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LEAD STORIES

AGRICULTURE: G-20 TABLES NEW PROPOSAL; NEGOTIATIONS ONGOING IN GENEVA

The WTO Special Session of the Committee on Agriculture (CoA) is convening from 2-4 June for an 'agriculture week'. Members are continuing negotiations and consultations in an effort to establish a negotiating framework agreement for the Doha agriculture talks before delegates adjourn at the end of July for the WTO summer break. Discussions in this third post-Cancun 'agriculture week' are expected to largely centre on a new market access proposal submitted by the G-20 group of developing countries on 28 May (available at http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/ag/resources/G-20_Ag_tariff_Proposal.pdf). According to trade sources, the G-10 group -- which consists mainly of developed country net food-importers, including Switzerland, Japan and Norway -- is to table a revised comprehensive negotiating proposal during the three-day agriculture talks.

The 'agriculture week' began in the morning of 2 June with an open-ended informal special (negotiating) session. During the rest of the day, Members met in informal consultations among delegations in smaller groups. These informal meetings will continue throughout 3 June and the morning of 4 June. The agriculture week will conclude in a formal CoA special session on Friday afternoon, 4 July.

No alternative formula proposed in new G-20 submission

The G-20 -- including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Tanzania, Venezuela and Zimbabwe -- recently tabled a new proposal on agricultural market access. Notably, the group did not come up with a new tariff reduction formula to replace the 'blended' formula developed by the EC and US in their August 2003 framework text (see BRIDGES Weekly, 21 August 2003,

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<http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-08-21/story2.htm>). Instead, the group set out the basic concepts and principles to which the future reduction methodology must live up to in order to provide fair and equitable outcomes. According to the proposal, the essential elements of such formula are: "progressivity," i.e. a formula leading to higher tariffs being cut more than lower ones; "flexibility" for both developed and developing countries to take into account certain sensitivities; "neutrality," meaning the formula should not per se be biased against the tariff structures of certain Members; as well as "proportionality," meaning less than full reciprocity between developed and developing countries along the lines of the approach used during the Uruguay Round.

At a 13-14 May 'mini-ministerial' in Paris (see BRIDGES Weekly, 19 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-05-19/story2.htm>) the G-20 had been requested by the EC and US to come up with an alternative reduction formula, as the developing country grouping had rejected the 'blended' formula approach proposed by the US-EC duo. Moreover, sources reported that the US prompted the G-20 at the 17 May WTO General Council meeting to circulate a new proposal within ten days so as to give Members enough time to digest the proposal before the next agriculture week commencing on 2 June. The G-20, however, stressed that Members should work on the details of the new formula together.

In their preliminary comments, key Members such as the EC criticised the new G-20 market access proposal for its vague nature. According to a trade source, however, the developing country grouping had taken the right approach. The G-20 clearly defined the key parameters any future reduction formula would have to fulfil, thereby playing the ball back to the US and EC, which now have to show whether they are willing to engage in good faith discussions on the underlying principles of the reduction methodology.

While observers of the negotiations see a commitment amongst G-20 members to work with the whole WTO Membership towards a reduction formula to be included in the framework agreement, many doubt whether the very limited period of time left before the end of July would allow for such an endeavour. "This now very much depends on the willingness of the US and EC to show flexibility in the agriculture talks," a developing country source commented.

The next issue of BRIDGES Weekly will provide an update on the remainder of the agriculture week.

ICTSD reporting; "Agriculture: G-20 keeps options open in proposal on market access for WTO farm talks," WTO REPORTER, "1 June 2004; Agriculture: Elements

of market access proposal outlined by G-20 for WTO agriculture talks," WTO REPORTER, 27 May 2004.

DSU UPDATE: DSU REVIEW DEADLINE EXTENDED; APPELLATE BODY DEVELOPMENTS

At the special (negotiating) session of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) held on 28 May, Members supported a statement by Chair to extend the deadline for negotiations around the Dispute Settlement Understanding without setting a definite deadline. Members at the DSB session also considered a proposal from a diverse group of countries, and discussed proposed amendments to the 'Working Procedures for Appellate Review'.

Deadline extended

Delegates expressed support for a statement by Chair David Spencer (Australia) to extend the 31 May 2004 deadline for the completion of the negotiations on the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU Review). The statement, initiated on the Chair's own accord in consultation with Members, noted the progress made in the talks so far and proposed that the negotiations -- which are running parallel to the Doha round talks -- continue beyond May, without setting a definite deadline. Trade delegates supported this decision, which many had anticipated due to the slow pace of negotiations (see BRIDGES Weekly, 3 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-03-03/story2.htm>).

Delegates expect that formal DSB negotiation sessions will continue after the WTO's annual August break. Some trade sources also indicated that the DSU negotiations would be likely to gain momentum if there was a breakthrough in other negotiation areas, such as agriculture. Members missed a similar deadline a year ago (see BRIDGES Weekly, 4 June 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-06-04/story2.htm>).

Package deal released

Members present at the DSB special session also considered a proposal on the DSU review by Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India, New Zealand and Norway (see BRIDGES Weekly, 5 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-05-05/story3.htm>). The proposal, which was expected to cover seven negotiating issues, only covers three: sequencing, remand, and procedures for removal of authorisation for suspension of concessions. Delegates noted that they would examine these proposals further and send them to their capitals for further deliberation. The proponents

feel this proposal could be the starting point for negotiations after the August break.

