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WTO MEMBERS STILL FAR APART OVER CHAIR SELECTION BEFORE TNC

With less than a week to go before WTO Members formally convene for the first meeting of the committee that will oversee the multilateral trade negotiations launched in Doha in November 2001 (formally the Trade Negotiations Committee, or TNC), countries remain divided over the key procedural matter of who will chair the TNC and its subsidiary negotiating groups (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 16 January 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-01-16/story1.htm>).

On the one hand, a number of influential developing countries -- led by Pakistan and joined last week by China -- favour the proposition that the Chair should come from a WTO Member, preferably a Geneva-based ambassador. This group also is pushing for the TNC to be overseen by the Member-run General Council, and for negotiations to take place within existing WTO bodies. On the other hand, the majority of Members -- including the Quad group of Canada, the EC, Japan and the US -- believe that the TNC should be chaired by the WTO Director-General acting 'ex-officio', in his personal capacity. In general, these countries support the creation of specific negotiating groups, where Members would address the Doha mandate, as opposed to negotiating within existing fora. The Director-General is currently New Zealand's Mike Moore, though the post is scheduled to change over to Thailand's Supachai Panitchpakdi in September.

According to WTO sources, this situation has created a deadlock that must be overcome before Members can address other procedural and substantive issues in the mandated negotiations, including who will chair which negotiating bodies and regular WTO committees. General Council chair Stuart Harbinson has scheduled an informal open-ended meeting for all Members on 23 January to report back to the Membership on the status of his consultations on these issues; sources indicate that agreement at that meeting on the chair issue is unlikely.

Trade diplomats from developed countries have indicated they expect the WTO will eventually agree on a compromise arrangement that will give the TNC chairship to the Director-General, but that he will be subject to certain working instructions and will have to report back to the General Council on a regular basis. Officials also said that China might be willing to change its position if it can be assured that the General Council could exert adequate control over the TNC.

Moore pursues ministerial track

Director-General Moore has been meeting with key ministers over the past week and plans to meet with several more in coming weeks, particularly during his attendance at the World Economic Forum in New York from 31 January - 3 February. According to a WTO press release from 22 January, Moore's discussions -- with trade ministers from Canada, the EC, Mexico, South Korea and the US -- have focused primarily on the "smooth launch of negotiations" as well as on WTO capacity building and technical assistance for developing countries.

Moore is pushing to have the TNC "get off to a good start," and said that failure to ensure a sound negotiating structure or to choose committee chairpersons soon would lead to delays that "cannot be afforded" if Members wanted to conclude the Doha negotiations by the deadline of 1 January 2005. He will be meeting with senior officials from India, Japan and Pakistan in the coming days. Given the different approaches taken by the latter country's Minister and its Geneva-based operations as evidenced at the Doha Ministerial, some observers speculate, Pakistan's insistent opposition to the Director-General adopting the TNC chair post could be up for revision.

BRIDGES Weekly will report on the outcome of the 28 January TNC in its next issue.

"Moore meets ministers, senior official in Doha follow-up," WTO PRESS RELEASE, 22 January 2002; "China voices opposition to putting WTO Director-General in Doha Chair," WTO REPORTER, 18 January 2002; ICTSD Internal Files.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MOVE TO MAKE USE OF SUBSIDY EXTENSION MECHANISM

Under revised extension procedures adopted at the 9-14 November Doha Ministerial Conference, 25 developing country WTO Members have recently submitted requests to the Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures to extend various forms of subsidy programs related to investment incentives, tax breaks, export processing zones, and other tax or duty relief concessions.

Under the existing rules of Article 27.4 of the WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM), countries were able to seek an extension to the phase-out deadline (1 January 2003), as long as the request was submitted one year prior to the expiration date. This extension was then eligible for renewal based on annual consultations with the SCM Committee, taking into account "all relevant economic, financial and development needs" of the requesting Member.

The new procedures adopted at Doha (see document G/SCM/W/471) allow for an extension mechanism that can run through to the end of 2007. Under these terms, the annual review process will still occur; however, it will be in the form of further notifications submitted by the requesting Member to ensure that certain transparency and 'standstill' requirements are met.

