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LEAD STORIES

DIFFERENCES PERSIST ON HOW TO STRUCTURE WTO NAMA TALKS

The WTO Negotiating Group on Market Access for Non-Agricultural goods (NAMA) met from 8-11 November to continue discussions on a number of technical issues and on how to organise future work. According to several trade sources, initial disagreements began to emerge on how the work plan for the negotiations should be structured and the order in which three key elements from the July Package (WT/L/579, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>) should be discussed: the general tariff-reduction formula; the sectoral tariff component (involving the full elimination of tariffs in selected sectors); and flexibilities for developing countries.

Developing countries greet Johannesson's text with scepticism

The NAMA Chair, Ambassador Stefan Johannesson of Iceland, circulated a note to delegations before the meeting with some initial ideas on how the work programme could be structured, stating that "there was broad support" for focusing on the following elements in the first instance: the formula; sectorals; and flexibilities for developing countries (the so-called "tripod"). He also made reference to non-tariff barriers (NTBs) as a fourth element that could be discussed in this first phase.

About 20 developing countries, including Brazil, Thailand, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, Argentina, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, El Salvador, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and India criticised the statement, saying that they would oppose the "tripod" approach and that they could not negotiate a sectoral component until the formula was agreed. According to the Indian delegation, accepting the initiative would put sectoral tariff elimination at the same level of priority as the establishment of the formula. Furthermore, developing countries reiterated their demands of having the issue of flexibilities for developing countries considered at every stage of the process.

The sectoral initiative (and the work programme proposed by Johannesson) was strongly backed by the US, the EC, Australia and New Zealand. These Members stated that the formula was no more important to the negotiations than the other elements of a future agreement, including a sectoral component.

In this regard, the US mentioned that the July Package did not set out primary modalities and urged delegations not to break the balance inherent in the text. The Australian delegation reacted with disappointment, stating that some developing countries were trying to reinterpret the July Package where both the formula and the sectoral elimination were characterised as "key", suggesting both elements as equally important.

Another issue that stirred debate regarded the participation of Members in the sectoral initiative. Developing countries argued that the July Package stated that "participation by all participants" would be important for achieving the goals set out in the Doha Declaration. The US, on the other hand, had proposed the creation of a "critical mass," which would seal the deal on eliminating tariffs for a specific product when a large percentage of countries trading in that product agreed.

No agreement on methodology for tariff conversion

Delegates also discussed the conversion of non ad valorem duties into ad valorem duty equivalents during the NAMA meeting. Ad valorem duties refer to tariffs based on a fixed percentage of the value of imports, while non ad valorem duties are based on volume. The July Package calls for all non ad valorem tariffs to be converted into ad valorem equivalents and bound in ad valorem terms, so that they can be applied to the overall tariff reduction formula.

The US proposed to establish a "subgroup" within the NAMA Negotiating Group to study the technical implications of the conversion and come forward with a formula. However, this idea was opposed by the EC, which argued that this would duplicate efforts already underway in the agriculture negotiations.

The treatment of unbound tariffs in the reduction exercise was also discussed. The July Package calls for all unbound tariffs to be converted into bound tariffs. Sixty Members have more than one percent of tariff lines unbound.

Argentina, India, Singapore, Chinese Taipei and Japan submitted new notifications on non-tariff barriers. Korea made a focused submission on the NTBs faced by its electronics industry (TN/MA/W6/add4).

Reacting to the four days of meetings, one developing country delegate affirmed that NAMA is "an area that we've taken for granted, but which could give us more problems than agriculture". Other delegations mentioned that the disagreement was only a normal part of the evolving discussion on how to move forward with the discussions and that they did not expect it to become a great obstacle to further movement in the negotiations.

The next meeting of the Negotiating Group on Market Access is scheduled for 6 December.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO Members Hold Market Access Talks; Members Remain Split on Sectoral Initiative," WTO REPORTER, 11 November 2004.

AGRICULTURE: COSTA RICA PROPOSES ACTION ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS

WTO Members are in the midst of agriculture negotiations during the second "agriculture week" following agreement on a July Package for moving the Doha Round forward (WT/L/579, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). Delegates have convened in informal meetings from Monday, 15 November through Wednesday, 17 November. They are set to meet in a regular session of the Committee on Agriculture (CoA) on 18 October, wrapping up their "agriculture week" with a formal meeting of the CoA special (negotiating) session on Friday, 19 November.

