covered. "There are potential WTO concerns about how it is structured now", he concluded. US trade officials have also attacked the 1 percent labelling threshold for accidental presence of GM materials. The EU for their part is defending the proposed rules. "We believe it is a good law which is a solid base for fostering acceptance and consumer confidence in genetically modified products", said Commission spokeswoman Beate Gminder. The new regulations would require all GM foods to be labelled, including foods derived from but no longer

containing GMOs, such as highly refined products (e.g. maize or soy oil) where the original GMO content is removed during the production process (see BRIDGES Weekly, 31 July 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/03-07-01/story4.htm>). To take effect, the rules will have to be approved by the EU governments and European Parliament. If approved, they should enter into force by 2003 at the latest.

"Sri Lanka's GM food ban delayed indefinitely," REUTERS, 4 September 2001; "China says to allow grace period for GMO trade," REUTERS, 23 August 2001; "US pressing EU to change GMO rules", REUTERS, 26 August 2001; "US may provoke row over GM food labelling," THE INDEPENDENT, 14 August 2001; "EU defends new rules on genetically modified food," REUTERS, 27 August 2001.

IN BRIEF

AARHUS CONVENTION SET TO COME INTO FORCE. The Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters will come into force on 30 October following ratification by Armenia. The UN Economic Commission for Europe Convention aims to strengthen the rights of citizens to be informed on environmental matters, in order to prevent governments from hiding sensitive environmental information as was the case in the 1986 Chernobyl explosion. Jeremy Wates, secretary of the Convention said "the convention is not only a powerful weapon in the struggle to protect the environment, but also a tool for democracy". He added that "especially in countries which have recently introduced democratic systems, it is of crucial importance to establish principles of transparency, accountability and involvement of civil society to ensure stability and security". "Treaty To Come Into Force In October," UN WIRE, 10 August 2001.

WTO IN BRIEF

FRANCE CAUTIONS ONE-YEAR-DELAY MAY HELP TRADE ROUND. The French State Secretary of Commerce Francois Huwaert warned last week that the decision to launch a new round of trade liberalisation talks might need to be delayed until next year because little had changed since WTO Members failed to reach an agreement on a negotiating agenda at the 1999 Ministerial Meeting in Seattle. He added that the one-year delay would give negotiators extra time to take into account the trade needs of the world's poorest nations. The Minister's words are considered by some as a sign of his government's growing uneasiness about plans to agree on new a round of trade talks, which would focus also on agriculture, a highly sensitive issue for France. Some speculate that the French government is trying to avoid angering the country's farmers ahead of the presidential elections next May. Huwaert, however, dismissed these speculations at a press conference in Hanoi on Monday. "We consider that as far as possible our priority is to launch the new round," he said. "We consider that the new round, the next round, should be well-balanced between market access issues and new issues...and regulation in general," he added. "France warns on prospects of new trade

round," FT, 8/9 September 2001. "France Wants to Delay Trade Talks," AP, 7 September 2001; "France says wantsto see new global trade round," REUTERS, 10 September 2001.

CHINA AND TAIWAN ON HOME STRETCH TO WTO ACCESSION. The Working Group on China's Accession to the WTO is expected to approve the country's membership at their next meeting on 13 September, thereby ending China's 15-year struggle to join the trade body. Taiwan's entry is expected to be accepted by a separate working group the following day. These agreements would then be formalised at the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Qatar in November. China and Taiwan would become Members of the WTO 30 days after they have ratified the accords in their own countries. Only Mexico has so far failed to reach a bilateral pact with China, but the lack of an agreement is not expected to hold up the country's accession. BRIDGES Weekly will report on the outcomes of the meetings in an upcoming issue. "WTO sets approval date for China's application," IHT, 5 September 2001.