By standstill, the procedure refers to stipulations that the programs are no more favourable than they were as at 1 September 2001, and as outlined in initial notifications to be submitted no later than 28 February 2002. Furthermore, other Members can now request additional details and clarifications as part of the notification process of ensuring standstill. One trade analyst speculated that such requirements were in effect to make sure that the rules did not change to become more favourable to local firms. Another trade

source, however, indicated that with these rules so focused around investment incentives and tax breaks -- predominantly in export processing zones (EPZs) -- the most likely benefactors would in fact be multi-national corporations who operate in these zones.

A further modification to this review process emanating from Doha comes out of paragraph 10.6 of the Implementation-related Decision (WT/MIN (01)/W/10), which outlines that the SCM Committee must also take into account "the relative competitiveness in relation to other developing country Members who have requested extension of the transition period following these procedures [...]". Para. 10.6 notes that the aim of this clause is to avoid a situation whereby 'similar' Members receive different treatment for similar programs. This stipulation resulted almost exclusively due to concerns expressed by Colombia, which perceived a potential advantage going to neighbouring Panama, without some consideration going to relative competitiveness among applicants. Both countries have a number of competing EPZs along their shared border.

With respect to the demographics of the submitting Members, it is interesting to note that all but six of the countries (76 percent) were from either Latin America or the Caribbean - with only two from Africa and Asia respectively. Least-developed countries are also absent from this list, as they are exempt from this subsidy reduction requirement under SCM Article 27.2 (a).

Requests have been submitted by the following Members: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Bolivia, Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Panama, Papua New Guinea, El Salvador, Suriname, Thailand, Uruguay, St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

The various applications can be viewed via the WTO's online document database at http://docsonline.wto.org/gen_search.asp - search via document symbol 'G/SCM/N/74'.

"WTO Gets Applications From 17 Countries For Extended For Subsidy Phase- Out" WTO REPORTER, 9 January 2002; ICTSD Internal Files.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS: CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

US to explore free trade agreement with Central America

On 16 January, US President George Bush announced during a conference of the World Affairs Council at the Organisation of American States that the US Administration would work closely with Congress towards a free trade agreement (FTA) with the countries of Central America in order to "reinforce their progress toward economic, political, and social reform - and to take another step toward completing the Free Trade Area of the Americas [FTAA]," Bush said.

The states involved -- Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua -- had expressed their interest in such a pact during a meeting with the US in Managua last September. Although US Congress last year granted trade benefits to these countries providing them with market access to the US comparable to that granted to the US' North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] partners Canada and Mexico, a free trade accord is said to make Central America more attractive to multinational companies looking for investment opportunities. Central American countries have about 34 million inhabitants and account for some US\$ 9 billion in US exports.

In his address to the World Affairs Council, Bush further said that the US is "prepared to help Argentina [recently struck by economic and fiscal collapse] weather this storm" by supporting assistance for Argentina through international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF. Argentina's new President Eduardo Duhalde has recently declared the country's former open market model "broken" and signalled his government's determination to vehemently safeguard its domestic industries.

Bush began his presidency in 2001 expressing a clear commitment to focus on Latin America in his foreign policy, mainly through setting up the FTAA by 2005.

Washington has free trade agreements with Israel, Jordan, Canada and Mexico and is currently in bilateral trade negotiations with Chile and Singapore.

NAFTA speeds up tariff reductions

US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick announced on 9 January that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) members have agreed to accelerate tariff cuts by a further US\$ 25 billion. As outlined in Zoellick's statement, the US will eliminate tariffs on various rubber and footwear products, whereas Mexico and Canada will in return bring down tariffs on US cars, electrical and electronics items as well as on chemicals. After these reductions, Mexico's average tariffs will be cut to less than 0.5 percent compared to 10 percent in the pre-NAFTA period prior to 1993. The reductions were to have been scaled back by 2008, but the NAFTA parties agreed last December to accelerate these cuts so as to "help our economies sharpen their competitiveness and efficiency," the statement said. The tariff reductions became effective as of 1 January this year.

Mexico's Economy Ministry stated in a press release on 8 January that the acceleration of import tariff reductions would apply to goods worth some US\$ 5 billion in intra-NAFTA trade. The Ministry expects the tariff cuts to help increase footwear exports by Mexico, as US tariffs on shoes from other countries will range between 37.5 and 48 percent. In addition, tariff reductions on cars and auto parts between Mexico and Canada and between Mexico and the US will also support Mexico's auto industry, which is currently facing financial difficulties, the press release said.