Costa Rica presents proposal on tropical products

Among other developments in the informal meetings, Costa Rica, on behalf of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela, presented a proposal on tropical products and products providing an alternative to illicit narcotic crops. According to the proposal, addressing tropical products was first brought up during the Uruguay Round, and the issue is firmly grounded in the July Package, which states that "full implementation of the long-standing commitment to achieve the fullest liberalisation of trade in tropical agricultural products and for products of particular importance to the diversification of production from the growing of illicit narcotic crops is overdue and will be addressed effectively in the market access negotiations". Therefore, the proposal stresses that it is time to deliver on this mandate, which will also help Members operationalise of the development dimension of the Doha Round.

The proposal notes that full liberalisation of markets for tropical products would provide significant development benefits to countries, including in terms of job creation.

Under such a scenario countries would be able to better address their external debt issues -- especially given that in a number of developing countries, tropical agricultural goods account for over 50 percent of exports. Benefits in the form of lower prices would also flow to consumers in developed countries.

The submission therefore proposes bringing down tariffs on these products, removing tariff peaks, abolishing quotas on the products, addressing non-tariff barriers and providing most-favoured nation (MFN) treatment. The measures should be permanent, and without conditionalities. The submission further notes that Members should not be able to designate tropical goods as "sensitive products" -- shielding them from full liberalisation -- in the overall agriculture negotiations.

A number of developing countries responded positively to the proposal, and Peru, one of the co-sponsors, pointed out that it sought to show how special and differential (S&D) treatment could be operationalised in the Doha Round in a way that is positive and offensive, rather than defensive in providing developing countries with longer time periods for implementing agreements.

ICTSD will provide coverage of the full "agriculture week" in the next issue of BRIDGES Weekly.

ICTSD reporting.

CTD FOCUSES ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, COMMODITIES

WTO Members continued discussions on technical assistance, the post-quota textile and clothing industry and the declining terms of trade in primary commodities at a 16 November meeting of the Committee on Trade and Development (CTD). Ambassador Trevor Clarke chaired the session, which included a presentation from the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on commodities, as well as discussion on whether to include textiles and clothing in the proposed 2005 technical assistance plan. However, the meeting was unable to complete its agenda and will resume on 26 November.

2005 technical assistance plan

The WTO Secretariat presented the proposed 2005 Technical Assistance and Training Plan (WT/COMTD/W/133/Rev.1, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). Delegates also heard a short verbal report on training by the International Development Law Organisation. The Plan, which must be adopted with amendments by the end of 2004, drew debate in particular for its reference to textiles and clothing as a training component for 2005 regional

workshops. Members clashed over whether this sector should be included in the plan, with China saying that with the elimination of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) in December, and given that technical assistance (TA) is generally provided on topics that are either referred to in the WTO Agreements or the Doha Declaration, there was no reason to have textiles and clothing assistance. Brazil supported China's position, with trade sources suggesting that a possible motivation for the resistance of these countries to TA in the sector was that if TA were provided on this non-Doha mandated issue, this could in turn open the TA scope to other non-mandated areas -- including the three rejected Singapore issues (competition policy, transparency in government procurement and investment). Sources also suggested that China might fear that lack of clarity on "post-ATC" textiles and clothing assistance could lead to an attempt by some countries to revive quotas in this sector within NAMA negotiations in 2005.

Uganda, Kenya and some Central American countries clarified that they did not want to revive the quotas, but rather preferred to seek assistance on how to facilitate the adjustment of their economies and domestic industries in the post-ATC era. At an informal lunchtime meeting, the delegate from China suggested holding national seminars on the topic instead, and Brazil suggested it could be flexible if the regional workshops were solely on the post-ATC trading environment, and did not seek to extend quotas or other restrictions in the sector. In addition, Members sought clarification on the Technical Assistance Plan's proposed services activities and in particular asked for information on what level of assistance would be provided and whether this assistance would be regionally balanced.

UNCTAD presentation on commodities

UNCTAD presented a document (http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/a59d304_en.pdf) as part of the CTD's ongoing examination of the declining terms of trade of primary commodities (see BRIDGES Weekly, 26 February 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-02-26/story2.htm>). Owing to a lack of time, only a few questions were asked and Members decided to postpone discussion until the 26 November meeting.

Members were divided on how to proceed with the commodities issue, with developed countries suggesting a series of presentations by various organisations with discussion by the CTD on the topic being postponed until the very end. Developing countries, on the other hand, wanted to have discussions immediately, and feared that the developed country approach may be too time-consuming and not lead to action anytime soon. Members were therefore

considering a mixed approach with a series of organisations making presentations, followed by discussions. The debate on this issue was also postponed, with Members hoping the Chair would help resolve what was described as an "unnecessary impasse".

