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LEAD STORIES

ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL PROPOSE "DEVELOPMENT AGENDA" FOR WIPO

Over the last week, Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia informally circulated a proposal to establish a "development agenda" at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). The proposal, to be officially presented at the upcoming thirty-first session of the WIPO General Assembly at the end of the month, is expected to be controversial. Some developing country trade observers have characterised it as "groundbreaking," and as an important step in the rethinking of the role of developing countries in WIPO, since it is the first proposition of its kind at the organisation. The proposal criticises the general nature of WIPO, arguing that it is time for the institution to integrate the UN-wide development agenda, including the commitments set out in the Millennium Development Goals, in its mandate. It also touches on the basic principles and structure of WIPO, and questions the role WIPO has played in promoting development. While the Doha Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and Public Health has been a milestone for one aspect of intellectual property, the proponents consider it to be time to turn attention to what arguably is one of the most important institutions in setting future intellectual property (IP) policy.

Specific issues of concern

Apart from the challenge of incorporating a development perspective in WIPO, the proposal highlights certain specific areas of concern. These include a proposition for the establishment of a new subsidiary body in WIPO that would look at measures within the IP system that could be undertaken to ensure an effective transfer of technology to developing countries, mirroring parallel bodies in the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the WTO. Further concerns are related to negotiations surrounding the Substantive Patent Law Treaty (SPLT), with the proposal arguing that so far the treaty has failed to incorporate the interest and proposals of developing countries. In this sense, the proposal discusses the difficulty developing countries will have in

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implementing more stringent IP standards contained in such a treaty. As a result, Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia argue that public interest flexibilities and policy spaces in member countries should be preserved, and that the SPLT and other treaties in WIPO should include the contents of Articles 7 and 8 of the TRIPS Agreement (Articles 7 and 8 highlight the principles of promoting technological innovation, transfer and dissemination, bearing in mind the importance of social and economic welfare, the protection of public health and nutrition and the necessity to prevent the abuse of IPRs in this context).

Future Steps

According to trade sources, developing countries have welcomed the emergence the discussion on a "development agenda" at WIPO. It is, however, too early to expect many co-sponsorships of the proposition, as the proposal has yet to reach all developing states and be included in the agenda of the General Assembly. Reportedly, Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia will meet with other developing countries in the near future to go over the details and create a stronger basis of support for the upcoming WIPO General Assembly, scheduled for 27 September to 5 October.

To access the proposal by Brazil and Argentina, visit http://www.iprsonline.org/resources/docs/BrazilArgentina_WIPO.pdf

ICTSD reporting; "Brazil, Argentina to Push at WIPO Meeting To Put Development Issues Higher on Agenda," WTO REPORTER, 3 September 2004.

ASEAN LOOKS TO DEEPEN INTEGRATION, FORGE NEW TRADE TIES

The ten-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) finance ministers concluded their four-day annual meeting on 7 September in Jakarta, Indonesia. The meeting sought to lay the foundation for greater integration and marked several pivotal trade agreements and negotiations between ASEAN and key countries, such as New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Korea, China and India. In concrete terms, the six original members -- Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand --decided to abolish tariffs in 11 sectors (rubber, electronics, autos, textiles, air travel, tourism, agriculture, e-commerce, fisheries, wood, and healthcare) by 2007. The newer members, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam, will phase out tariffs by 2012. "Equipped with a clear road map and schedule, those sectors of priority will certainly encourage the growth and integration of the other sectors," commented Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

The meeting in Jakarta also endorsed the establishment of a fund to strengthen the group's dispute settlement mechanism and to revise the "rules of origin" agreement, which in the past has required that products manufactured in an ASEAN country have a minimum 40 percent local or ASEAN content to be able to enjoy low tariffs. The revision would cut the local content requirement to 20 percent, thus boosting regional trade. Officials expressed the hope greater economic integration would enable ASEAN to better compete in the global economy as the region recovers from the repercussions of the Asian financial crisis and the recent uncertainties associated with SARS and the Iraq conflict.

