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NOTE TO SUBSCRIBERS

ICTSD, in collaboration with its partner organisations - Centro Internacional de Política Económica (CINPE) de la Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano (FFLA), and OIKOS / Cooperação e Desenvolvimento - is providing five Daily Updates from the Eighth Ministerial Meeting of the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) and related activities, held from 17-21 November 2003 in Miami, USA. The Updates are provided in Spanish, Portuguese and English and focus on delivering news from the negotiations and other activities around the Ministerial as they relate to trade and sustainable development. The Updates are distributed on-site to government, press, private sector and NGO delegates, as well as electronically through ICTSD's and its partners' electronic mailing lists. To access the Updates online, visit http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/Americas/FTAA_ministerial/miami/index.htm.

LEAD STORIES

WTO: GREEN ROOM HIGHLIGHTS LIMITED PROGRESS IN TRADE TALKS

Carlos Perez del Castillo, Chair of the WTO General Council (GC), held a 'green room' meeting among heads of delegation on 18 December to take stock of talks seeking to revive the current round of trade negotiations. According to Chair Perez del Castillo, Members had been showing their commitment to the process, and he said that he was "convinced we have been able to put the shock of Cancun behind us, and... pleased that our recovery from this seems to be taking place rapidly". However, he also warned that sticking points remained, in particular in the area of the Singapore issues of investment, competition, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation, where countries had not moved from their pre-Cancun positions. The meeting, which lasted for less than two hours, was held primarily for reasons of transparency, and only a small number of countries took the floor.

Chair Perez del Castillo has been consulting informally among Members on four key issues -- agriculture, industrial market access, cotton and the Singapore issues -- since ministers failed to reach agreement at the fifth WTO Ministerial in Cancun in September (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-11-13/story1.htm>).

At the 'green room' meeting, Perez del Castillo elaborated on the state-of-play in the four key areas, noting that talks had basically served to test countries' flexibility on the issues. On agriculture, he said much work remained to be done, and noted that Members agreed to work on a general framework for modalities (i.e. the specific numeric parameters for the negotiations, including timeframes) at the current stage of talks. On industrial tariffs, he noted that Members could use the text from Cancun as a basis, although there was no agreement on the text as it stood. On Singapore issues, he said each issue should be considered on its own merits, and that Members were discussing different unbundled options to address them. On the initiative to eliminate cotton subsidies, put forth by four West African countries some months before Cancun, Chair Perez del Castillo said a majority of Members felt that the issue should be integrated into agricultural talks, but given special attention. He also noted a distinction between trade and development-related aspects of the cotton issue. Overall, he said he had found that a fairly high level of convergence had emerged around the 13 September "Derbez text" that had been issued at Cancun.

WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi delivered a speech outlining his consultations with Members in both capitals and Geneva. He noted, among other things, the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) Summit and its call for re-engaging in negotiations based on the "Derbez text" as the basis for further work. He also said he had just returned from an African ministerial meeting in Cairo, which had expressed its support for efforts to ensure that negotiations regain momentum. On his plans for the near future, Supachai said he would be travelling to Central and South America, meeting with groups of ministers from the region in Honduras and Guyana. In conclusion, he stressed the need to translate a political willingness Members had been indicating into concrete progress in negotiations. He warned Members against retreating into "previous tactical positions," and called on Members to move forward.

After the Chairs had spoken, Benin took the floor to stress that the four countries backing the cotton initiative strongly felt it should be kept on a separate track and not dealt with by the Committee on Agriculture. India voiced doubt on the use of the Derbez text as a basis for negotiations.

15 December only a stepping-stone?

While Members were mandated by the Cancun meeting to find a way forward by 15 December and to take "necessary action" to be able to conclude the round, some doubt the 15 December deadline will be met in a substantive way. The EU, which is still officially in a mode of reflection (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-11-13/story2.htm>), and will meet at the trade ministers level on 2 December, has, in particular, suggested decisions would be pushed forward. Carl Trojan, EC ambassador to the WTO, recently said "if we come to the conclusion that we aren't ready on Dec. 15, we won't convene a meeting of senior officials," and added that "it has been often suggested in the consultations that our meeting in December should not be seen as a deadline, but rather as a stepping stone to more substantive and wide-ranging work after that". He indicated that discussions may actually proceed to the next level only in mid-February.