Secretariat considers rules and development linkages

In the context of ongoing debate on the meaning of "sustainable development" within paragraph 51 of the Doha Declaration (see BRIDGES Weekly, 6 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-06/story3.htm>), which mandates the CTD to "to identify and debate developmental and environmental aspects of the negotiations, in order to help achieve the objective of having sustainable development appropriately reflected," the WTO Secretariat made a presentation on those aspects of the proceedings of the Negotiating Group on Rules that have developmental and, in particular, special and differential (S&D) treatment implications.

The second half of the November CTD meeting, to be held on 26 November, will include the completion of the technical assistance plan, a discussion on the UNCTAD presentation, a presentation from the International Telecommunications Union on electronic commerce, and the preparation of the report to the General Council. Delegates will also address a WTO Secretariat report on the participation of the developing economies in the global trading system (WT/COMTD/W/136).

ICTSD reporting.

GOODS COUNCIL ASSESSES TEXTILES PHASE-OUT

The WTO Council for Trade in Goods (CTG) met briefly on 11 November in an informal session dedicated to the major review of the third and last stage of the implementation of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC). Members considered the 2004 Report of the Textiles Monitoring Body (G/L/700, searchable at <http://docsonline.wto.org>) and examined the comprehensive report of the Textiles Monitoring Body to the Council for Trade in Goods on the implementation of the ATC (G/L/683).

The first topic of discussion centred on the technical aspects of notifications and implementation of the ATC, according to which all quotas in the textile and clothing sector are to be eliminated at the end this year. The 2004 report noted that it would be useful if all Members "could provide a detailed list of the products to be integrated on 1 January 2005" in order to ensure

transparency in the liberalisation process. The report further raised some implementation questions regarding US quotas, and noted that at the end of 2004, the Textiles Monitoring Body would cease to exist. Members also discussed the more controversial issue of post-ATC adjustment difficulties faced by smaller developing countries (see BRIDGES Weekly, 27 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-27/story1.htm>), but failed to reach consensus on whether something should be done to ease the transition to the post-ATC trading environment, and what that something could be.

Members were urged to use restraint with trade remedies in the textiles and clothing sector in 2005, especially given a section of the Doha Round Decision on Implementation, which states that "Members will exercise particular consideration before initiating investigations in the context of antidumping remedies on textile and clothing exports from developing countries previously subject to quantitative restrictions under the Agreement for a period of two years following full integration of this Agreement into the WTO". Other issues briefly discussed included the use of transitional safeguard mechanisms, carry-forward options in this third and last stage of liberalisation, and administrative arrangements for quota administration and implementation.

The Council for Trade in Goods is tasked under ATC Article 8.11 to conduct a major review of the implementation of the ATC, and to prepare a report on that review. The 11 November meeting, and subsequent dedicated informal meetings planned for 18 and 19 November, were called to prepare for the formal meeting of the Council for Trade in Goods on 25 November, which will look at both the ATC implementation process and post-ATC adjustment issues and begin negotiating the report on the major review. Countries are gearing up for major shifts in trade in textiles and clothing following the January 2005 phase-out of textiles quotas as mandated by the ATC (see BRIDGES Weekly, 27 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-27/story1.htm>)

ICTSD reporting.

WTO PANEL RULES IN FAVOUR OF ANTIGUA, BARBUDA IN GAMBLING DISPUTE

On 10 November the WTO panel hearing Antigua and Barbuda's complaint against "certain US measures restricting the cross-border supply of gambling and betting services from foreign operators" released its final report to the public. The report followed a

disruption in the process, during which the US and Antigua had tried to resolve the dispute through consultations (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-13/WTOinbrief.htm#3>). Ruling in favour of Antigua and Barbuda, the panel found that gambling restrictions at both the federal and state levels violated US market access commitments under the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Trade experts described this WTO ruling -- the first to address internet trade -- as a landmark decision that could serve as a precedent with regard to WTO Members' GATS commitments.

US to appeal panel report

While Antigua's ambassador to the UN in New York, John Ashe, welcomed the ruling, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) spokesperson, Richard Mills, announced that the US would appeal the 'deeply flawed' panel report. Mills reiterated the US defence in this dispute that "the Clinton Administration clearly intended to exclude gambling from US services commitments when the Uruguay Round negotiations were completed". On this key point, the panel upheld Antigua's claim that US market access commitments under its GATS schedule covering "other recreational services" included gambling services. The US had argued that it never intended to allow the cross-border supply of such services and that "gambling services" are not specifically mentioned in the schedule in question. The panel further held that restrictions on several means of supplying gambling services outlined under various federal laws and the legislation of certain states resulted in the US failing to offer services and service suppliers from Antigua treatment no less favourable than that set out under its GATS schedule of commitments.