SAARC MEMBERS MEET TO FORMULATE COMMON POSITION FOR DOHA. Commerce ministers of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) met in New Dehli, India, on 23 August to draft a common position ahead of the WTO Ministerial Conference in Qatar. Ministers stressed that previous trade talks had "further accentuated the inequalities between the developed and developing countries". "This growing development deficit should receive primacy in all future work programmes in the WTO since a key to sustained global economic growth lies in unlocking the growth potential of developing country," they added. Discussions at the one-day meeting focused, inter alia, on agriculture, services and labour standards -- contentious topics for SAARC countries. In their joint declaration, ministers called on developed countries to eliminate trade subsidies, non-tariff barriers and other protectionist measures, as well as greater global copyright protection of traditional resources, such as medicinal plants, food items and apparel indigenous to the region. "South Asian nations unite to ask for greater share of global trade," AFP, 23 August 2001.

PARLIAMENTARIANS PLAN DOHA INITIATIVE. The European Parliament in Strasbourg hosted a meeting on 5 September to prepare for an expected large parliamentary gathering this November at the Fourth WTO Ministerial Meeting in Qatar where parliamentarians are expected to push for the creation of a parliamentary assembly for the WTO. Two meetings earlier this year, in April (under the auspices of the European Parliament) and June (under the auspices of the Inter- Parliamentary Union), discussed parliamentary involvement in the WTO. Both meetings called for further work in Qatar, although there are competing visions as to the structure and mandate of any future parliamentary body. WTO Director-General Mike Moore favours the Inter-Parliamentary Union as host of future meetings of parliamentarians. The group led by the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), in contrast, favours a more robust independent "standing body." The 5 September meeting in Strasbourg recommended modalities for the Qatar meeting, which will include NGO participation and will be organised following a joint letter of invitation from both parliamentary groups. ICTSD Internal Files.

CURRENT STATUS OF SADC PREPARATIONS FOR DOHA. Ministers of the fourteen countries comprising the Southern African Development Community (SADC) met on 4 September in Balaclava, Mauritius, to reach consensus and form a common SADC position in the build up to the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference. Mauritian Finance Minister Paul Berenger said he was confident in the ability of SADC to agree on "a common stand on what to target at Doha and on issues such as industrial tariffs and agriculture in particular". The meeting succeeded a three-day SADC annual summit held on August 14 where member countries vowed to accelerate regional integration to develop a viable internal market and industrial base, thereby fostering investment in the SADC region. The summit included among others discussions on the early realisation of a free trade zone, streamlining of the bloc's institutions and fight against poverty and AIDS. The fourteen member states of the SADC are: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Southern African States Seek Unity at Trade Talks", REUTERS, 4 September 2001; "Annual Summit of Southern African Economic Bloc Closes", Xinhua News Agency, 14 August 2001.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

EVENTS

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>.

Coming Up This Week

10-12 September, Interlaken, Switzerland: LINKING WORK, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE: LEARNING FOR SURVIVAL AND GROWTH. Organised by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. For further information, contact: DDC, Suisse; tel: (41-79) 310 85 84; fax: 412 89 72; email: info@workandskills.ch; Internet: <http://www.workandskills.ch/>.

10-28 September, Geneva, Switzerland: JOINT FAO-WHO MEETING ON PESTICIDES RESIDUES. The 26th session of the joint meeting of the FAO Panel of Experts on Pesticide Residues in Food and the Environment and the WHO Expert Group on Pesticide Residues. This meeting is expected to produce reports and monographs summarising the assessments of certain pesticides. For further information, contact: Amelia Tejada, FAO; tel: (39-6) 5705-4010; fax: 5705-6347; email: Amelia.Tejada@fao.org; Internet: <http://www.fao.org/waicent/FaoInfo/Agricult/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/events/c.htm>. From Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

11-13 September, Trieste, Italy: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GLOBALIZATION OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT - CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: This meeting is being co-organised by Harvard University's Center for International Development and Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, and the Third World Academy of Sciences. For further information contact: Derya Honca, Center for International Development, Massachusetts; tel: (1- 617) 495-1923; email: m_derya_honca@harvard.edu; Internet: <http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidbiotech/r&dconf/description.htm>.

12-15 September, Loughborough, UK: 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT OF ALIEN PLANT INVASIONS (EMAPi). Issues to be discussed include, inter alia, effective control and management strategies; mechanisms of invasion; impacts of invasions including socio-economic impacts and risk assessment; and legislation and guidelines for prevention/containment strategies. For further information, contact: Dr Lois Child, Centre Co-ordinator, Centre for Environmental Studies, Loughborough University, Loughborough LE11 3TU, UK; email: L.E.Child@lboro.ac.uk; Internet: http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/cens/invasives/call_for_papers.htm.