Between the 18 November 'green room' meeting and the 15 December meeting of the GC, Chair Perez del Castillo will hold another, intensified round of talks on the way forward, focussing on the four key issues identified. He is expected to hold another informal stock-taking meeting on 5 December.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO trade talks make some progress but more needed," REUTERS, 18 November 2003; "WTO Negotiators Say They May Miss Another Deadline," AP, 18 November 2003; "WTO Chair Cites Progress in Post-Cancun Talks; Singapore Issues Creating Impasse," WTO REPORTER, 19 November 2003.

AG TALKS: GC CHAIR REPORTS PROGRESS, KEY MEMBERS SCEPTICAL

Carlos Perez del Castillo, Chair of the WTO General Council, reported to Members at an informal 'green room' meeting at the heads of delegation level on 18 November on progress made in the first round of post-Cancun consultations on agriculture (also see related story, this issue). A week earlier, on 13 November, a group of ten key Members had met to exchange views on what some saw as a largely "Chair-driven process" in agriculture, which they felt was putting more pressure on Members to move than they were prepared to do at the current stage of talks.

Chair Perez del Castillo: common approach in sight

Chair Perez del Castillo made clear at the outset of post-Cancun talks that agriculture played an "important central role" in the Doha round, and that a serious effort

was needed in order to bridge the remaining gaps in Members' positions. He proceeded on the basis that there was "wide acceptance" of the objective to adopt a framework for establishing modalities in agriculture, rather than agreeing on full modalities including clear targets, numbers and rules-based elements. Reportedly, only a few countries -- e.g. G-20 leader Brazil and India -- had preferred concrete numbers in the framework text (see BRIDGES Weekly, 30 October 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-10-30/story1.htm>).

Chair Perez del Castillo, keen to avoid "academic" discussions on which text to base further discussions, chose to test a set of key parameters for a possible negotiating package for the agriculture framework among Members. He said he envisaged an approach along three basic lines. First, to seek "greater reductions in domestic support than the levels envisaged in the original EC/US proposal" (see BRIDGES Weekly, 21 August 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-08-21/story2.htm>). Second, to seek "commitments on the elimination of all forms of export competition" [namely export subsidies, export credits, food aid and state trading enterprises], although a concrete end date for phasing them out would not be inserted in the framework text. Third, "commitments for the opening of markets from all Members, developed and developing," though with the provision that developing countries would be accorded special and differential treatment (S&D) taking into account their "development and specific needs".

Cracks appear in Members' support for Chair's approach

Reportedly, a number of key Members -- including the Quad (US, EC, Canada and Japan), Australia, Brazil, China, India, Mauritius and Switzerland -- met on 13 November for an informal consultation. This core group exchanged views and expressed difficulties that some had with Perez del Castillo's mainly "Chair-driven process". In particular, several Members were concerned with the Chair's intention to discuss substantive elements of the "Derbez text" prior to the 15 December General Council meeting, an approach they felt could have far-reaching consequences for Members' positioning. As not all countries were in a position to negotiate at this stage, some Members -- such as the EC -- reportedly indicated that the agricultural talks could be extended beyond the 15 December deadline until February. This, according to a source, could give the US some more time to reflect on its options before becoming fully absorbed by domestic concerns relating to its 2004 presidential elections.

However, reporting on progress at the 18 November green room meeting, Chair Perez del Castillo

emphasised the positive discussions he had had with Members, as well as the "constructive spirit" of the talks. According to the Chair, discussions had moved towards a common approach, encouraging him to move on to a second round of consultations on agriculture commencing at end of this week.

ICTSD reporting.

OTHER NEWS

MIAMI FTAA TALKS OFF TO LUKEWARM START

Trade negotiators from the Americas are currently gathered in Miami in preparation for the eighth Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Ministerial meeting from 20-21 November. The FTAA Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) has been meeting since 15 November, preparing a draft Ministerial Declaration, and an array of related activities are being organised by civil society under the auspices of the Americas Business Forum (ABF) and the Americas Forum on Trade and Sustainable Development (AFTSD).

The talks on the Draft Ministerial Declaration were preceded by a mini-ministerial summit held from 8-9 November (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-11-13/story5.htm>), which failed to bridge gaps between key parties. The US and Brazil disagree over the scope of the talks, with the US seeking a comprehensive agreement and Brazil preferring an agreement without wide-ranging commitments in certain sensitive areas, such as intellectual property rights, investment or services. The US, on the other hand, has been unwilling to negotiate in an area of key concern to Brazil: agriculture.

The current Draft Declaration -- kept at a general level - seeks to overcome these differences by outlining a two-tiered FTAA, with an opt-in option for countries wishing to sign on to a more comprehensive agreement (for a copy, see http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/Americas/FTAA_ministerial/miami/index.htm).