Appellate Body developments

Members briefly discussed proposed amendments to the 'Working Procedures for Appellate Review,' which had been initiated by the Appellate Body itself. On 8 April, the Chair of the Appellate Body, Georges Michel Abi-Saab, circulated a proposal on behalf of all seven Appellate Body members for comments (WT/AB/WP/8, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). The proposal seeks to clarify the content of notices of appeal and also introduces procedures which would enable parties to amend notices of appeal where necessary. The proposal further clarifies the meaning of the word 'clerical' in a provision that allows Members to correct 'clerical errors' in their written submissions. It also seeks to adjust the timeframes for the oral hearing at the appeals level and the current 90 day limit within which the Appellate Body has to circulate its report on a case. Some Members expressed disagreement with the proposed changes on notice of appeal. The Chair has called informal consultations to discuss the proposals on 7 June. The deadline for Members to submit comments to the Appellate Body has been set for 11 June 2004.

In related developments, the Appellate Body released its first annual report highlighting its activities in 2003 on 7 May. The report, which also covers the work of the Appellate Body since its establishment in 1995, contains information on appeals filed so far, tracks changes in the composition of the Appellate Body and offers statistics on participation rates of WTO Members in the dispute settlement system. The report notes that the US has been the most frequent participant in disputes to date, followed by the EU. Provisions under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the WTO Antidumping and Subsidies Agreements have been the most popular subject for disputes to date.

The first annual Appellate Body report is available at http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dispu_e/wt_ab1_e.doc

ICTSD reporting; "Chair to propose indefinite continuation of dispute reform", WTO Reporter, 25 May, 2004; "Appellate Body issues first annual report", WTO Press Release 7 May 2004; "Amendments proposed to the Working Procedures for Appellate Review", WTO Press Release 15 April 2004.

DRAFT TEXT READY IN ADVANCE OF UNCTAD CONFERENCE

On 14 May, member countries of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) finalised the draft text that is to be transmitted to the 13-18 June UNCTAD XI Conference in Sao Paulo, Brazil. While the negotiations were not without controversy (see BRIDGES Weekly, 26 February 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-02-26/story4.htm>), all members appear to be sufficiently pleased with the language as it currently stands. The text still includes approximately a dozen bracketed paragraphs upon which final negotiations must still take place at the Conference. Regarding concerns that the Conference's outcome would constrain UNCTAD's mandate as expressed by some developing country members and civil society organisations (see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-04-28/inbrief.htm#1>), reports indicate that these groups are generally satisfied that the current draft offers adequate scope for UNCTAD to continue its work.

Changes to the text

A number of the latest changes to the 'Draft UNCTAD XI Negotiated Text' (TD/L.368, available at http://www.unctad.org/en/docs//tdl368_en.pdf) have been characterised by observers as "encouraging" and "an improvement" to previous versions -- including, inter alia, in one of the more controversial areas of 'policy space', as well as on GATS/services, development assistance, preference erosion, and the broader reaffirmation of the three pillars of UNCTAD's mandate (consensus-building; research and policy analysis; and technical assistance). That said, a number of concerns have been raised over weaknesses in sections on, inter alia, commodities and gender issues, as well as what is perceived to be a 'narrow interpretation' of policy coherence. In the current text, the policy coherence appears focused on coherence with international monetary, financial, investment and trading policy, to the exclusion of broader sustainable development policy (development, environmental, and social).

CSO Statement

Civil society organisations (CSOs) have prepared a draft CSO statement, which will be finalised in Sao Paulo and presented to members at the beginning of the Conference. One CSO observer indicated that the statement was not intended as a competing text, but rather as a presentation of the vision participating CSOs have for UNCTAD's future role in the international system. The overriding message of the current draft CSO statement is to "see an invigorated UNCTAD emerge from UNCTAD XI, an UNCTAD able

and committed to meeting the sustainable development needs of the planet, especially of its poorest and most disempowered people, particularly in developing countries". The draft notes that "trade or increased financial flows can be means to sustainable development but they are not ends in themselves", and says UNCTAD must maintain the overarching mandate of "elaborate[ing] and promot[ing] Southern development policies in a more equal and enabling international economic environment".

Next Steps

As the draft text now has been finalised and sent for translation, members will resume the negotiations in Sao Paulo from 14-17 June. The CSO statement will be finalised during the Civil Society Forum on 11 and 12 June.

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 will focus on enhancing the coherence between national development strategies and global economic processes towards economic growth and development, particularly for developing countries.

For comprehensive details on UNCTAD XI, including a tentative agenda, see <http://www.unctadxi.org> as well as <http://www.forumsociedadecivil.org.br/> for civil society-related information.

ICTSD reporting; "UNCTAD Update On The Final Draft UNCTAD XI Negotiated Text," IATP, 14 May 2004.

OTHER NEWS

AFRICAN TRADE MINISTERS ADOPT 'KIGALI CONSENSUS' ON ONGOING WTO TALKS

African trade, customs and immigration ministers met in Kigali, Rwanda from 27-28 May at a conference organised by the African Union (AU). The agenda featured a number of trade issues, including a review of the stalled WTO negotiations, a status report on the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) under

negotiation with the EU under the Cotonou Agreement, a report on the implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) -- a US trade agreement giving special preferences to Africa -- and preparations for the upcoming UNCTAD XI meeting organised by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Ministers address the Singapore issues

In Kigali, the African trade ministers issued a 'Kigali Consensus' paper on key aspects of the ongoing WTO talks of interest to Africa. The highlight of the Consensus was a statement on the so-called Singapore issues of investment, competition, government procurement and trade facilitation. The ministers demanded that the first three issues be dropped from the Doha agenda (the outcome of the fourth WTO ministerial conference in Doha, Qatar, which provides the mandate for the current negotiations) as well as from the WTO work programme in its entirety. The latest meeting of the WTO General Council had left the status of the three Singapore issues not slated for negotiations somewhat ambiguous (see BRIDGES Weekly, 19 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-05-19/story1.htm>). In his speech at the opening of the conference, WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi also mentioned that a consensus was emerging in Geneva to negotiate on trade facilitation as well as "to keep the other three issues in the WTO's work programme" but outside the ongoing negotiations (for the full speech see http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/spsp_e/spsp28_e.htm).