"Bush Says US Will Explore Central American Free Trade Agreement," US DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS RELEASE, 16 January 2002; "Bush Defends Free Market Path," WASHINGTON POST, 17 January 2002; "Bush Pledges To Help In Argentine Crisis," WASHINGTON POST, 17 January 2002; "US Says NAFTA Partners Agree To Accelerate Tariff Cuts," DOW JONES, 9 January 2002; "Mexico: Tariff Reductions Help Footwear, Auto Sectors," DOW JONES, 8 January 2002.

IN BRIEF

NGOS SEEK RIGHT TO ATTEND NAFTA PROCEEDINGS

On 17 January, the Council of Canadians, the Sierra Club, and Greenpeace asked the Federal Court of Appeal in Toronto, Canada, to appeal a previous decision excluding them from participating in a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Chapter 11 (investment) dispute. The case in question involves the Canadian government's appeal of a NAFTA tribunal's ruling in 2000 against Canada in its dispute with a US corporation over toxic waste exports (see BRIDGES Weekly, 14 November 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/inbrief.14-11-00.htm>). SD Myers, a US waste disposal company, was successful in challenging a Canadian government ban on export of PCB waste enacted in order to fulfil a commitment to the UN Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes. Mexico has recently become involved in the case, and according to Steven Shrybman, the lawyer representing the groups, " [Mexico's] submissions are the best of the three, it seems seriously interested in containing the damage that this mechanism will cause." The decision on the groups' appeal should be forthcoming in a few weeks.

"Coalition challenges exclusion from secretive NAFTA case, NAFTA trumps treaties, Canada pays for keeping its word," Campaigns, 17 January 2002.

REPORTS TARGET EU & GLOBAL FISHING ARRANGEMENTS

Three recent reports are putting into question bilateral fisheries agreements, particularly those pursued by the EU. The European Union has called for tighter control over its own fishing stock, while moving toward the fisheries of developing countries, much to the dismay of environmental groups such as the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) (see "Put environment at the heart of European fisheries policy," http://www.panda.org/endangeredseas/publications/manifesto_1.pdf). However, environmental groups, including WWF, have welcomed the failure of the EU to obtain a fisheries agreement with Senegal. According to WWF, this development is a "positive sign" that developing countries are becoming more prudent in weighing short-term economic gains against protecting their natural resources. A UN Environment Programme (UNEP) report released on 27 December 2001 cautions developing countries

that the costs of allowing foreign fishing fleets into their waters outweigh the benefits of such action (see <http://www.unep.org/Documents/Default.asp?DocumentID=227&ArticleID=2991>). Similarly, Eurostep recently released a paper entitled "Fishing for Coherence: Promoting Complementarity between EU Fisheries Arrangements and Development Policy," highlighting inconsistencies between EU fisheries policy and EU development policy. This paper is available at <http://www.oneworld.org/eurostep/fishcoh.htm>. The WTO Ministerial Declaration adopted on 14 November 2001 in Doha launched negotiations on fisheries subsidies, while acknowledging the importance of this sector to developing countries.

"EU Parliament Calls for Tighter EU Control Over Fisheries," ASSOCIATED FOREIGN PRESS, 17 January 2002; "NGOs Welcome EU Failure to Secure Fisheries Agreement With Senegal," INTER PRESS SERVICE, January 2002; UNEP, 27 December 2001; Regular News Update from EUROSTEP, 18 January 2002.

AFRICA EXPERIENCES INCREASE IN FDI AMIDST GLOBAL ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

Despite a global economic slowdown in foreign direct investment (FDI) during 2001, Africa experienced an FDI increase. According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), FDI flows in Africa increased from \$US9 billion in 2000 to \$11 billion in 2001, while in both industrialised and developing countries, FDI flows decreased from 2000 to 2001. UNCTAD estimates put industrialised countries on track for half as much FDI in 2001 as in 2000, from \$US1 trillion to \$US500 billion dollars. Overall FDI flows to developing countries were estimated to have dropped from \$US240 billion in 2000 to \$US225 billion in 2001.

"Africa Bucks World Trend To Register Increased Foreign Direct Investment: UN" AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 21 January 2002.