For further details on the meeting, including daily reports, see http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/Americas/FTAA_ministerial/miami/index.htm.

ICTSD reporting.

CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS OUTLINE VISION, CONCERNS for UNCTAD XI

On 17 November, a group of civil society organisations presented a statement to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) preparatory committee for the UNCTAD XI summit that raised issues identified at a civil society meeting in mid-October. The statement supported the "invaluable work" of UNCTAD and called on governments to ensure that the outcome of UNCTAD XI (and its preparatory process) bolstered, rather than hindered, UNCTAD's ability to continue assisting developing countries "as they struggle to define an appropriate developmental strategy and their relationship with the global system". At the same time, however, the NGOs highlighted a number of concerns regarding the role of civil society envisaged by UNCTAD in the design and implementation of UNCTAD XI.

Background

Every four years, UNCTAD holds a conference to set its priorities and guidelines, and to provide an opportunity to debate key economic and development issues. The last conference, UNCTAD X, was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 12-19 February 2000 (see <http://www.unctad-10.org/>). UNCTAD XI, to be held 13-18 June 2004 in São Paulo, Brazil, will focus on enhancing the coherence between national development strategies and global economic processes towards economic growth and development, particularly for developing countries. Specific sub-themes include: i) development strategies in a globalising world economy; ii) building productive capacity and international competitiveness; iii) assuring development gains from the international trading system and trade negotiations; and iv) partnerships for development (see TD(XI)/PC/1, available at http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/tdxipcd1_en.pdf).

Civil Society report

UNCTAD organised a meeting for civil society from 15-16 October for an exchange of views on procedural and substantive elements of UNCTAD XI among Geneva-based civil society representatives and the UNCTAD secretariat. In the report back from civil society to the PrepCom, the groups praised UNCTAD for offering "a vision of equity to the international economic system and the relationship between developed and developing countries premised on North-South partnership and the right to development", rather than the principles of pure liberalisation and laissez-faire. This was the kind of vision, according to the NGOs, that should form one of the "cornerstone principles" of UNCTAD XI, and continue to permeate UNCTAD's work in the long-term.

The report highlighted the opportunity for UNCTAD XI to address the most pressing developmental challenges facing developing countries. It touched on four main areas, including changing the "unfair rules" and patterns of trade so as to support sustainable development; the lack of sufficient stability and transparency in the international financial architecture; the problems of unsustainable debt and declining commodity prices; and the need for fundamental reforms in the structures of international economic governance. Notably, the report stressed the need to enhance the role of the UN, and to embed sustainable development in the mandates of the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO.

Procedure: need for more participation

On procedural items however, the civil society statement was less supportive. Citing the UNCTAD preparatory document (see link above), they raised the concern that civil society participation had been pre-determined as "supporting the objectives and policies defined at the intergovernmental level". The role of civil society as partners in UNCTAD XI, they continued, was best determined via participatory processes that allowed "civil society's views, values, concerns and analyses to be taken into effective consideration". The statement also pointed to the need to reach beyond civil society organisations in Geneva (and especially to those in developing countries), and to practical difficulties related to accreditation, financing to ensure equitable participation, and ensuring sufficient information flows. As a positive contribution in this regard, a list of procedural concerns and proactive recommendations was included in the statement.

Delegates and UNCTAD respond

A number of developing and least developed countries, both inside and outside the UNCTAD XI PrepCom, supported the civil society statement that was presented by Third World Network's Chien Yen Goh. The Ambassador of Jamaica, representing the G-77/China, agreed with Mr. Goh's comments on the need for UNCTAD to continue playing its role, particularly in providing policy analysis and consensus-building. He also reportedly echoed Mr. Goh's sentiments on the possible irony of an outcome from UNCTAD XI that would result in UNCTAD's marginalisation. The US reportedly welcomed the statement, as well as further civil society participation, noting that it contained elements of agreement and disagreement. The Canadian representative also welcomed the input, but reportedly commented that Mr. Goh's views appeared "value-laden and not balanced", and that the presentation was too critical of the preparatory text.

On procedural matters, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD Carlos Fortin noted the existence of accreditation procedures already in place, including the establishment of a fast-track process for UNCTAD XI. The Chair of the Prep Com, Chinese Ambassador M. SHA Zukang, also reiterated his interest to have civil society participate in this process in a meaningful way, but reminded participants of UNCTAD's inter-governmental nature, stating, "anything useful from civil society will be accepted, but this does not mean everything that civil society says".