ASEAN agrees to FTA talks with New Zealand and Australia

ASEAN agreed to begin free trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand next year. Negotiations are expected to start in January and conclude within two years with full implementation by 2015. Leaders from Australia, New Zealand, and the ten ASEAN countries will discuss the talks at an ASEAN summit in Laos in November. Trade officials noted that agriculture is likely to become a challenge in these talks, with Australia and New Zealand both being major exporters. Indonesia and several other ASEAN countries are seeking to protect their poor farmers from import surges and secure rural development and livelihoods.

Meanwhile, regional powerhouses Japan, Korea, and China also agreed to strengthen trade ties with ASEAN. Free trade agreements between ASEAN and Japan should be in place by 2012, and with South Korea by 2009. Japan is expecting tough talks on opening up its protected farm market to imports, as well as opening its labour market. ASEAN economic ministers also held free trade talks with Indian Trade Minister Kamal Nath and agreed to establish a free trade area with India in January 2005 and steadily reduce tariffs on 105 items with the hopes of reaching zero tariffs by 2007.

ASEAN recognises China as market economy

Another outcome of the meeting in Jakarta was that the ASEAN recognised China as a full market economy, according to the Chinese state press. Although Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand had already recognised China as a market economy, the remaining ASEAN members finally made their recognition this past weekend. Achieving regional acknowledgment as a market economy, China will now have greater power in trade disputes and will likely increase trade within the region. Already, "the two-way trade volume between ASEAN nations and China accounts for 11 percent of China's overall external trade," said China's Minister of Commerce Bo Zilai. ASEAN's recognition was seen as

especially significant after the EU refused China full market economy status this past June due to problems such as China's state interference, weak rule of law, and poor corporate governance.

"Australia, New Zealand, ASEAN Agree To FTA Talks Next Year," MEDIA CORP NEWS, 6 September 2004; "ASEAN Recognizes China As Market Economy," AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 6 September 2004; "ASEAN Moves Closer To Single Market With Road Map, Global Trade Deals," AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 5 September 2004; "Pascal Lamy Returns To South-East Asia To Strengthen Regional Trade Links," EUROPA PRESS RELEASE, 03 September 2004; "ASEAN Ministers To Urge Leaders To Speed Up Integration," KYODO NEWS, 3 September 2004; "ASEAN-India FTA Set To Kick Off In January," XINHUA NEWS, 6 September 2004; "EU Yet To Set Timetable For FTA With ASEAN," ASIA PULSE, 6 September 2004; "ASEAN Trade Body Endorses Enhanced Rules Of Origin," THE JAKARTA POST, 3 September 2004.

IN BRIEF

ZAMBIA TO MANUFACTURE GENERIC HIV/AIDS MEDICINES

On 2 September Zambia declared HIV/AIDS a national emergency in an effort to begin manufacturing generic AIDS drugs. Davidson Chilipamushi, Tanzanian Permanent Secretary of Commerce, Trade and Industry said the declaration would enable local firms to obtain licenses to produce cheaper, generic AIDS drugs. Under WTO rules, countries must declare HIV/AIDS an emergency in order to manufacture generic AIDS drugs for domestic distribution. The drugs cannot be exported, and companies as well as persons who wish to manufacture, use or sell any generic drugs will require a written authorisation during the declared period of emergency. The emergency declaration offers new hope to Zambia. Patented western anti-retroviral drugs cost between US\$300 and US\$1,000 per treatment per month. One in every five Zambians is infected with HIV or AIDS, and nearly 700,000 Zambians have already died since the first case was reported in 1984. 800,000 children have been orphaned. The need for affordable drugs is staggering, especially in a country of 10 million people where the majority live far below the World Bank poverty threshold of US\$1 a day. Developing countries that do not have the capacity to produce their own generics have the right to import them in situations of national emergency under a decision on TRIPS and

Health taken in 2003 at the WTO (see BRIDGES Weekly, 4 September 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-09-04/wtoinbrief.htm#1>).