WTO IN BRIEF

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION TO ADDRESS ISSUES AND PROBLEMS AFFECTING WTO

Following a meeting with between WTO Director-General Mike Moore and his new group of external advisors, Moore on 15 January announced that efforts were underway for a summer 2002 publication aimed at addressing some of the key issues and problems affecting the WTO. According to Moore, the objective of the publication is to offer "collective and individual ideas on how we should move forward on the questions of substance and governance, taking into account the external political factors which will shape our organisation in the future." Moore expressed concern that despite the recent

success of the Doha Conference, many of the problems that surfaced in Seattle in 1999 may recur. In an effort to introduce fresh ideas on how to address the problems that the WTO faces, Moore will draw on the expertise of the members of the expert group, which consists of specialists from non-governmental agencies, academia, and former President of Mexico Ernesto Zedillo, who will each write a chapter for the publication. The external advisory panel was formed on 5 July 2001 to advise Moore on the challenges and opportunities that confront the WTO and the global trading system.

"Moore Praises Advisors, Says Efforts Will Lead to New Ideas," WTO PRESS RELEASE, 15 January 2002.

EU SEEKS RETALIATION AGAINST US OVER ANTI-DUMPING, COPYRIGHT LAWS

On 18 January, the EU asked the WTO to rule on the level of retaliation it is entitled to take against the US over a US anti-dumping law and a copyright act, trade sources reported. Japan supports the EU in its complaint that the 1916 US Anti-Dumping Act violates WTO rules, a claim that has been upheld on two occasions by WTO experts but to which the US has yet to comply. Rather than asking the US directly to change its laws, the EU and Japan have asked permission to take measures which would be similar in nature to the 1916 Anti-Dumping Act, but this has caused concern among other WTO Members such as Brazil, who point out that the Act has already been found to be WTO-inconsistent. According to a Brazilian delegate, "it is not unthinkable that this mirror solution would reflect deleteriously in the whole system, thus distorting its fundamentals of good faith and abidance by the rules." The other case concerns an EU complaint that the US Copyright Act that exempts smaller bars, restaurants and retailers from paying royalties on music played to their customers breaches trade and copyright rules, but both sides have agreed to suspend the arbitration process.

"EU Seeks Retaliation Against US in Two Trade Rows," AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 18 January 2002.

ON THE MOVE

CHINA APPOINTS WTO AMBASSADOR

Following a decision by the National Peoples Congress Standing Committee, Chinese President Jiang Zemin on 18 January appointed Sun Zhenyu as China's permanent representative and ambassador to the WTO. Zhenyu has held positions as the Vice President of China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Import and Export Corporation, Deputy Director General of the Third Department for Regional Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade (MOFERT), Director General of the Department

of American and Oceanian Affairs of MOFERT, and Assistant Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC). Most recently, Zhenyu has held the role of Vice Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation.

"China Appoints Ambassador to WTO," PEOPLE'S DAILY, 18 January 2002; Curriculum Vitae of Vice Minister Zhenyu Sun, MOFTEC website, http://www.moftec.gov.cn/moftec_en/moftecjs/ldjj/szy_en.html.

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/cal/index.htm>.

Coming up this week

24-25 January, London, UK: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRADE IN TEXTILES AND CLOTHING. Organised by the WWF, the goal of the dialogue is to promote sustainable trade in textiles and clothing between Asian suppliers and European retailers. The meeting is by invitation only. For further information contact: Aimee T. Gonzales, Senior Policy Advisor WWF; tel: (41-22) 364-9002; fax: (41-22) 364-0640; email: agonzales@wwfint.org.

28 January-8 February, New York, USA: SECOND PREPARATORY SESSION FOR THE 2002 WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. The meeting will review the results of national and regional preparatory processes, examine the main policy report of the Secretary-General, and convene a multi-stakeholder dialogue. For further information contact: Andrey Vasilyev; tel: (1-212) 963-4264; email: vasilyev@un.org. Internet: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/>.

28-29 January, Nairobi, Kenya: REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY IN AFRICA. For further information contact: Anna Ogalo or Harrison Maganga, African Centre for Technology Studies, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: (254-2) 524-700/6; fax: (254-2) 524-701; email: acts@cgiar.org or a.ogalo@cgiar.org; Internet: <http://www.acts.or.ke/>.

28-29 January, Midrand, South Africa: UNEP FI REGIONAL OUTREACH EVENT - AFRICA. Organised by the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiatives (UNEP FI), the conference aims to address the role of the African financial sector in the progression of sustainable development. The objective of the conference is to highlight and encourage the active participation of diverse African financial institutions within the

dynamics of sustainability. Both financial sector and non-financial sector participation is welcome. For further information contact: Niamh O'Sullivan, UNEP FI; tel: (41-22) 917-8178; fax: 917- 8076; email: niamh.o.sullivan@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.unepfi.net/africa>.