The Kigali Consensus reiterated concerns expressed by African countries regarding the economic implications of negotiating new WTO agreements, especially considering that existing commitments already tax their capacities. Regarding trade facilitation, the Kigali Consensus noted that before negotiations on modalities proceed, WTO Members should address the resource and capacity constraints faced by developing countries in implementing new obligations in this area. Furthermore, the African ministers called on Members to clarify the applicability of the WTO dispute settlement system to trade facilitation and to address the issue of whether new rules on trade facilitation should be of a binding nature.

Agriculture and cotton

On agriculture, the Kigali Consensus reiterated that African countries do not support the so-called 'blended formula' for tariff reductions put forth by the EU and US (see BRIDGES Weekly, 22 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-04-28/story2.htm>). Instead, ministers noted that any tariff reduction formula to be agreed upon should fully take into account African

needs and development concerns. In related developments on this issue, the G-20 negotiating group, which includes five African countries -- Nigeria, Egypt, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe -- issued a proposal on agricultural market access on 28 May. The proposal does not contain any alternative formula, but instead highlights the concepts and principles WTO Members should consider when drafting a tariff reduction formula (see related story, this issue).

On cotton, the Kigali Consensus urged Members to eliminate subsidies over a three year period starting 1 January 2005, and to establish a fund to support Africa's cotton sector as outlined in the 'Cotton Initiative' (see BRIDGES Weekly, 4 December 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-12-04/story1.htm>).

Regarding the issue of non-agricultural market access (NAMA), the ministers expressed concern that current proposals on the table contradict the principle of less than full reciprocity in favour of developing countries as enshrined in the Doha mandate. Specifically, they expressed concern that this could further worsen the problem of de-industrialisation and heighten unemployment and poverty in African economies. Other areas covered by the Kigali Consensus included trade related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPs), commodities, the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU), and a decision on observer status for the African Union in the WTO.

African finance ministers highlight trade concerns at UNECA meeting

African ministers of finance, planning and economic development met in Kampala, Uganda from 21-22 May -- just prior to the Kigali meeting -- under the auspices of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). A Ministerial Statement issued at the conclusion of the meeting highlighted Africa's continued dismal performance in the global trading system and underscored the importance of "successfully concluding the Doha Development Round in order to better integrate Africa into the global trading system". The statement further outlined some of the trade concerns and interests of Africa in the talks, and commended the ECA for establishing an office in Geneva and an African Trade Policy Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to better assist African trade negotiators in preparing for the WTO negotiations.

The full text of the Kampala Ministerial Statement is available at <http://www.uneca.org/cfm/2004/index.htm>.

ICTSD reporting; "African Ministers call for three Singapore issues to drop from WTO work programme," TWN INFO SERVICE ON WTO ISSUES, 31 May 2004; "African trade ministers meet to forge common front," BUSINESS DAY, 1 June 2004; "G-20 keeps options

open in proposal on market access for WTO farm talks" WTO REPORTER, 1 June 2004.

EU AGREES TERMS FOR RUSSIA'S WTO ENTRY, PUTIN SIGNALS SUPPORT FOR KYOTO PROTOCOL

At an EU-Russia summit on 21 May, the EU agreed to support Russia's WTO accession, and Russian President Putin said he would "speed up" Russia's process to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Both topics had been slated for possible inclusion in an EU-Russia package deal (see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-04-28/story5.htm>). In the end, formal agreement was limited to Russia's WTO accession, with the EU and Russia agreeing on the bilateral terms of Russia's accession. In order to join the WTO, Russia needs to clinch bilateral deals with Members that so request. The President of the EU Commission, Romano Prodi, commented that "today the EU and Russia cement further their trade and economic relations. This deal brings Russia a step closer to the international trade family, the WTO, where it belongs". Russia still faces negotiations with other key WTO Members, including the US and China, before joining.

EU-Russia agreement on Russia's accession terms

The Russian policy of low domestic gas prices had been a stumbling block in bilateral WTO accession talks with the EU (see BRIDGES Weekly, 8 April 2004; <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-04-08/story5.htm>). In the final deal, Russia agreed to gradually increase gas prices, and to open up its gas pipelines to private firms. Russia agreed to raise gas prices for industrial users from the current US\$27-28 per tonne to US\$37-42 by 2006 and US\$49-57 by 2010. These increases are, in any case, in line with Russia's domestic energy plan. According to the EC, "increasing domestic energy prices will encourage a more efficient use of energy resources in Russia and it is thus mutually supportive of the Kyoto goals". Russian petroleum company Gazprom would, however, be allowed to keep its monopoly on exports of Russian gas. Pascal Lamy, the EU Trade Commissioner, said, "it was a red line for Putin. In these sorts of negotiations, there are red lines, and I can tell you that it will remain a red line for Mr. Putin".

In terms of goods, Russia will bind tariffs at 7.6 percent for industrial goods, 11 percent for fishery products and 13 percent for agricultural goods, in addition to tariff rate quotas for fresh and frozen meat and poultry from the EU representing around EUR600 million, or 15

percent of total EU agricultural exports to Russia, per year.

Russia made a number of minor concessions in the services sector. Lamy noted a successful outcome in the telecoms sector, saying that "we got what we wanted, which is no restrictions on market access as it is in Russian legislation". In terms of flights over Siberia, Russia agreed to make charges "cost based, transparent and non-discriminatory by 2013".

These terms will be included in Russia's overall WTO accession package, which will consolidate the best concessions into market access schedules for goods and services.