Next steps

As part of the preparatory process, civil society will be invited to attend hearings on 16 January and 23 February. For further information contact Amel Haffouz at the UNCTAD secretariat (amel.haffouz@unctad.org; tel: +41 22 907 5048; fax: +41 22 907 0122). For further information on UNCTAD XI, including documentation, visit <http://www.unctad.org/unctadxi>.

ICTSD reporting; "Civil Society Statement for UNCTAD Pre Comm for UNCTAD XI", VARIOUS NGOs, 17 November 2003; "UNCTAD XI Must Not Marginalise UNCTAD" TWN AFRICA, 18 November 2003.

IN BRIEF

METHYL BROMIDE HALTS MOMENTUM AT OZONE CONFERENCE

The fifteenth meeting of the parties (MOP-15) to the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer was held from 10-14 November in Nairobi, Kenya. Items on the agenda included various issues relating to "critical use exemptions" of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) from control measures. The MOP is usually a routine event where scientists and politicians make adjustments to what is widely held as the most successful international environmental treaty to date. Particularly controversial at this meeting was developed nations' proposed phase-out of the pesticide methyl bromide, a significant ozone depleting substance, by 1 January 2005. The US, EU and Japan had all previously agreed to cut the use of the chemical by 30 percent relative to 1991 levels. However, at the MOP, the US -- responding in particular to pressure from Californian farmers -- argued that it needed more time to find effective substitutes, and requested a two-year exemption from the proposed 2005 ban on production and importation. Many parties, led by the EU and Japan, opposed the exemption and were unwilling to

reverse on progress already made. The meeting failed to reach consensus on the issue, and will hold an extraordinary meeting from 24-26 March 2004 in Montreal, Canada.

In related news, new studies place illegal trade of CFC's at 15 percent of total production, threatening the integrity of the Protocol. This problem was not, however, discussed at the meeting. The Montreal Protocol is one of a core group of six multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) which many WTO Members have begun to focus on in the context of negotiations on the relationship between WTO and MEAs as part of the Doha round.

For a final analysis of the 15th meeting of the Montreal Protocol, visit: <http://www.iisd.ca/ozone/mop15/>.

"Summary of MOP-15," IISD'S EARTH NEGOTIATIONS BULLETIN, 17 November 2003.

EUROPE ESTABLISHES GREEN DIPLOMACY NETWORK

The EU recently announced an initiative to enhance its capacity to negotiate effectively on environmental issues. This "Network of Diplomats and Experts on European Diplomacy on Environment and Sustainable Development" was established some months ago, and will draw on existing diplomatic resources in the new, enlarged EU-25. It has identified efforts to encourage Russia to ratify the Kyoto Protocol as a first activity. Other targets include effective negotiations at a meeting of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in February 2004, and efforts to promote renewable energy and marine environmental protection. In terms of methods, the network will gather intelligence on the positions of other actors, and will play an active role through, among other things, setting up campaigns to get the EU message out across the world. The initiative will seek to redress the problem of EU negotiators spending much of their time in internal processes, thereby moving toward a more proactive -- rather than reactive -- approach in their negotiating tactics.

For more information visit http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/international_issues/green_diplomacy_en.htm.

"Europe to put muscle behind its green vision," ENVIRONMENT DAILY, 12 November 2003.

CANADIAN CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS CALL FOR CHANGES TO DRAFT DRUG LAW

Various civil society groups in Canada have called for changes to current draft legislation that would amend the Canadian Patent Act C-56 to allow generic pharmaceutical companies to produce and export patent-protected drugs to countries unable to manufacture their own. The Canadian legislation is an attempt to implement an agreement on intellectual property rights and public health adopted by WTO Members before the Cancun Ministerial (see BRIDGES Weekly, 15 October 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-10-15/story5.htm>). The draft bill went through a second reading in the Canadian Parliament on 7 November and will now be submitted to Parliamentary committee for hearings before being re-submitted to the Parliament for a final reading. While welcoming the government's initiative to amend the Patent Law, the NGOs -- including Médecins Sans Frontières and the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network -- expressed a number of concerns regarding the current draft. Specifically, they noted that the draft contained provisions permitting patent-holders to block licences for generic manufacturers, thereby providing a disincentive for these manufacturers to negotiate contracts with developing countries. They also pointed out that the legislation included only a limited list of pharmaceutical products and excluded some developing countries that are not Members of the WTO from benefiting from the legislation (see <http://www.aidslaw.ca/home.htm> for further details).