"Zambia Declares AIDS Emergency To Produce Drugs," REUTERS, 3 September 2004; "HIV/Aids Call For Unity And Focus, Says Ndhlovu," THE LUSAKA POST, 7 September 2004; "The Cost Of A Cure," NATIONAL REVIEW, 15 June 2004.

US TEXTILE GROUPS LASH OUT AGAINST CHINESE PRODUCERS

On 1 September US textile producers stated their intention to file a safeguard claim in anticipation of surges of Chinese textile imports in 2005. The National Council of Textile Organisations (NCTO), the American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition (AMTAC), and the National Textile Association (NTA) cited earlier import surges from China as proof that the elimination of all textile and clothing quotas would lead to material injury to the US textile industry. Commenting on the issue, US Undersecretary for International Trade Grant Aldonas said that current procedures for considering requests for import restraints under the China textile safeguard mechanism allow for petitions based on threat of injury. In addition, he said he would raise the possibility of a broader agreement restraining China's textile trade across a range of categories during a meeting with Chinese trade officials to be held from 7-18 September. US textile producers also blamed China for currency suppression, saying that the weakness of the yuan gave Chinese producers an advantage in international garment markets. The groups urged the US government to continue pressuring the Chinese government to float the currency.

Under the WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC), Members must phase out textile quotas by 31 December 2004. Certain countries have expressed concern regarding adjustment costs due to quota elimination (see BRIDGES Weekly, 1 September 2004 <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-09-01/story2.htm>) and Members will likely bring up this issue at a 1 October meeting of the Council for Trade in Goods.

"Textile Industry Announces Intention to File Threat-Based China Safeguard Petitions in September," WTO REPORTER, 7 September 2004; "Textile Industry Announces Intention to File Threat-Based China Safeguard Petitions in September," GAFTT, AMTAC PRESS RELEASE, 1 September 2004; "WTO DG consults members on possible emergency meeting to discuss textiles and clothing adjustment challenges," WTO PRESS RELEASE, 4 August 2004; "U.S. Says It Will Keep Pressuring China Over Currency," BLOOMBERG, 2 September 2004.

CITES BANS CAVIAR TRADE

On 1 September officials from the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) told the New York Times that caviar exports had been suspended. The officials highlighted the failure of exporting countries to accurately account for illegal harvesting of beluga caviar and abide by a 2001 agreement on conservation. Caviar from beluga sturgeon is exported mainly from countries bordering the Caspian Sea. Its population has plummeted 90 percent in the past 20 years due to overfishing, habitat destruction and pollution. CITES' decision to stop issuing export permits was praised by civil society groups such as Caviar Emptor, a coalition of three organisations seeking to protect and restore endangered Caspian Sea sturgeon. Lisa Speer, senior policy analyst for the Natural Resources Defense Council and spokesperson for Caviar Emptor, said the coalition was "very concerned that critically needed long-term conservation measures have yet to be implemented in the Caspian region". The Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan were all party to the 2001 agreement which bound the parties to reduce stocks and make significant improvements in science, management and enforcement related to depleted sturgeon populations. They agreed to a 9.6 percent reduction of stocks in 2002, and in March 2004 CITES granted them an extra three months to fulfil their international obligations (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 2 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-04-02/story3.htm>). Although the ban will not prevent illegal trade in sturgeon caviar, CITES said it would remain in place until the Caspian nations comply with the agreement.

"Caviar Faces a Ban," NYT, 1 September 2004; "U.N. agency says nations need to improve conservation," MSNBC, 1 September 2004; "Wildlife Officials Shut Down Global Caviar Trade," CAVIAR EMPTOR RELEASE, 1 September 2004.