Tougher talks to follow

Before joining the WTO, Russia will be required to clinch deals with a number of other current Members. Trade sources indicate that some of the upcoming talks, with countries such as the US, are likely to be tough. In fact, some commentators felt that the deal with the EU had been light -- especially in the services sector -- with the EU leaving certain problem areas to other Members to work out with Russia. All terms of the various bilateral deals will automatically apply to all Members under the most favoured nation principle. Lamy commented that the deal with the EU was meant to encourage Russia to continue bilateral talks, and said it was clear that "here and there, they'll have to give more to the US, Japan, or China". The US is set to get a better deal in the telecommunications and financial services sectors, in terms of protection of intellectual property rights, import duties on aircraft and aircraft parts, as well as the dual pricing of energy.

In terms of timing, both Russian and EU trade negotiators said that Russia would likely make it into the WTO only in 2006 at the earliest.

Putin extends lifeline for Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol, which sets emissions limitations for greenhouse gases, cannot enter into force without Russian ratification, following the pullout of the US in 2001. Russia has been sending mixed signals on its intentions in this regard (see BRIDGES Weekly, 1 October 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-10-01/story2.htm>). However, immediately following the summit with the EU, Putin said, "it is true that the European Union has met us half-way on certain issues during the WTO negotiations. This cannot but have a positive effect on our position on the Kyoto protocol. We will speed up Russia's moves towards ratifying the protocol...We clearly set out our position on Kyoto long ago. We are for the Kyoto process and we support it".

Putin did not, however, set a date for Russia's ratification.

"European Union-Russia deal brings Russia a step closer to WTO Membership," EC PRESS RELEASE, 21 May 2004; "Russia get EU deal on WTO, backs Kyoto," REUTERS, 21 May 2004; "Russia, EU agree on WTO-membership terms," PRAVDA, 25 May 2004; "Lamy Says Russia WTO Accession Talks Nearly Complete; Some EU Goals Dropped," WTO REPORTER, 26 May 2004.

REGIONAL UPDATE: AMERICAS, CHINA AND EUROPE

With progress slow in the multilateral arena, regional trade agreements continue to move forward. The EU and Mercosur -- a trade bloc comprising Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay -- emerged optimistic on the prospects for concluding a free trade agreement in October this year, following a summit between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean from 28-29 May in Guadalajara, Mexico. Brazil and China signed ten agreements covering trade and cooperation on 24 May, and discussions continued on the formation of a Common Economic Space (CES) between Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, also on 24 May. In addition, new initiatives are emerging, with Mercosur and China set begin talks on a free trade agreement, and the Central American and Andean countries looking to collaborate more closely with the EU.

EU, Mercosur closer to bilateral agreement

The third summit of the heads of state from the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean took place from 28-29 May in Guadalajara, Mexico. The meeting was the first summit since the EU's expansion from 15 to 25 member countries, and focused on social cohesion, regional integration and effective multilateralism. During the talks, which were accompanied by protests, the issue of agriculture arose as a sticking point. "The European position is that...given that subsidies are being discussed in the WTO, they should not be brought up in bilateral talks, like the Mercosur-EU talks," said the host, Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Ernesto Derbez. "We don't like that, I don't like that," he added. The meeting wrapped up with a 'Declaration of Guadalajara', which, on the subject of trade, underlined the potential of external trade as a catalyst for economic growth. The Declaration expressed commitment to the Doha round of trade negotiations and recognised the need to ensure benefits for all countries, and in particular developing countries, from the round. The Declaration further committed its signatories to maintaining the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) "as the focal point in the

UN System for dealing with the integrated treatment of trade and development".

At the summit, the EU announced it would begin free trade talks with the Central American and Andean nations once the two regions achieved greater regional integration. "Once we have assessed that these countries have reached a sufficient level of integration would we be prepared to move into a phase of negotiations," said Karl Falkenberg, a senior EU official. Exploratory talks are scheduled for September.

In days surrounding the summit, the EU and Mercosur met to discuss their ongoing bilateral negotiations (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-05-13/inbrief.htm#3>).

"We all had the sense it is possible, with hard work, to finish by the target date of October 2004, with a good and balanced agreement," said Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim. On 28 May, the two sides concluded talks on concessions in the agricultural sector by the Europeans and in the goods and services areas by the Mercosur countries. Differences still remain over Mercosur's wish to increase exports of raw materials and byproducts, as well as over the EU's request for increased market access for industrialized goods and preferential treatment of 90 percent of European products.

The Andean countries consist of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela; the Central American group consists of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, and Nicaragua.

China in cooperation with South America

On 24 May, Brazil and China signed ten agreements covering trade and cooperation in different fields, including agriculture, science and technology, energy, infrastructure, health services, sports and joint investment projects. Visiting Beijing, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao emphasised their commitment to a bilateral "strategic alliance," calling for "a more democratic and representative global system". President Lula da Silva stressed that, "the strength and vitality of the Chinese economy is a unique opportunity for growth and cooperation with the countries of the Southern hemisphere, and I'm sure China has that clear perception about the Brazilian economy". The target would be "to quadruple trade with Brazil in the coming years". Lula da Silva also announced that Mercosur and China would, in the near future, begin talks aimed at a free trade agreement. Private sector talks would commence in July when Argentine president Nestor Kirchner and a Mercosur business delegation visited China. The initial goal would be an agreement on a partial list of goods subject to tariff preferences.

However, sources indicate that some in the Brazilian private sector are concerned about the success of such cooperation, given the competitiveness of the Chinese economy.

In related news, China was accepted as one of the sixty country observers at the Organisation of American States (OAS) on 27 May. "China will actively promote cooperation with the OAS with the purpose of promoting mutual development," said Chinese observer Yang Jiechi. He added that the observer status would open many opportunities for cooperation between China and the Americas, and praised the role the OAS played in promoting regional integration, stability and security.