In related developments, the US-based AIDS Healthcare Foundation is planning to file a lawsuit against the South African subsidiary of GlaxoSmithKline, seeking damages on behalf of people it said died because they could not afford HIV/AIDS medicines. The group offered to drop the plan if the company agreed to create a USD 150 million fund for free HIV/AIDS drug treatment in South Africa.

"Amendment to Canada's Patent Act to authorise export of generic pharmaceuticals," CANADIAN HIV/AIDS LEGAL NETWORK, 10 November 2003; "U.S. group to sue Glaxo S.Africa over AIDS drugs," REUTERS, 13 November 2003.

AG THE STICKING POINT IN EU- MERCOSUR NEGOTIATIONS

Trade negotiators from the Mercosur member states -- Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay -- met with EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy and EU Foreign

Affairs Commissioner Chris Patten on 12 November in Brussels to discuss their planned free trade accord. Sensitive issues, such as Mercosur access to the protected European agricultural market, resurfaced during the meeting. While the EU included 91 percent of all agricultural products in its initial market offer, some vital Mercosur products (meats, cereals, oil and processed foods) were left out. Mercosur negotiators had hoped to decrease restrictions for olive oil, dairy products, juices, meats and fruit. Martin Redrado, Argentine Secretary of Commerce, indicated some progress by pointing out that, "we agreed to find creative mechanisms such as lower tariffs and changes, for example, in the Hilton (primer beef) quota currently entitled to Mercosur", indicating some progress. The EU generally favours linking their Mercosur talks to negotiations at the WTO, preferring a compromise in agriculture pertinent to both agreements.

The EU and Mercosur talks aiming at an Association Agreement began in June 1999, and ten rounds of negotiations have since taken place. The talks are scheduled to conclude by October 2004, and five meetings have been scheduled before then, starting in December in Brussels and followed by a round in Buenos Aires next February.

"EU, Mercosur aim to conclude trade deal next year," EU Business, 12 November 2003; "Mercosur-EU seek "creative" mechanisms," MERCOPRESS, 14 November 2003; "EU-Mercosur: Ministerial meeting to roadmap free trade negotiations," EU PRESS RELEASE, 12 November 2003.

CSR CONFERENCE REVEALS UNRESOLVED ISSUES

The UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) hosted a conference on "Corporate Social Responsibility and Development: Towards a New Agenda?" from 17-18 November. The conference covered the themes of: corporate social responsibility (CSR) and development; research perspectives; new relations with transnational corporations (TNCs); UN-business partnerships; beyond CSR; corporate accountability and international regulation of TNCs -- the role of the UN. Discussions focussed on, inter alia, areas where voluntary accountability for sustainable development was insufficient. Participants pointed to situations related to foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade in which company profits and interests dominated. Some gave examples of governments yielding to corporate interests, marginalising health, labour, food security and environmental issues.

On the role of the WTO, some participants and speakers criticised the fact that the multilateral trading system did not regulate trade and investment issues in accordance with good corporate citizenship (GCC) principles. A speaker from the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) presented six options for including GCC practices in international investment agreements: including GCC principles in the form of non-binding instruments; linking voluntary instruments to legally binding ones; granting treaty benefits only to investments made in accordance with national laws and regulations of the host country; creating mandatory procedural obligations for governments; placing GCC in preambles of investment agreements; and incorporating legally binding provisions.

ICTSD reporting.

WTO IN BRIEF

HAITI TRADE POLICY REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR SOCIO- POLITICAL STABILITY

The WTO completed its first Trade Policy Review (TPR) of Haiti on 6 November 2003. Haiti is one of the most open economies in the Western Hemisphere due to reforms undertaken since 1986. Despite its liberal economy, Haiti continues to be the poorest country and the only Least Developed Country (LDC) in the Western Hemisphere. The TPR stressed that structural components of Haiti's reforms have not been implemented properly, a factor with negative repercussions on the economy's performance. The report went on to stress the need for socio-political stability, which it said would allow Haiti to proceed with its reforms and to fully exploit its preferential trade status with developed countries as an LDC. The report also highlighted the importance of international support for Haiti's liberalisation programme, recognising its unilateral efforts under difficult socio-political circumstances. It urged the international community to give Haiti all the assistance required to increase its participation in the multilateral trading system.

To access the TPR report, visit http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tp_r_e/tp222_e.htm.

"Socio-political stability would help Haiti to benefit from its liberalisation effort," WTO RELEASE, 6 November 2003.

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>. If you would like to submit an event, please email events@ictsd.ch.