29-30 January, New York, USA: HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLE ON ENERGY. Organised by the Global Environment Facility, this roundtable will be held alongside the second WSSD preparatory meeting. The meeting will discuss and exchange views on a background paper on sustainable energy in developing countries. For further information contact: GEF; tel: (1- 202) 473-0508; fax: (1-202) 522-3240; email: kkumari@worldbank.org. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/>.

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.

22 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT -- ICTSD will report on this meeting in its next edition.

22-23 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TEXTILES MONITORING BODY.

23 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO INFORMAL OPEN-ENDED CONSULTATIONS ON 28 JANUARY TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE.

23 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TRADE POLICY REVIEW BODY - PAKISTAN.

23-24 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

25 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TRADE POLICY REVIEW BODY - PAKISTAN.

25 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES' SUB-COMMITTEE.

28 January, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE -- ICTSD will report on the outcomes of this event in its next issue.

Other Forthcoming Events

30-31 January, Geneva, Switzerland: INTERNATIONAL AID AND TRADE EUROPE 2002 EXHIBITION. Organised by The Winchester Group in partnership with UNOPS, International Aid & Trade Europe will bring together numerous representatives from UN agencies, Red Cross, NGOs, IFIs and development banks, along with officials from governments and the EU. Speakers will address issues regarding the changing nature of humanitarian aid delivery. Conflict prevention, post-conflict recovery and the rehabilitation of civic society will also be included within the agenda, looking at the coordinated approaches made by the international aid community in partnership with donor and recipient governments and the private sector. For further information contact: Kevin Sammon, Group Sales Manager; email: kevin.sammon@aidandtrade.com or Caroline Maguire, Exhibition Manager; email: caroline.maguire@aidandtrade.com; Internet: <http://www.aidandtrade.com/>.

31 January-3 February, New York, USA: GLOBALIZING JUSTICE. A call for a WEF Counter-Summit and National Student Mobilisation to be held at Columbia University. The conference will feature speakers, workshops on a variety of topics, and more. For further information visit: <http://www.studentsforglobaljustice.org/contact.htm>.

31 January-4 February, New York, USA: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM: ANNUAL MEETING 2002. The annual meeting attracts top business leaders, political leaders, and academic experts from every domain to address key economic, political and societal issues. This year's theme is "Leadership in Fragile Times: A Vision for a Shared Future." Among the topics to be discussed are: Advancing Security and Addressing Vulnerability, Redefining Business Challenges, Reducing Poverty and Improving Equity, and Restoring Sustained Growth. For further information visit: <http://worldeconomicforum.org/>.

31 January-5 February, Porto Alegre, Brazil: WORLD SOCIAL FORUM. The WSF will be an international arena for the creation and exchange of social and economic projects to promote human rights, social justice and sustainable development. The conference will consist of a series of daily plenary sessions with invited speakers, presentations of current initiatives, and meetings to develop networks and to strengthen ties among groups that engage in similar forms of organisation. For further information visit: <http://www.worldsocialforum.org>.

1 February, Geneva, Switzerland: FAO ROUNDTABLE ON SPECIAL AND DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WTO NEGOTIATIONS ON AGRICULTURE. The Round Table will consider Special and Differential Treatment in the context of the on-going WTO negotiations on agriculture and in particular how to take into account concerns of developing countries related to the Development Box proposal, Small Island Developing States and Single Commodity Exporters. For further information contact the Commodities and Trade Division, UN Food and Agricultural Organization; <http://www.fao.org/ES/ESC/default.htm>.

7-8 February, Paris, France: CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT AND ENVIRONMENT. This conference, organised by the OECD, aims to shed light on the broader linkages between FDI and the environment in the mining sector, an important sector for the economy in many developing countries, and where environmental concerns have frequently been voiced. For further information visit:

<http://www.oecd.org/oecd/pages/home/displaygener-al/0,3380,EN-document-0-nodirectorate-no-20-21276-0,FF.html>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca>.

13-15 February, Cartagena, Colombia: SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM. For further information contact: Secretary for Governing Council; tel: (254- 2) 623-431; fax: (254-2) 623-929; email: beverly.miller@unep.org; Internet: http://www.unep.org/governingbodies/gc/specialsessions/gcss_vii. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca>.