Former Soviet states to increase integration

On 24 May, Russian President Vladimir Putin met with his counterparts from the Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan in Yalta by the Black Sea to discuss the formation of a Common Economic Space (CES), which would be modelled loosely on the EU. The Presidents agreed to promote greater coordination of economic policies and trade, and Putin expressed his hope that the main agreements establishing the economic zone could be signed by 2005-2006. This would allow a free trade zone to be set up by 2010. The four heads of state also noted that a regional trade alliance would help, rather than hinder, their bids to become members of the WTO. CES membership would not be closed, and other post-Soviet countries would be encouraged to join. The CES is seen by trade commentators as an attempt to counterbalance the strong US influence in the region.

To access the Declaration of Guadalajara, visit http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/80644.pdf

"China becomes OAS observer, MERCOPRESS," 28 May 2004; "Brazil and China 'strategic alliance'," MERCOPRESS, 25 May 2004; "Russia Forges Post-Soviet Economic Union," CNSNews.com Correspondent, 26 May 2004; "EU: Not Ready For Central, Latin America Free Trade," AP, 27 May 2004; "EU, Latin American meetings end with no agreement," AP, 30 May 2004; "Europe and Latin America look to boost ties, trade in Mexican Summit," CHANNEL NEWS ASIA, 26 May 2004; "European-Latin American summit ends," AP, 29 May 2004; "Ex-Soviet Union 'Good for WTO Bids,' MOSCOW TIMES, 25 May 2004.

IN BRIEF

EU APPROVES GM CANNED MAIZE

On 19 May, the European Commission approved the sale of Syngenta's Bt-11 sweet corn. The genetically modified (GM) maize, which will be sold canned, is the first approval in five years of biotech food sales within Europe. The maize imports, authorised for a period of 10 years, "has been subjected to the most rigorous pre-marketing assessment in the world," according to EU Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne. The US has long complained that the EU's restrictions on GM products have not been based on scientific evidence. "Our basic concern is that the EU does not have a consistently functioning approval process. Recent actions by EU authorities to advance a few biotech products through its process are not sufficient to address US concerns," commented Neena Moorjani, spokesperson for the US Trade Representative.

Many civil society groups sharply criticised the Commission's decision. "Good science and democracy went out the window last week when the European Commission approved that maize...it certainly isn't because of overwhelming public opinion," said Liana Stupples of Friends of the Earth International. Former Ulster Farmers' Union president and independent candidate for the European Elections noted, "this decision is a direct result of the EU acquiescing to American bully tactics". Despite the approval, Syngenta on 26 May announced its decision not to market Bt-11 maize due to reluctance of the European food industry to add GM corn to its product range.

"Anger at Euro ruling on GM maize," BELFAST TELEGRAPH, 20 May 2004; "EU allows sale of genetically modified corn," THE WASHINGTON POST, 20 May 2004; "EU approves GMO canned maize, lifting 5-year ban," REUTERS, 20 May 2004; "Syngenta decides not to market GM product in the EU after all," CORDIS NEWS, 26 May 2004; "Protestors ask WTO to keep out of GM food issue," AP, 25 May 2004.

**US TO SPEED UP APPROVAL OF
GENERIC AIDS DRUGS**

At the annual meeting of the World Health Assembly on 17-22 May in Geneva, the US announced it would provide rapid approvals for generic versions of HIV/AIDS drugs. This move represented a reversal of US policy, and means that the US\$15 billion HIV/AIDS Fund under the Bush Administration will be able to rely on generics, including one pill fixed-dose combinations.

Only two months ago, the US negative stance on generics sparked criticism among civil society organisations, which asserted that the US was blocking the use of sorely needed inexpensive generic versions of HIV/AIDS drugs in poor countries in order to secure the market for US patented drugs (see BRIDGES Weekly, 31 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-03-31/story3.htm>). The US Food and Drug Administration will still be responsible for reviewing applications of generics manufacturers; the processing time could, however, be cut from six months to just a few weeks. World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria welcomed this move. Some critics voiced their concern over the fact that the US will continue with its own approval process despite an international process undertaken by the WHO. Three pharmaceutical companies, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Gilead Sciences and Merck & Co., announced their plans to develop a fixed-dose combination of three HIV medicines following the move by the US.

"U.S. Speeds Approval Process For Generic AIDS Drugs," UNWIRE, 17 May 2004; "WHO, Global Fund Welcome U.S. Rapid Review Of AIDS Drugs," UNWIRE, 18 May 2004.

**BAHRAIN, US CONCLUDE FTA
NEGOTIATIONS**

After just four months of negotiations, Bahrain and the US concluded a free trade agreement (FTA) on 27 May. According to US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick, "the US-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement is a pace setter showing the way to implement the president's initiative for building prosperity, opportunity, and hope in the Middle East". In the Arab world, the US recently concluded a free trade agreement with Morocco (see BRIDGES Weekly, 3 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-03-03/inbrief.htm>), and already has a deal in place with Jordan. US President Bush has proposed a regional Mideast free trade pact stretching from Morocco to Iran by 2013 (see BRIDGES Weekly, 3 July 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-07-03/inbrief.htm#3>). Bahrain's Finance Minister Abdulla Hassan Saif said he hoped the FTA with the US would position Bahrain as a permanent gateway for trade in the region. The US currently is Bahrain's leading trade partner, exporting aircraft, machinery, vehicles, pharmaceuticals, toys, games and sports equipment to the middle eastern state. Bahrain exports apparel and clothing accessories, aluminium, fertilisers and organic chemicals to the US.

"US Reaches Agreement On Free Trade Deal With Bahrain," AP, 27 May 2004; "U.S., Bahrain reach free trade pact - official," REUTERS, 27 May 2004.

ZOELICK DISMISSES POSSIBLE WTO CASE AGAINST OPEC

On 27 May, US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick dismissed the possibility of the US bringing a dispute settlement case against the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Thirty-two Members of the US Congress sent a letter to US President Bush in late March requesting the administration to file a complaint with the WTO over OPEC's restrictions on oil outputs, which have kept oil prices high (see BRIDGES Weekly, 31 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-03-31/inbrief.htm#6>). Such calls have lately been reiterated by US Members of Congress, as oil prices have climbed to their highest in 20 years. Zoellick, however, said there was "no apparent basis" to launch a case.