14-15 September, Monterrey, Mexico: ROUND TABLE FOR CLEANER PRODUCTION. The meeting is organised by the Mexican Center for Cleaner Production. The INNOVA Center will act as the host organisation in cooperation with other organisations such as Nacional Financiera (NAFIN). The event is a forum for many working proposals in the area of Cleaner Production. It is expected that some 400 participants will attend this event that will have an opportunity to hear, discuss and share ideas on the work that different organisations are doing in Cleaner Production and Sustainable Development. For further information, contact: INNOVA, INNOVA Center for Sustainable Development; email: innova@itesm.mx.

17 September, Ferney, France: TRIPS ON TRIAL: WHY THE WTO'S PATENT REGIME THREATENS LIVES. Speakers will share ideas on TRIPS implementation. The focus will be on issues concerning the upcoming WTO Ministerial Meeting in November. For further information contact: The Berne Declaration Zurich office, tel: (41 1) 277 7000; fax: 277 70001; email: info@evb.ch.

18 September, Brussels, Belgium: ISSUE GROUP MEETING. Organised by the European Commission's Directorate General for Trade, this is a biannual meeting between the EU Civil Society and business organizations, and the EU Trade Commissioner. The agenda focuses on: (1) the current outlook for a launch of a New Round and preparations for the WTO Ministerial Conference, and (2) sustainable development and trade policy. For further information, contact: Haitze Siemers, email: Haitze.Siemers@cec.eu.int.

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. For further information on WTO events contact: WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org.

11 September, Geneva, Switzerland: SUBSIDIES AND COUNTERVAILING MEASURES COMMITTEE.

12 & 14 September, Geneva, Switzerland: US TRADE POLICY REVIEW. On A briefing and press conference will be held at the UN on Friday.

13 September, Geneva, Switzerland: CHINA ACCESSION WORKING PARTY. Press conference in Room B, WTO at 12 pm..

13 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS.

14 September, Geneva, Switzerland: CHINESE TAIPEI ACCESSION WORKING PARTY.

17 September, Geneva, Switzerland: COMMITTEE ON ANTI-DUMPING PRACTICES.

17 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT.

17 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WORKING PARTY ON STATE TRADING ENTERPRISES.

Other Forthcoming Events

20 September, Amsterdam, Netherlands: HOW FREE IS TRADE - WHO SETS THE STANDARDS? An international conference organised by the South-North Federation (SNF). The SNF will explore issues related to the next Ministerial Conference of the WTO (scheduled for November in Qatar). Participants will make recommendations to representatives of the Dutch government, politicians and NGOs who will attend the Qatar meeting. The following issues will be discussed in workshops and expert meetings: market access for Least-Developed Countries, investment treaties, environmental standards and WTO, social standards and WTO, access to medicines, baby food marketing, and trade in health services. For further information contact: Inez Staarink; tel: (31-70) 376 5523; email: snf@artifexsupport.com; Internet: <http://www.hivos.nl/>.

24-26 September, Hamburg, Germany: INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY AFTER COP6. Hosted in co-operation of the Hamburg Institute, the Hamburg University and the Hamburgische Electricitäts-Werke AG (HEW). Topics to be covered include: international flexibility in current climate, foundations of an efficient global climate regime, long-term integration of developing countries, the role of pro-active stakeholders, the way ahead for climate policy after COP 6. For more information: tel: (49-04) 4283-4479; email: climate@hwwa.de; Internet: <http://www.hwwa.de/climate.htm>.