ICTSD Event

20 November, Miami, Florida, US: STRATEGIC DIALOGUE ON COHERENCE BETWEEN MULTILATERAL REGIONAL AND BILATERAL PROCESSES ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY. This dialogue is part of the ICTSD-UNCTAD Project on IPRS and sustainable development. It will take place at the Founder's Hall in the University of Miami. For additional information see <http://www.ictsd.org/dlogue/index.htm>.

Coming Up: 20 - 26 November

17-20 November, Wilton Park, West Sussex, UK: CLIMATE CHANGE: WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE IN NORTH AND SOUTH? Organised by the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and LEAD International. This conference will discuss the next step in the Kyoto process, mitigation targets needed for the coming commitment period, whether the US and major greenhouse gas emitters among transition and developing nations can be drawn in, what role there is for alternative energy and nuclear power, and what external actors and national governments can do to help entire societies soften the impacts through adaptation strategies. Speakers include Sir John Houghton; Michael Meacher, former UK Minister for the Environment; officials and Members Parliament from Europe and developing countries. For further information contact: David Grace, e-mail: davidgrace@insideeurope.fsnet.co.uk; tel: +international 44 146 067368; Internet: <http://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/web/conferences/wrapper.asp?confref=WP730>.

17-21 November, Rome, Italy: FAO/WHO EXPERT CONSULTATION ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED ANIMALS, INCLUDING FISH. This event is organised by FAO and WHO. Its purpose is to review and analyse data on the current situation of GM animals, in particular fish, and the foods derived from them. For further information contact Ezzeddine Boutrif, FAO; tel: +39-6-5705-6156; fax: +39-6-5705-4593; e-mail: ezzeddine.boutrif@fao.org; Internet:

http://www.who.int/foodsafety/biotech/meetings/ec_nov2003/en/.

17-21 November, Geneva, Switzerland: PIC INC-10: This will be the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for an International Legally Binding Instrument for the Application of the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade. For further information, contact: Interim Secretariat for the Rotterdam Convention, tel: (41 22) 917-8183, fax: 797-3460, email: pic@unep.ch, Internet: <http://www.pic.int>

19-20 November, Brussels, Belgium: LABOUR STANDARDS & HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE. This two-day conference organized by Ethical Corporation will look in detail at the latest labour, Codes of Conduct and human rights policies that multi-national companies are devising, implementing and currently using in their global operations. Issues to be covered include: Internal EU policies and emerging issues; external supply chain risks; practical tips on working with suppliers, unions and NGOs; and human rights policy development and usage. For further information visit: <http://www.ethicalcorp.com/labour2003>.

20 November, Deventer, Netherlands: 75TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT (ICAD): NEO-COLONIALISM OR DEVELOPMENT? Organised by the University of Professional Education Larenstein, the Royal Netherlands Society for Agricultural Sciences KLV, the Royal Tropical Institute KIT and the International Agriculture Centre. This conference aims to further research, training and debate policy in the field of food production, sustainable rural livelihood and health. For further information, contact KLV Office, Tel: (+31) (0)317 485191; Fax: (+31) (0)317 483976; email: office@KLV.nl ; Internet: <http://www.klv.nl/English/>.

20-21 November, Vienna, Austria: THE WTO AFTER CANCUN: HALF-TIME OF THE NEW TRADING ROUND. This conference, organised by the European Community Studies Association - Austria and the Research Institute for European Affairs will feature panel discussions on WTO law, the 'Development Round' and its success in terms of development, Agriculture, and TRIPS. For more information on this event, please visit: <http://fgr.wu-wien.ac.at/ecsa/cancunco.html>.

20-21 November, Miami, Florida: FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS (FTAA) MINISTERIAL MEETING. This meeting is an important marker in the negotiations among the 34 FTAA members to remove tariffs, trade barriers, and promote regional economic development

and integration in the Western Hemisphere. For more information, please visit: www.ustr.gov/releases/2003/01/03-06.htm.

22-28 November, Santa Clara, Cuba: III INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: "ENVIRONMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY". The conference will cover the following themes: Energy, Resources and Environment, Sustainable Development and Clean Technologies, Environmental Education and Communication, Environmental Management and Biodiversity. Activities include inter alia: masterly lectures, round tables, and postgraduate courses. For further information contact Rachel Bruhnke, email: rachel@globalexchange.org; tel: +1 415-255-7296, ext 354.