ICTSD reporting; "Zoellick Rejects Opening WTO Trade Case Against OPEC for Restricting Oil Supplies," WTO REPORTER, 1 June 2004.

WTO PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM: DIALOGUE AND PROTESTS

From 25-27 May, the WTO's annual public symposium, entitled "Multilateralism at a Crossroads" was held in Geneva. The meeting, which drew a crowd of around 1000 participants, consisted of 29 sessions organised by NGOs, the WTO and Members. Speakers at the opening plenary included Pascal Lamy, EU Trade Commissioner, Niall Fitzgerald, Chair and CEO of Unilever and Eveline Herfkens, the UN Secretary General's Executive Coordinator for the Millennium Development Goals. In his opening speech, WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi noted that the WTO is facing a "historic window of opportunity" and that "if we fail to seize this opportunity, we run the risk of losing the rest of this year, as well as most of 2005". The panel discussion yielded various perspectives, ranging from Lamy's view that bilateral and regional efforts should be complementing multilateral efforts, to Herfken's perspective that there should be a moratorium on regional trade agreements, as it is only in a multilateral setting that coalitions between smaller countries can be formed in order to "constrain the powerful and protect the weak".

Members from civil society gathered outside the WTO building on the 25 May parallel to the Symposium, urging the WTO not to undermine the sovereign right of any country to protect its citizens and the environment from genetically modified (GM) foods and crops. A petition, signed by more than 100,000 citizens from 91 countries and more than 544 organisations representing 48 million was delivered to the WTO as part of a campaign against a complaint filed at the WTO

by the US, Argentina and Canada a year ago accusing the EU of blocking trade in GM crops (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 30 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-04-30/story2.htm>).

To access Supachai's speech, visit http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news_e.htm#speech27

For more information on the "Bite back" campaign, see <http://www.bite-back.org/>

ICTSD reporting; "Hands off our food, say campaigners," ONEWORLD.NET, 25 May 2004.

VACANCIES

VACANCIES

Vacancy At ICTSD

MANAGING DIRECTOR, ICTSD. Geneva, Switzerland. Competencies required

include: ability to manage and lead the business, financial, legal and human systems of a multi-programme nongovernmental organisation, ability to interact directly with staff and act as main interface and problem solver on programme issues related to above-mentioned areas, ability to lead, frame and provide guidance to multi-disciplinary teams and knowledge of and experience with international organisations and/or international non-governmental organisations. Application Deadline: 11 June 2004. For further information see: <http://www.ictsd.org/about/ar/MgtDirectorAC.pdf>

Other Vacancies

ISEAL ALLIANCE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. The ISEAL Alliance is a formal collaboration of the leading international standard-setting and conformity assessment organisations working on social and environmental issues. ISEAL is seeking a highly motivated individual to lead a small team in delivering services to our member organisations. The Executive Director is responsible for fundraising, programme and long-term strategic planning, in addition to analysis and advocacy in the international policy environment. The full job and hiring process description can be downloaded from the ISEAL homepage at <http://www.isealliance.org>. Applications are to be sent before 1 July to Brendan May, Chief Executive of the

Marine Stewardship Council, email:
Brendan.May@msc.org.

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.

Coming Up: 3-9 June

29 May to 4 June, Washington, D.C., US: 36TH WORLD FARMERS CONGRESS. This Congress, organised by IFAP -- the world body gathering national farmers organisations -- will be the occasion to challenge world leaders on global issues, such as the WTO trade negotiations, water, food security and industrial concentration. For over 50 years, inter-governmental organisations have been mandated to eliminate hunger and poverty, and place the world on a sustainable path for global economic development. For further information contact IFAP-FIPA, tel: +33-1-4526-0553; fax: +33-1-4874-7212; e-mail: ifap@ifap.org; Internet: <http://www.ifap.org/wfc04/index.html>

1-4 June 2004, Bonn, Germany: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGIES. German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002 that Germany would host this Conference. Themes to be considered include financing (instruments) and market development, formation of enabling political framework conditions, and capacity building (education, research, networks, cooperation, etc.). The Conference is expected to add to the momentum generated by the coalition of like-minded countries for promotion of renewable energy (known as the Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition, JREC). For further information contact: Secretariat of the International Conference for Renewable Energies; tel: +49-6196- 794404; fax: +49-6196-794405; e-mail: info@renewables2004.de; Internet: <http://www.renewables2004.de/>

3-4 June, Cambridge, Massachusetts, US: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FROM TAIWAN. Sponsored by Science, Technology and Innovation

Project Centre for International Development, Harvard University and Science, Technology and Globalization Project, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government. The conference builds on ongoing research and outreach activities on the role of science, technology and innovation in economic transformation. Other related activities include the Task Force on Science, Technology and Innovation of the United Nations Millennium Project commissioned by the UN Secretary General and supported by the UN Development Group. For further information contact: Brian Torpy, email: stg@ksg.harvard.edu; tel: 617-496-5574, fax: 617-495-8963; Internet: <http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidbiotech/taiwan/announce>

3-4 June, Paris, France: WORKSHOP ON EUROPEAN GOVERNANCE AND EUROPEAN OPINIONS ON TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. The fifth workshop of the Trade, Societies and Sustainable Development "Sustra" Network is dedicated to civil society participation in the policy-making process. It addresses the issue of the European governance of the trade negotiation process. The objective is to understand how collective preferences about trade and sustainability are built up within Europe. Several questions will be addressed : (i) why did the NGO movement prove to be so successful in raising linkage issues such as the potential negative effects of trade for example on food security ? (ii) What is the role of networks in the European decision-making process ? (iii) Does the European integration process favour the convergence of public opinions on sustainable trade and does it exacerbate divergences? For further information contact Jean-Marie Paugam, IFRI, tel: +33 1 4061 6083; fax: +33 1 4061 6060; email: paugam@ifri.org; Internet: <http://www.agromontpellier.fr/sustra/>