WTO IN BRIEF

WTO RELEASES COTTON REPORT; US VOWS TO APPEAL

The ruling in the case brought by Brazil against US cotton subsidies was finally made public on 8 September. The panel ruled that subsidies granted to US cotton farmers by the US government from 1999-2002 under certain programmes, such as marketing

loans, export credits, commodity certificates and direct payments, depressed world market prices and were injurious to Brazil's trade interests (see BRIDGES Weekly, 23 June 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-06-23/wtoinbrief.htm>). The parties to the dispute had received copies of the report on 18 June, and the delay of its release was due to the need for translation to all three official WTO languages. Following the public release of the report, the US stressed the "mixed nature" of the verdict, noting that the panel had ruled that decoupled subsidies did not depress world cotton prices. "We welcome the panel's findings that US decoupled income support payments have not caused 'serious prejudice' under WTO rules. This report confirms that reforms in our 1996 farm legislation and continued in 2002 have worked and that fully decoupled payments do not cause WTO-inconsistent effects by distorting production or trade," said US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick. He said the US would appeal, and stressed that certain issues covered in the report should be negotiated, not litigated.

To access the panel report, visit http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news_e.htm

ICTSD reporting; "United States Successfully Defends Decoupled Payments from "Serious Prejudice" Claims," USTR PRESS RELEASE, 8 September 2004.

BYRD AMENDMENT: WTO ALLOWS SANCTIONS AGAINST US

On 31 August, a WTO arbitrator ruled that the EC and seven other countries can impose retaliatory sanctions on the US, which has failed to comply with a ruling that found certain US anti-dumping practices illegal. Under the so called Byrd Amendment -- the popular name for the US Continued Dumping and Subsidy Offset Act of 2000 (CDSOA) -- foreign firms selling their products below cost in the US could be fined, and the money redistributed to the US companies who initiated the complaint. This redistribution scheme was ruled illegal by a WTO panel in January 2003 (see Bridges WEEKLY, 22 January 2003: <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-01-23/story2.htm>). The US had requested arbitration to determine the parameters of the retaliation. The arbitrator ruled that the complainants -- the EC with Brazil, Canada, Chile, India, Japan, Korea and Mexico -- could fine the US to the tune of 72 percent of monies collected in duties under the Byrd Amendment. Following the ruling, the US said it would work to modify the CDSOA, but would continue its use of anti-dumping and countervailing measures. The case, which was initiated in 2001, has already gone through an appeal and two other arbitrations, highlighting systemic problems at the

implementation phase of the WTO dispute settlement system that has resulted in prolonged disputes.

In relation to the ruling, US manufacturing alliance Consuming Industries Trade Action Coalition (CITAC) noted that trade petitions filed against shrimp imports from six developing countries (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 23 July 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-07-23/inbrief.htm#3>) were initiated by the US shrimp industry in hopes of receiving millions of dollars in payments under the Byrd Amendment. According to the coalition, annual anti-dumping payouts to these domestic companies amount to as much as US\$829,493 per company each year, creating an incentive for domestic shrimp companies to launch complaints against foreign firms.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO rules for EU in US trade row," BBC NEWS, 31 August 2004; "US Responds to WTO Byrd Amendment Ruling," CALTRADE REPORT, 1-15 September 2004.

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: 9-15 September

6-10 September, New York, US: UNFF AD HOC EXPERT GROUP ON CONSIDERATION OF A LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON ALL TYPES OF FORESTS. At its 52nd plenary meeting held in December 2003, the Economic and Social Council decided that the ad hoc expert group of the United Nations Forum on Forests would meet in New York from 6-10 September 2004, with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests. For further information contact the UNFF Secretariat, tel: +1-212-963-3262; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: unff@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests>

9 September, Tokyo, Japan: SYMPOSIUM ON THE INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE REGIME BEYOND 2012--LONG-TERM GOALS AND NEAR-TERM ACTIONS. The Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), together with the National Institute for