24-25th November, Brussels, Belgium. WHY DOES CHEMICALS POLICY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT CONCERN ME? Organised by EU Conferences Limited. The REACH Chemical Policy will become a reality in some form very soon and its legislation will influence, transportation, labelling, management, software applications design, testing procedures and production of chemicals. It will affect upstream and downstream users, as well as distributors and ethical retail purchasers. For further information, tel: (+ 44 18) 7383-0724; tel/fax: 7383-0692; email: info@euconferences.com; Internet: <http://www.euconferences.com/frachemical.htm>

24-26 November, Mauritius: SIXTH REGIONAL SEMINAR OF ACP-EU ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INTEREST GROUPS. This recurring event is organised by the European Economic and Social Committee. It will include working sessions on the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement with regard to non-state actors, the negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), and regional integration and sustainable development. For additional information contact Susanna Baizou at email: Susanna.Baizou@esc.eu.int; Internet: http://www.esc.eu.int/pages/en/acs/events/24_11_03_maurice/home_en.htm.

26 November, Brussels, Belgium: SEVENTH MEETING OF ACP MINISTERS OF TRADE. The ACP Group is made up of 77 countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific, which are members of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly. At this meeting there will be a panel discussion on the post- Cancun trade negotiations outlook as it concerns the ACP countries. The panellists will be the WTO Director-General, the President of the World Bank, and the Secretary-General of UNCTAD. There will also be a discussion on strategies for advancing the interests of ACP in the WTO's multilateral trading system as well as updates on the

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) with the European Union. For more information see: <http://www.acpsec.org>.

26-27 November, Amsterdam, the Netherlands: ELECTRONICS RECYCLING SUMMIT. This senior executive Pan-European event will focus on delivering practical information for implementing the WEEE and RoHS directives and providing a competitive advantage through the collection, disassembly and recycling of electronics. For further information contact E.N.G. European Networking Group at tel +31 (0)20 305 0950; email: recycling@eng-nl.com; Internet: <http://www.eng-nl.com>.

26-27 November, New Delhi, India: SYMPOSIUM ON GM TECHNOLOGY. Gene Campaign is organising a national symposium on "The Relevance of GM Technology to Indian Agriculture and Food Security". A range of national and international experts will deliver talks on various aspects of GM technology and its application. Panel discussions will be held involving a variety of stakeholders. For further information visit: <http://www.genecampaign.org>.

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.pdf. 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, and are open to WTO Members and accredited observers only.

18-20 November, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COUNCIL FOR TRADE-RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.

20 November, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

21 November, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY.

24 November, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TEXTILES MONITORING BODY.

26 November, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON BUDGET, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION.

26 November, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS.

Other Forthcoming Events

27-28 November, Brussels, Belgium: 78TH SESSION OF ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. The ministers will discuss revised regulations within the ACP Secretariat. They will also hear reports from Committees on bananas, sugar, and development finance cooperation. For more information see: <http://www.acpsec.org>.

27 November, Brussels, Belgium: SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED WTO MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS. This will be a DG TRADE Civil Society Dialogue meeting with the Institute for Development Policy and Management of the University of Manchester. There will be a presentation and discussion on the integration of its final report into policy-making. To register for the meeting email: belgin.bingol@cec.eu.int. To read the papers see <http://idpm.man.ac.uk/sia-trade/Phase%203A/frontpage3A.htm>.

9-12 December, Havana, Cuba: INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY. Organised by the Cuban Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment with the support of UNESCO, this meeting will consider policies and strategies that allow a better interface between science and technology and sustainable development. Other issues related to S&T and their interface with society to be discussed include: ethics and bioethics, interactive museums, science communication, science education, technology transfer, and innovation. For more information e-mail: lilliam@ceniai.inf.cu.

21-25 January 2004, Davos, Switzerland: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ANNUAL MEETING. For more information on the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum contact the secretariat at tel: +41-22-869-1212; fax: +41-22-786-2744; e-mail: contact@weforum.org; Internet: <http://www.weforum.org/site/homepublic.nsf/Content/Events+subhome>.

23-24 February 2004, London, England: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE WTO: TRADE, INVESTMENT AND ENVIRONMENT AFTER CANCUN. This international conference is the fifth in the Royal Institute of International Affairs' series on trade, investment, and sustainable development. Challenges to the multilateral trading system in the wake of Cancun will be discussed, including the US and EU response to developing country concerns over agricultural subsidies, the negotiating dynamic of the new G21 grouping of developing countries, and

potential conflicts between trade and sustainable development. For further information and to register for the conference contact the Conference Unit tel: +44-20-7957-5729; Internet: <http://www.riia.org/index.php?id=5&cid=38>.