21-23 February, Lyon, France: EARTH DIALOGUES - GLOBALIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - IS ETHICS THE MISSING LINK?. Organised by Green Cross International, Earth Dialogues will provide a forum for debate on the world's most acute problems. Participants will share their views on how to forge the essential links between globalisation, sustainable development and ethics. For further information contact: Earth Dialogues Secretariat; tel: (41-22) 789-1662; email: secretariat@gci.ch; Internet: http://www.greencrossinternational.net/pdf/Earth_Dialogue.pdf. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca>.

4 March, London, UK: BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATIES AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION: THE LATIN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. For further information contact: The British Institute of International and Comparative Law; Charles Clore House, 17 Russell Square, London WC1B 5JP, United Kingdom; tel: (44-20) 7862-5151; fax. 7862-5152; email: info@biicl.org; Internet: <http://www.biicl.org>.

5 March London, UK: ASSIGNMENT OF RECEIVABLES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE: THE NEW UN CONVENTION. £30 Members and £50 Non-members. For further information contact: The British Institute of International and Comparative Law; Charles Clore House, 17 Russell Square, London WC1B 5JP, United Kingdom; tel: (44-20) 78620-5151; fax. 7862-5152; email: info@biicl.org; Internet: <http://www.biicl.org>

13-15 March, Vancouver, Canada: GLOBE 2002 CONFERENCE - ACCELERATING BUSINESS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES. For further information contact: GLOBE Foundation, Vancouver, Canada; tel: (1-604) 775-7300; fax: (1-604) 666-8123; email: info@globe.apfnet.org Internet: <http://www.globe2002.com/conference.htm>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca>.

16-20 March, Alexandria, Egypt: BIOTECHNOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - VOICES OF THE SOUTH AND NORTH. This conference is co-sponsored by the Government of Egypt, FAO, UNESCO, World Bank and OECD, among others. For further information contact: Ismail Serageldin; tel: (203) 487-6024;

fax: (203) 487-6001; email: egyptbiotech@bibalex.org; Internet: <http://www.egyptbiotech.com/>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca>.

18-22 March, Monterrey, Mexico: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT. The conference will bring together high-level representatives from governments, the UN, and other leading international trade, finance and development-related organizations. For further information contact: Harris Gleckman, Coordinating Secretariat; tel: (1-212) 963-4690; email: gleckman@un.org or Federica Pietracci, tel: (1-212) 963-8497; email: pietracci@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca>.

19 March, Geneva, Switzerland: WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY BUILDING ON ENVIRONMENT, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT. The workshop aims to provide a forum for identifying capacity building activities needed to assist countries effectively engage in trade and environment negotiations, assess the environmental as well as the developmental implications of the WTO agreements, and develop and implement mutually supportive trade and environment policies. For further information contact: Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics: Economics and Trade Branch, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: (41 22) 917 8243; fax: (41 22) 917 8076; email: etb@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.unep.ch/etu>.

5-8 December, Washington, D.C., USA: AFRICA IN THE INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY AGE. The 45th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association will study the roles and effects of information technology in the lives and governance policies of Africans, as well as those who interact with Africans on various levels. The importance of IT in health care, education, the arts, and political organising will be examined in the many contexts of 21st-century Africa. For further information contact: email: michpete@rci.rutgers.edu; Internet: http://www.africanstudies.org/asa_papercalltheme.html.

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 Hugo Cameron, hcameron@ictsd.ch. Submissions of publications to ICTSD's documentation centre would also be welcome (contact Matteo Rizzolli, mrizzolli@ictsd.ch).

UKRAINE'S ACCESSION TO THE WTO. Published by the Agency for Humanitarian Technologies. For a number of years the Agency for Humanitarian Technologies has been continually monitoring government decisions aimed at speeding up economic reforms. The paper focuses on all aspects of Ukraine's accession to the WTO. For the full paper, visit http://www.aht.org/economy/Publications/wto_2002/eng/index.htm.