Environmental Studies (NIES) will hold an open symposium on "beyond Kyoto" issues. The discussion will focus on the near-term actions that can be taken as part of long-term efforts to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. The symposium will provide simultaneous translation. For further information visit <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/event>

9-11 September, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA: NATIVE FOOD SUMMIT 2004, FIRST FOOD NATIONS: CREATING A RECIPE FOR CHANGE. Intended for Tribal leaders, traditional farmers, and advocates for Native culture, food and health, the summit aims to educate participants about how Native food systems can help improve the health and economic issues facing Native America, while facilitating networking and partnership-building among those building and sustaining food systems in Native America. For further information, visit http://www.firstnations.org/narc/initiatives/Nafsi/nafsi-summit/NAFSI_food_summit_frame.html

10 September, Washington D.C., US: THE EU PRESIDENCY, DOHA, AND TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS DAY. Organised by the Washington International Trade Association (WITA), this presentation will feature a speech from Karien van Gennip, Minister for Foreign Trade, Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs. Van Gennip was actively involved in negotiating a framework for the Doha Round of trade negotiations in the WTO in Geneva last month. She will share her insights into the current trade landscape, the Geneva breakthrough, and the outlook for 2005 and beyond. For further see <http://www.wita.org/content.cfm?L1=4&QA=250>

13 September to 9 October, Berlin, Germany: TRAINING COURSE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF FOODS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN: ADAPTATION TO INTERNATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS. Intended for participants from Asia, this course aims to contribute to the modernisation of existing national food safety and security programmes through boosting the competitiveness of countries in the global trade of foods of animal origin according to the WTO globalised regulations, standards and rules for veterinary public health and preventive consumer protection. For further information see <http://www.dse.de/zell/zellprog/A810200000.rtf>

13-14 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WORKSHOP ON THE FUTURE OF WIPO. WIPO describes itself as "the leading international organisation, and the UN specialised agency, responsible for initiatives in respect of effective international cooperation in the area of intellectual property." The TransAtlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD) will host a two-day meeting in Geneva

on the Future of WIPO. The meeting will bring together leading experts and stakeholders from academia, industry, NGOs, and governments, as well as members of the WIPO secretariat, to discuss the future of this United Nations Agency. For further information visit <http://www.tacd.org/cgi-bin/db.cgi?page=view&config=admin/docs.cfg&id=259>

14 September, Brussels, Belgium: MEETING ON SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF WTO NEGOTIATIONS - FOCUS ON FORESTRY AND DISTRIBUTION SERVICES. This meeting is organised by the European Commission and will include a presentation by the Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM) at Manchester University. The presentation of mid-term reports on IDPM work on forestry and distribution services is part of a sustainability impact assessment of proposed WTO negotiations. For further information and to register, contact Belgin Bingol, email: Belgin.Bingol@cec.eu.int; Internet: http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/civil_soc/meet.php?action=consult&criteria=158

15 September, Brussels, Belgium: COLLECTIVE PREFERENCES AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE - WHAT FUTURE FOR THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM? After the step forward in the Doha negotiations represented by the July package, which paved the way for future conclusion of the round, the EC is organising a conference to present and discuss some ideas concerning the future of the multilateral trading system and of global governance based on the concept of collective preferences. If you wish to attend you must pre-register and send an e-mail before 8 September to trade-conference@cec.eu.int.

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.

15 September: WTO TRADE POLICY REVIEW BODY - KOREA.

15 September: WTO WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF KAZAKHSTAN.

Other Upcoming Events

16-17 September, Geneva, Switzerland: UNECE/FAO WORKSHOP ON ILLEGAL LOGGING AND TRADE OF ILLEGALLY-DERIVED FOREST PRODUCTS IN THE UNECE REGION. This Joint UNECE/FAO workshop will discuss the extent and causes of illegal logging in the UNECE region. For further information contact Timber Branch, UNECE, fax: +41-22-917-0041; email: ED.Pepke@unece.org; Internet: <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/docs/sem/2004-1/sem-2004-1.htm>