25 September 2001, Geneva, Switzerland: A SKILLSHARE SEMINAR ON ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS AS APPLIED TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE. Organised by the Asia-Pacific Environmental Exchange (APEX), in coordination with IATP, FOEI, and CIEL through their joint Trade Information Project (TIP). The seminar aims to introduce the multidisciplinary field of Ecological Economics to staff of NGOs, development organisations, and international institutions working on issues relating to international trade; and to provide NGO staff with the tools, concepts, and policies of ecological economics for their trade-related work and campaigns. The meeting will be held in Room 4 of the International Environment House, Chemin des Anémones 11, 1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 pm. RSVP to: Dave Batker of APEX at , or to Vice Yu (FOEI), Shefali Sharma (IATP), or Matthew Stilwell (CIEL) c/o the Trade Information Project (TIP)

28-29 September, Geneva, Switzerland: NGO MEETING ON TRADE AND AGRICULTURE. This 2-day meeting discusses the state of negotiations on agriculture at the WTO in the context of the 5th anniversary of the World Food Summit. The meeting's agenda consists of: an update and review of negotiations on agriculture at the WTO; an introduction to the NGO planning for the World Food Summit; presentation of case studies from developing countries; and a discussion of wider implications of the production model encouraged by WTO rules. A final half-day session will allow smaller groups to meet on specific issues related to trade and agriculture. For further information contact: Jayson Cainglet; email: str2000@hotmail.com; cell phone: +41.78.872.4686. Or, contact: Sophia Murphy at IATP; email: smurphy@iatp.org; tel: (612) 870 3454; fax: (612) 870 4846.

3 October, Manhattan, New York: THE GREENING OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION? Despite a history of freeing trade at all costs, the WTO Appellate Body affirmed a French ban on asbestos imports, thus allowing a member nation to restrict trade on public health grounds. Speakers, including Steve Charnovitz, Robert L. Howse, Petros C. Mavroidis, and Amelia Porges, will discuss the impact of this decision. Limited seating. For further information, contact: Michael Rhee; tel: (212) 431 2865; email: mrhee@nyls.edu.

5-8 November, Beirut, Lebanon: THE WORLD FORUM ON THE WTO. This three- day forum is organised by The Arab NGO Network for Development and The Lebanese Platform on the WTO. The forum is part of the anti-corporate globalisation movement which is a coalition of labour, environmental, cultural, women's, and political organizations that are resisting the call for a new round of negotiations in the WTO in

Qatar through mass mobilization and demonstration. The international forum aims to hold peaceful mass meetings and rallies, in addition to panels and discussions on issues that are being addressed in the WTO and related agreements. A special emphasis will be put on the participation of representatives of civil society in Arab countries. For further information, contact: Arab NGO Network for Development; tel: (961 1) 319366; fax: 815 636; email: annd@cyberia.net.lb; Internet: <http://www.worldforumbeirut2001.org>.

RESOURCES

REPORT ON THE TRIPS AGREEMENT AND ACCESS TO MEDICINES IN CONTEMPLATION OF THE WTO DOHA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE. By Frederick M. Abbott, Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva. This paper aims to assist in formulating recommendations regarding a possible Doha Ministerial Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health, or a near-term formal interpretation of the TRIPS Agreement, and to raise issues that might more appropriately be the subject of a longer-term review of the TRIPS Agreement. It includes specific recommendations for developing negotiators regarding articles 7 and 8 of the TRIPS Agreement as well as on issues related to Compulsory Licensing; Parallel Importation; Exceptions to Rights Conferred; Granting of Patents; Trademarks and Copyrights; Data Protection; and an annex on the economics of public health, and price formation and R&D issues related to pharmaceutical products. For further information, contact Jonathan Hepburn, email: quno1@quno.ch. The paper will be available online shortly (<http://hostings.diplomacy.edu/quaker/>).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: PERFORMANCE, PROSPECTS AND POLICY ISSUES. Published by UNCTAD. The report discusses how declining aid and terms of trade, mounting debt, and ineffective adjustment policies have left sub-Saharan Africa poorer than two decades ago. For further information, contact: Erica Meltzer, Press Officer, tel: (+41-22) 907- 5365/5828, or Alessandra Vellucci, Information Officer, tel: (+41-22) 907-4641/5828. For a copy of the report, contact the UNCTAD Press Unit; fax: (+41-22) 907-0043; email: press@unctad.org