RESOURCES

ICTSD Resources

FTAA DAILY UPDATES IN SPANISH, PORTUGUESE AND ENGLISH. ICTSD, in collaboration with its partner organisations - Centro Internacional de Política Económica (CINPE) de la Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano (FFLA), and OIKOS / Cooperação e Desenvolvimento - is producing five Daily Updates from the Eighth Ministerial Meeting of the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) and related activities (17-21 November 2003 in Miami, USA). The Updates focus on delivering news from the negotiations and other activities around the Ministerial as they relate to trade and sustainable development. They are distributed on-site to government, press, private sector and NGO delegates, as well as electronically. To access the Updates online visit

http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/Americas/FTAA_ministerial/miami/index.htm.

NEW AGRICULTURE NEGOTIATIONS AT THE WTO: POST-CANCUN OUTLOOK REPORT. (ICTSD, October 2003). This paper is the first intelligence report of a series detailing topical developments in the ongoing agriculture trade negotiations at the WTO. It seeks to summarise from developments since April 2003 until the first post-Cancun WTO consultation on agriculture held on 24 October. WTO Members were unable to adopt a modalities 'framework' at Cancun, and this report attempts to outline how WTO Members could manage the resulting crisis and facilitate a process that would result in a "successful and timely conclusion of the negotiations" as mandated by Trade Ministers in Cancun. To access the report, visit <http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/ag/products/AgricultureNegotiations9.pdf>.

Other Resources

WTO AGRICULTURE NEGOTIATIONS: THE WAY FORWARD FROM CANCUN. By Troy Pobdury, Shirshore Hagi Hirad, Neil Andrews, and Wayne Gordon (Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, November 2003). This report contains Abare's blueprint for achieving substantial agricultural liberalisation, based on the "Derbez text," the last draft from the Cancun WTO meeting. Proposed modifications include changes in the approach to

market access and domestic subsidies. The report emphasizes the importance of active engagement in the multilateral negotiations on agriculture in order to make progress. This is an early release from Abare's December issue of Australian Commodities. For more information see <http://www.abare.gov.au/pages/media/2003/18nov2.html>.

INVESTOR RIGHTS OR HUMAN RIGHTS? THE IMPACT OF THE FTAA. By Rick Rowden and Vicki Gass (ActionAid USA and Washington Office on Latin America, November 2003). This policy briefing explores the investment agreement within the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The report highlights radical new provisions for foreign investors that would undermine the ability of governments to enforce or fulfil fundamental economic, social, and cultural rights and subvert democratic procedures. The main provision is a trade dispute settlement mechanism that allows foreign corporations to sue local or national governments to make them get rid of laws or regulations they claim violate free trade principles. This provision is part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the report explores its effects in Mexico. It claims that most of the benefits of NAFTA in Mexico have gone to foreign investors rather than towards the development of Mexico. The report can be found at <http://www.actionaidusa.org/FTAA%20%20Investor%20Rights%20or%20Human%20Rights.pdf>.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS IN BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATIES AND IN INVESTMENT TREATY ARBITRATION. By the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD, April 2003). This research paper examines the provisions for investor-state dispute settlement. These provisions have been used to challenge host state treatment of investments, including the regulation of water and sewage concessions, tax treatment, and environmental regulations. The paper examines the possibility of challenging government regulations for human-rights reasons. The report can be found at http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2003/investment_int_human_rights_bits.pdf.

DEBT AND DESTRUCTION IN SENEGAL. By Demba Dembele (World Development Movement, October 2003). This report offers a damning indictment of World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies in Senegal over the last twenty years, as well as in Africa and developing countries in general. It provides a comprehensive history of donor intervention in Senegal and highlights two recent case studies, the failed liberalisation of the groundnut sector and the failed privatisation of the electricity company SENELEC. This report is part of a series building the case of The People vs. the IMF and World Bank. The report can be

found at
<http://www.wdm.org.uk/campaign/colludo/resources.htm>

CHINA'S FIXED EXCHANGE RATE FOR THE YUAN: COULD THE UNITED STATES CHALLENGE IT IN THE WTO AS A SUBSIDY? By Marc Benitah (The American Society of International Law (ASIL), October 2003). The report examines China's fixed exchange rate against the three criteria of the WTO's definition of a subsidy that can be challenged: specificity, government financial contribution, and its benefit to the recipient. It finds that challenging the fixed exchange rate in the WTO would not be easy but may be possible. The report can be found at <http://www.asil.org/insights/insigh117.htm>.

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http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/WhichBulletin.cfm?Bulletin_ID=14&SID=

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