22-23 September, Dhaka, Bangladesh: REGIONAL LAUNCH MEETING OF "ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY BUILDING ON COMPETITION POLICY AND LAW IN ASIA" PROJECT. Intended for participants from South and South East Asia, this meeting is organised by the CUTS Center for Competition, Investment and Economic Regulation (CUTS C-CIER). The project aims to accelerate the process towards functional competition policy and law for selected countries (Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Bangladesh, Nepal and India) and advance an enabling environment for the law and policy to be better enforced. For further information, contact Alice Pham, email: 7up2@cuts-international.org; Internet: <http://www.cuts-international.org>

4 October, Geneva, Switzerland: UNCTAD XI CIVIL SOCIETY HEARING. As part of the São Paulo Consensus, the Trade and Development Board will meet with civil society representatives in this half-day informal hearing to allow non-State actors to express their views on the issues before the Board. For further information contact the Civil Society Outreach at UNCTAD, email: civil.society@unctad.org; Internet: <http://www.unctad.org>

4-15 October, South Africa: BUILDING COMPETENCIES FOR MAINSTREAMING TRADE & DEVELOPMENT WORK. DFID, in collaboration with the Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa (TRALAC) in South Africa, will hold a 2-week intensive training programme on trade and development topics for around 30 trainees. The course is aimed at programme managers and advisory staff interested in developing their competence to work on trade and development. The programme will focus on key trade and development issues for developing countries at the national level and in the context of the bilateral, regional and multilateral agenda. The course aims to give participants an understanding of, inter alia, the theory and evidence linking trade, growth and poverty reduction and the principles/practice behind mainstreaming trade within national strategies for poverty reduction and sustainable development. For further information and to apply, contact Hushe Mzenda, DFID, email: h-mzenda@dfid.gov.uk or Paul

Leenane, tel: +44 20 7023 0892; email: p-leenane@dfid.gov.uk.

7-11 October, New York, US: INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE MAURITIUS SIDS INTERNATIONAL MEETING. Organised by Don MacKay, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the UN, these consultations will address remaining pending issues in relation to the outcome document of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS. For further information contact the New Zealand Mission to the UN, tel: +1-212-826-1960; fax: +1-212-758-0827; email: nzmissionny@earthlink.net; Internet: <http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/En/lateste.pdf>

RESOURCES

RECONCILING TRADE AND POVERTY REDUCTION. By John Audley and Hans Anker (German Marshall Fund of the US, July 2004). This report surveyed public opinion in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the US on the relationship between international trade and poverty reduction. They find that while people surveyed believe in fighting poverty for humanitarian reasons, they also believe that the best way to do so is by helping developing countries become self-reliant. When asked what is better for developing countries, two out of three respondents choose trade over aid. Overall, the study indicates that public support for trade is strong but conditional upon attention being paid to worker rights, the environment, open negotiations, the need for education and gradual liberalisation in developing countries, and job security. To access the report visit <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/272.pdf>

GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROSPECTS 2004: REALISING THE DEVELOPMENT PROMISE OF THE DOHA AGENDA. By the World Bank (2004). The Doha Agenda of the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the WTO opened many contentious and important questions. This report analyses the most critical multilateral trade issues and suggests policy options that would raise living standards in developing countries and reduce global poverty. Among other topics, it explores the short-, medium-, and long-term outlook for the global economy, including driving forces, commodity prices, and capital flows, and their implications for major regions; examines trade in agriculture; reviews recent export trends from developing countries and trade barriers that work to the disadvantage of poor people; and discusses the special treatment of developing countries in the world trading system. To access the report visit <http://www.worldbank.org/prospects/gep2004>

"Trade, Environmental Regulations and the World Trade Organisation: New Empirical Evidence". Matthias Busse in the JOURNAL OF WORLD TRADE 38 (2, 2004). This article empirically explores the linkages between environmental regulations and international trade flows. Using a large and comprehensive new database for environmental regulations across countries, a thorough empirical investigation of that linkage from 119 countries and five high-polluting industries is performed. The results indicate that concerns about a "race to the bottom" on environmental standards or major move towards "pollution havens" cannot be supported. The only exception is iron and steel, where a negative association between the stringency of environmental regulations and net exports can be found. The article also discusses the issues of trade and environmental regulations within the context of the WTO framework.