7 June, Copenhagen, Denmark: SEMINAR ON STANDARDS AND TRADE IMPACTS OF FOOD SAFETY, QUALITY AND 'SUSTAINABILITY' STANDARDS ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. This seminar is organised by the 'WTO, Trade & Development' network, an initiative based at the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS). Presentations include: Disciplining the use of food safety measures - The impacts of the WTO SPS Agreement on developing countries; Food safety standards in developed countries vs. integrating developing countries in world food trade. What are the solutions?; Contract production of non-traditional vegetables and the evolution of food safety and quality standards: The case of Zimbabwe; and Beyond regulation: How voluntary and private standards on quality and 'sustainability' shape 'real world' trade. For further information on the network and the 'Trade Mondays',

contact Stefano Ponte, Seminar Coordinator, email: spo@diis.dk.

7-9 June, Copenhagen, Denmark: SYMPOSIUM ON UNCERTAINTY AND PRECAUTION IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT. This international symposium will address the engineering/science - policy/management interface, focusing in particular on the uncertainty and ignorance associated with predictions in science for policy, and on examining the implications of the Precautionary Principle from the scientific, ethical and legal perspectives. The specific areas of application that will be emphasized are water resource management and the risk assessment and regulation of chemicals. For further information contact MIACON, Meeting and Conference Services, tel: +45-4585-9727; fax: +45-4583-9727; e-mail: mia@miacon.dk; Internet: <http://upem.er.dtu.dk/>

8-10 June, Sea Island, Georgia, US: G-8 SEA ISLAND SUMMIT. US President George Bush will host the 2004 G8 Summit. For further information contact the 2004 G8 Summit Planning Organisation, tel: +1-202-647-4804; fax: +1-202-647-3079; e-mail: info@G8USA.gov; Internet: <http://www.g8usa.gov>

9 June, Washington, D.C., US: SEMINAR ON AGRICULTURE AND THE DOHA ROUND: THE 2004 OECD ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL PRODUCER SUPPORT POLICIES. Reform of trade-distorting national agricultural support policies is the central challenge to a successful conclusion of the WTO Doha Round of trade negotiations. Thus, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's annual survey and analysis of current national agricultural support policies is of central importance in assessing what is on the table in the negotiations, including the impact of new reform proposals from key players such as the United States and the European Union. At this seminar -- which is organised by the America Enterprise Institute -- an OECD representative will present the 2004 findings, and a group of experts will discuss the prospects for a successful outcome of the agricultural trade negotiations. For further information see http://www.aei.org/events/type.upcoming,eventID.838,filter/event_detail.asp

9-11 June, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM. The fourth Regional Session of the Global Biodiversity Forum for Africa will focus on the overall theme of Biodiversity and Livelihoods in Africa: Delivering on the Millennium Development Goals. A joint initiative of World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Regional Office for Southern Africa, IUCN South Africa, and ResourceAfrica, its aim is to gather and review regional experiences and perspectives on the

precautionary approach in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, review and discuss early drafts of case studies, and contribute to the development of best-practice guidance on implementation of the precautionary principle. For further information contact Kule Chitepo, ResourceAfrica, tel: +27-12-342-9252; email: kule@resourceafrica.org; Internet: http://www.gbf.ch/present_session.asp?no=37&lg=EN

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.

4 June: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE - SPECIAL SESSION.

4 June: WTO COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPANTS ON THE EXPANSION OF TRADE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS.

7 June: WTO SUB-COMMITTEE ON LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

7-8 June: WTO NEGOTIATING GROUP ON RULES.

9 June: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE IN CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

9 June: WTO NEGOTIATING GROUP ON MARKET ACCESS.

Other Upcoming Events

11-12 June, Sao Paulo, Brazil: G-77 SPECIAL MINISTERIAL MEETING. This Special Ministerial Meeting will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the G-77. The meeting will, inter alia, review the evolution of the G-77, assess the achievements of the Group over the last 40 years, and analyse the challenges facing developing countries. This meeting will also constitute an opportunity for developing countries to reaffirm their commitment to the continuing validity and relevance of the objectives and principles of the Group. In this regard, the meeting is expected to adopt through a declaration the new strategy of action of developing countries. For further information contact Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77, tel: +1-212-963-3816; fax: +1-212-

963-3515; email: g77off@unmail.org; Internet:
<http://www.g77.org>

24 June, New York, US: GLOBAL COMPACT LEADERS SUMMIT. To be chaired by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Global Compact Leaders Summit will convene leaders of participating companies, international labour and civil society and select government officials to take stock of the Global Compact and chart its future course. Launched in July 2000, the Global Compact is an international initiative that brings companies together with UN agencies, labour and civil society to support nine agreed principles of human rights, labour and the environment. For further information contact Gavin Power, Director of Communications, tel: +1-212-963-4681; fax: +1-212-963-1207; email: powerg@un.org; Internet: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/Portal/Default.asp>

RESOURCES

THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES REPORT 2004: LINKING INTERNATIONAL TRADE WITH POVERTY REDUCTION. By the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), May 2004. The Least Developed Countries (LDC) 2004 Report assesses the relationship between international trade and poverty within the LDCs, and identifies national and international policies that can make trade a more effective mechanism for poverty reduction in these countries. The Report argues that international trade can play a major positive role in reducing poverty in the LDCs. However, in practice this is not happening in many of them. In some this is due to a weak trade performance. But most of the LDCs achieved much higher rates of export growth in the 1990s than in the 1980s. The failure of trade expansion to lead to poverty reduction has been related to weaker linkages between trade and economic growth than in the more advanced developing countries. Moreover, there is a tendency for export expansion in very poor economies with mass poverty and few surplus financial resources to be associated with an exclusionary rather than inclusive form of economic growth. Civil conflicts in some of the LDCs have also been associated with immiserising trade. For further information and to access the report see