"Are Intellectual Property Rights Stifling Agricultural Biotechnology in Developing Countries?" IFPRI 2000-2001 ANNUAL REPORT. By Philip G. Pardey, Brian D. Wright, and Carol Nottenburg, published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The report discusses the effects of intellectual property rights on the use of biotechnology in developing countries. It also gives insight on how production and trade patterns affect intellectual property rights and how they will change with the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property. The report is available at: http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/books/ar2000/ar2000_essay02.htm

WTO, AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. By Eugenio Díaz-Bonilla, Sherman Robinson, Marcelle Thomas and Yukitsugu Yanoma, published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), March 2001. The paper analyses agricultural trade issues from the perspective of developing countries. The objective is to align the different components and subcomponents of the negotiations with the final

objectives of sustainable economic growth, poverty alleviation, and food security. The report is available at: <http://projektweb.sjfi.dk/>

ENVIRONMENTAL AND FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS IN THE CONTEXT OF TRADE LIBERALIZATION: ISSUES AND OPTIONS. By Ulrike Grote and Stanie Kirchhoff, ZEF-Discussion Papers on Development Policy No. 39, Center for Development Research (ZEF), Bonn, June 2001. The discussion paper describes the complex process of setting standards, the relevant WTO agreements dealing with technical as well as sanitary and phytosanitary standards and potential outcomes of setting environmental standards. The paper also offers a list of alternative policy responses and strategies to tackle environmental issues in the context of international trade. The paper is available at: http://www.zef.de/zef_englisch/f_publ.html.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

GLOBALIZATION RESEARCH WEBSITE. Hosted by the World Bank. The Research website includes a new topic on globalisation. Research on this topic includes trade liberalisation and its impact on developing countries, globalisation and financial markets, the role of global and national institutions in globalisation, governance and trade policy, and the impact of globalisation on equality and inequality within developing countries. The website address is: www.econ.worldbank.org.

INFORMATION ON CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION ON ACP-EU CO-OPERATION. Euforic, the Internet portal for European development co-operation, has developed a page on its website providing a number of links relating to civil society participation in ACP-EU co-operation including a report of the ACP-EU Civil Society Conference on Civil Society Participation organised by the Belgian Presidency of the EU and the ACP Secretariat in July. The page also provides links to key organisations working on the issue, debates and events. Available online at: <http://www.euforic.org/resource/en/doss/civilsociety/index.html>.

POSITION VACANCIES

IUCN - The World Conservation Union

Regional Director - European Programme. As the Head of the European Regional Office, which includes oversight of IUCN's Central European and CIS offices (Warsaw and Moscow), the Regional Director is the chief manager for all financial, personnel, and administrative matters and will be responsible for ensuring the financial viability of the European Programme. The Regional Director will also be responsible for coordinating IUCN's policy dialogue with the European Commission. Among other selection criteria are: At least 10 years' professional experience in conservation programme management, and sustainable development policy with at least 5 years in Europe. Extensive knowledge of conservation issues, organisations, and policy processes at a Pan-European level, and an understanding of inter-regional and global conservation and sustainable development issues. Closing date: 15 September 2001. For more information contact: Director -

Human Resources, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, 28 rue Mauverney, 1196 Gland, Switzerland; fax: (41-22) 999-0339, email: vacancies@hq.iucn.org.

A searchable archive of BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© can be accessed at: [http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/WhichBulletin.cfm? Bulletin_ID=14&SID=](http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/WhichBulletin.cfm?Bulletin_ID=14&SID=)

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), <http://www.ictsd.org>, with technical support from the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). Contributors to this issue are Andrew Baldwin, Heike Baumuller, Jennifer Ngai, Matteo Rizzolli, Alex Werth and Caroline Wiman. This edition of BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest was edited by Hugo Cameron, hcameron@ictsd.ch. Managing Editor is Andrew Crosby, acrosby@ictsd.ch. The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 13, ch. des Anémones, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editor or the Director.

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest is possible in 2000-2001 through the generous support of: the Governments of Switzerland (SECO) and the United Kingdom (DFID) and the Rockefeller Foundation. It also benefits from ICTSD's core funders: the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK), IUCN The World Conservation Union, MISEREOR, NOVIB (NL), Oxfam (UK) and the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (Switzerland).

ISSN 1563-003X