"Governance of International Trade Under World Trade Organisation Agreements: Relationships Between World Trade Organisation Agreements and Other Trade Agreements". By Mitsuo Matsushita in the JOURNAL OF WORLD TRADE 38 (2, 2004). The purpose of this article is to look into the relationship between WTO agreements and other trade agreements, that among WTO agreements and also that with sovereign jurisdictions of Members. "Trade agreements" are used in a wide sense and include agreements that deal with financial matters such as the IMGF and the World Bank. There are a great number of trade agreements in the World now and it is impossible to examine every one of such agreements. Therefore, one has to take some samples of such trade agreements and examine the relationship between them. Therefore, this article does not claim to be a comprehensive study of the relationship between WTO agreements and other trade agreements. Its purpose is a more humble one. This is merely to illustrate the relationship between such agreements and see what adjustment can be made.

"Developing Countries in International Negotiations: How They Influence Trade and Climate Change Negotiations". By Sheila Page in IDS BULLETIN 35 (1, 2004). Developing countries have become convinced that trade can have significant effects on their total income and on their development. Most believe that the effects of climate change will be particularly damaging to poor countries, while some of the measures proposed to mitigate it could provide significant financial benefits. Although they are not the most important or direct policy instruments against poverty, the outcomes of trade and climate change negotiations matter. Therefore, countries have started to participate. Participation works best where they have most experience, where they have the broadest range of allies, and where they are not handicapped by aid dependency. Some can point to achievements. Some

countries made gains on agriculture and textiles in the Uruguay Round. Since then, some have succeeded in blocking unwelcome initiatives and putting their issues forward. But the WTO and climate change institutions have not yet been changed to be appropriate for more players with more complex interests.

"The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and poor people's right to water". By Lyla Mehta Birgit la Cour Madsen IDS BULLETIN 35 (1, 2004). With the conclusion of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) in 1995 WTO members extended the scope of multilateral trade negotiations to include trade in services for the first time. The agreement, which seeks to expand international trade in a wide variety of services ranging from tourism to telecommunications to education has come under attack from civil society organisations in both the North and the South for having a detrimental impact on poor people's rights to basic services. This article explores some of the allegations put forward by the critics of the GATS using the example of water services and focusing specifically on the impact of the GATS on national governments' ability to safeguard the interests of poor people through regulation. It demonstrates that while liberalising water-related services under the GATS may not necessarily undermine, *de jure*, the ability of member-states to introduce the kind of legislative measures that are necessary to safeguard the interests of the poor. Still, *de facto*, the exercise of policy autonomy might be substantially curtailed due to inherent ambiguities in treaty interpretation and the politics of process arising out of power asymmetries and a lack of transparency in processes of negotiation and policy review. These could result in conflicting aims and contradictory outcomes around issues of trade, water provision, equity and rights.

Electronic Resources

BILATERALS.ORG: EVERYTHING THAT'S NOT HAPPENING AT THE WTO. This collectively owned and participatory website seeks to provide a forum for diverse organisations mobilising around bilateral trade and investment agreements given the proliferation of so-called "bilaterals" in recent years. Bilateral free trade has been promoted as a faster, deeper, and more comprehensive alternative to multilateral trade liberalisation, yet may be characterised by power asymmetries, lack of transparency, and trade diversion effects. Bilaterals.org aims to facilitate deeper understanding of the effects of these agreements while enabling those campaigning against bilateral trade and investment deals to link up with others to compare notes, share analysis and develop broader strategies. For further information see <http://www.bilaterals.org/>

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