THE WTO AGREEMENT ON AGRICULTURE: AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT. Published by Consumers International, 2001. The report is based on a series of case studies carried out by Consumers International. This assessment concludes that liberalising international trade in food affects people, particularly those in less-developed countries, in very basic ways that are not always easy to predict but which can tear the fabric of society. Consumers' International believes that, in proceeding with the Agreement on Agriculture, the WTO should give full measure to how such changes disrupt lives and economies in the short run, as well as considering how it might improve lives and benefit economies in the future. The full summary and report are available online at: <http://www.consumersinternational.org/publications/ExecSumAgr.html>. For further information, contact 24 Highbury Crescent, London, N5 1RX, United Kingdom; tel: (44-207) 226-6663; fax: (44-207) 354-0607; email: consint@consint.org.

DEBUNKING ECONOMICS THE NAKED EMPEROR OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES. By Steve Keen, Zed Books, 2001. A critique of neoliberal/neo-classical/orthodox economics. The book will provide ammunition for the task of delegitimising neoliberalism, making it an ideal complement to the protests on the streets, from Seattle to Genoa, which have brought globalisation under the spotlight. The most important part of the book, from the point of view of globalisation, is not in the hard copy of the book, but on the web at <http://www.debunking-economics.com> (look under TRADE CHAPTER).

TRADE NEGOTIATIONS: THE AGRICULTURAL EXCEPTION. Courrier de la Planete, Volume V, 2001. A magazine issue devoted to concerns of food and agriculture, specifically in developing countries. Articles include interviews, assessments of decisions reached at the recent WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, agricultural subsidies, and debates on multifunctionality. More information at Le Courrier de la Planete, Parc scientifique Agropolis- bat. 14, 34 397 Montpellier cedex 5, tel: (33-04) 9923-2280, fax: 9923-2460, email: solagral.mpl@solagral.asso.fr.

DOMESTIC POLICY AND SOUTH AFRICA'S COMMITMENTS UNDER THE WTO'S BASIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT: EXPLAINING THE APPARENT INERTIA. By Tracy Cohen in JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW, Volume 4, Issue 4. South Africa adopted the GATS Basic Agreement on Telecommunications and the regulatory principles in 1998. This article reviews the nature of the commitments undertaken by South Africa and assesses the country's compliance to date. This article also seeks to explore the relationship between domestic policy reforms and international trade aspirations. It is argued that the dynamic produced through this relationship affords domestic governments a mechanism with which to balance the seemingly opposing goals of competition and development. It is further argued that the broad regulatory principles facilitate this fine balancing and afford domestic governments an opportunity to advance sovereign concerns while pursuing international trade ideals. For the full article, visit: http://www3.oup.co.uk/jielaw/hdb/Volume_04/Issue_04/040725.sgm.abs.html.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

NEW BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE ONLINE TOOLKIT. At its first meeting, in December 2000, the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP) recommended the development of a pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) established by Article 20 of the Protocol. As part of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearinghouse, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has developed an online Toolkit meant to serve as an informative and instructional tool to assist interested users with the use of the pilot Biosafety site. Available at: <http://bch.biodiv.org/Toolkit/Home.asp>. For further information contact: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 393 rue Saint-Jacques, suite 300, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2Y 1N9, tel.: (1-514) 288-2220, fax: 288-6588, email: bch@biodiv.org.

POSITION VACANCIES

EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH EUROPE (FoEE). Friends of the Earth (FoE) is the largest grassroots environmental network in the world, campaigning to protect the environment and create sustainable societies. The European Campaign Coordinator will work full-time in the Brussels office and be responsible for FoEE's priority campaign towards European institutions and decision-makers, campaign coordination and strategy development, and information flow to national FoE groups. Applicants for this position should have campaign and/or lobbying experience, knowledge of European institutions and EU decision-making processes, and knowledge of European environmental politics.

EUROPEAN CAMPAIGNER ON GMOs, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH EUROPE (FoEE). The European Campaigner on GMOs will work thirty hours a week for one year in the Brussels office. Main responsibilities include: coordination of FoEE's GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) campaign, following EU proposals on GMO legislation, providing an interface with European institutions, and ensuring continuous information exchange. Applicants for this position should have prior work experience in dealing with GMOs, a high-level of knowledge about genetic engineering, and a good understanding of EU legislation and Member States' policies concerning GMOs.

Complete fluency in English (written and spoken), good communication skills, and the ability to work both independently and as part of a dynamic and motivated international team are required for both positions. For the complete job descriptions and conditions visit: <http://www.foeeurope.org>. Applications should be sent to Angela van Aalst (office manager), FoEE, 29, rue Blanche, B-1060 Brussels, Belgium, Email: application@foeeurope.org, by 5 February 2002 latest.

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