<http://www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=4810&intltemID=1397&lang=1>

THE STATE OF FOOD AGRICULTURE 2003-2004. By the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), 2004. This edition explores the potential for agricultural biotechnology to address the needs of the world's poor and food-insecure. Agriculture continues to face serious challenges, including feeding an additional two billion people by the year 2030 from an increasingly fragile

natural resource base. The effective transfer of existing technologies to poor rural communities and the development of new and safe biotechnologies can greatly enhance the prospects for sustainably improving agricultural productivity today and in the future. But technology alone cannot solve the problems of the poor and some aspects of biotechnology, particularly the socio-economic impacts and the food safety and environmental implications, need to be carefully assessed. For further information see: http://www.fao.org/docrep/006/Y5160E/y5160e01.htm#P0_0

ENLIGHTENED ENVIRONMENTALISM OR DISGUISED PROTECTIONISM? ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF EU PRECAUTION-BASED STANDARDS ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. By the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC), April 2004. This paper contains three essays with regional implications: on Africa, with a discussion of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), on Asia with an outline of the impact of the Basel Convention's broad definition of 'hazardous waste' and its proposed Ban Amendment on important recovery and recycling industries in Asia and Latin America and Asia with a presentation of the extra-territorial scope of the EU-REACH Regulation on chemicals. Available at [http://www.nftc.org/default/white%20paper/riskreg3study404\(2\)Final.doc](http://www.nftc.org/default/white%20paper/riskreg3study404(2)Final.doc)

EXPORTING THE LAW. By the National Foundation for American Policy (NFAP, April 2004). Proposed state and federal legislation to restrict outsourcing may violate the US Constitution and jeopardise US obligations under international trade agreements, according to this report. The proposed legislation is thus subject to challenge on a variety of grounds. NFAP solicited the views of Shannon Thyme Klinger and Lynn Sykes, attorneys in the Washington, D.C. office of Alston & Bird, and joins in their analysis -- which concludes that prohibitions on state contract work being performed overseas are the most legally suspect category of proposed outsourcing legislation. State laws offering preferential treatment for in-state interests, though not outright prohibitions, may also violate the US Constitution and State and federal measures that restrict or ban sending US consumers' financial, medical, or other related personal information overseas may be unenforceable in whole or in part under the doctrine of preemption. To access the report, visit http://www.nfap.net/researchactivities/studies/NFAPStudyExportingLaw_0404.pdf

JOB LOSSES AND TRADE: A REALITY CHECK. By Brink Lindsey (Cato Centre for Trade Policy Studies Trade Briefing Paper No. 19, March 2004). Fears about job losses and chronic job shortages are on the loose again. Over the past few years, millions of US jobs

have disappeared, and foreign competition is increasingly taking the blame. Manufacturing jobs are supposedly fleeing to China, while service-sector jobs are being "off-shored" to India. International trade contributes only modestly to this frenetic job turnover, however. Between 2000 and 2003, manufacturing employment dropped by nearly 2.8 million, yet imports of manufactured goods rose only 0.6 percent. Meanwhile, despite the new off-shoring trend, the Department of Labour is forecasting a 35 percent increase in computer-and math-related jobs over the next decade. To access the report, see <http://www.freetrade.org/pubs/briefs/tbp-019es.html>

PRICE EFFECTS OF PREFERENTIAL MARKET ACCESS: THE CARIBBEAN BASIN INITIATIVE AND THE APPAREL SECTOR. By Caglar Özden and Gunjan Sharma (World Bank Trade and Development Research Group Working Paper 3244, March 2004) Preferential trade arrangements should be evaluated by analysing their effect on prices, rather than the total value of trade, as emphasised in the theoretical literature but rarely implemented empirically. Özden and Sharma analyse the impact of the unilateral preferences granted by the US Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) on the prices received by eligible apparel exporters. They use fixed effects generalised least squares (GLS) estimation to isolate the effects of various other factors (such as quality, exchange rates, and transactions costs) and identify the effects of tariff preferences. To view the report, see <http://econ.worldbank.org/view.php?type=5&id=34171>

"Intellectual Property Rights and Biodiversity Management: The Case of India" in GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS (4/1 2004), p. 97. By Dr Philippe Cullet & Jawahar Raja. (International Environmental Law Research Centre). This article analyses the impacts of the international legal framework for the promotion of intellectual property rights on India's legal regime concerning the control over biological resources and inventions derived from biological resources. It focuses in particular on the newly adopted Biodiversity Act and Plant Variety Act as well as on amendments to the Patents Act and their organic relationship within the overall domestic legal framework. It analyses these enactments in the context of the move towards the control of biological resources and derived products through property rights fostered by existing international treaties, in particular the TRIPS Agreement and the Biodiversity Convention. To access the article, see http://www.ielrc.org/research_intellectual_property.php

"How Do Patents And Economic Policies Affect Access To Essential Medicines In Developing Countries?" in HEALTH AFFAIRS, Vol 23, Issue 3, (May 2004) pp. 155-166. By Amir Attaran. This paper studies the

relationship between patents and access to essential medicines. It finds that in sixty-five low- and middle-income countries, where four billion people live, patenting is rare for 319 products on the World Health Organisation's Model List of Essential Medicines. Only seventeen essential medicines are patentable, although usually not actually patented, so that overall patent incidence is low (1.4 percent) and concentrated in larger markets. This and other results shed light on the policy dialogue among public health activists, the pharmaceutical industry, and governments that is often based on mistaken premises about how patents affect corporate revenues or the health of the world's poorest. To access the report, see <http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/content/full/23/3/155>

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