US public morals defence unsuccessful

The US claimed that the remote supply of gambling and betting services raised significant concerns relating to the maintenance of public order and the protection of public morals, a defence available under the GATS and also reflected under the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT). There has been no previous panel ruling on this issue. According to the US, the remote supply of gambling and betting services was particularly vulnerable to various forms of criminal activity, especially organised crime. While the panel agreed that the challenged US legislation constituted measures to protect public morals or public order, the panel nevertheless found that the US had not explored and exhausted reasonably available WTO-consistent alternatives. More importantly, the US had declined Antigua's invitation to engage in bilateral and

multilateral consultations and negotiations to determine the possibility of addressing its concerns in a WTO-consistent manner.

Members have a right to regulate gambling and betting activities

In its concluding remarks, the panel emphasised that it was "well aware of the sensitivities associated with the subject-matter of this dispute, namely gambling and betting services". The panel therefore cautioned that its conclusions were directly linked to the particular circumstances of this dispute. According to the panel, "the United States may well have inadvertently undertaken specific commitments on gambling and betting services. However, it is not for the Panel to second-guess the intentions of the United States at the time the commitment was scheduled. Rather, our role is to interpret and apply the GATS in light of the facts and evidence before us".

The panel also emphasised the point that it had "not decided that WTO Members do not have a right to regulate, including a right to prohibit, gambling and betting activities". In the particular circumstances of this case, it noted, the measures at issue were inconsistent with the US scheduled commitments and the relevant provisions of the GATS.

The panel report, WT/DS285/R, is available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>

The Statement of USTR spokesperson, Richard Mills, is available at: http://www.ustr.gov/Document_Library/Spokesperson_Statements/Statement_from_USTR_Spokesman_Richard_Mills_Regarding_the_WTO_Gambling_dispute_with_Antigua_Barbuda.html

ICTSD reporting; "WTO Publishes Final Decision On Internet Gambling; U.S. to Appeal," WTO REPORTER, 12 November 2004.

IN BRIEF

SOUTH-SOUTH TRADE ROUND TAKING SHAPE

Informal meetings of two negotiating groups under the Global System of Trade Preferences Among Developing Countries (GSTP) -- focusing on market access and rule making -- are ongoing following a 19 October meeting that decided on the organisation of

work for the third round of GSTP negotiations. The round was launched at UNCTAD XI in Sao Paulo in May 2004 (see BRIDGES Weekly, 23 June 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-06-23/inbrief.htm#1>).

The two negotiating groups are doing groundwork on technicalities in informal meetings, with a view to developing full fledged negotiating plans in their respective areas of responsibility. The GSTP Committee of Participants and the Negotiating Committee are expected to meet in early December to review progress of work carried out by the two negotiating groups. Substantive work is set to begin early next year in order to meet the November 2006 deadline for concluding the Sao Paulo Round.

The GSTP was established in 1989 following an initiative at the 1976 ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 developing countries in Mexico City. It serves as a framework for the exchange of trade preferences, including tariff and potentially non-tariff concessions, among developing countries to promote south-south trade. There are currently 44 participants in the GSTP, whose mutual trade was estimated at close to US\$2 trillion in 2000. Approximately 900 products in total are covered by the tariff schedules of the individual GSTP participants and the simple average margin of preference was about 28 percent.

ICTSD Reporting; "Global System of Trade Preferences," UNCTAD, 16 June 2004; "GSTP For Enhancing South-South Trade," BHAGIRATH LAL DAS, 11 June 2004; "GSTP negotiations to be launched at Sao Paulo," SOUTH-NORTH DEVELOPMENT MONITOR, 1 June 2004.

EU COMMISSION ADOPTS NEW IP STRATEGY

On 10 November, the European Commission adopted a strategy to curb violations of intellectual property rights in third world countries. According to EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, "adopting new legislation on intellectual property is one thing. But devising the right tools to enforce it is another. This is now our priority." The EC plans to identify countries where intellectual property (IP) enforcement is lacking, and will attempt to provide technical assistance focused on protection of IP to all countries. In addition, violators of European IP will be subjected to possible bilateral and multilateral economic sanctions. Lamy stressed that, "fakes, like pharmaceuticals and foodstuffs, constitute an outright danger to the public, while others undermine the survival of the EU's most innovative sectors, confronted with the misappropriation of their creations." He further indicated that the new strategy not only protects IP owners but also citizens who may use dangerous imitation products. According to the EC, the

purpose of the new IP strategy is not to create new IP regulations, but rather to enforce IP legislation already agreed to in the WTO, or in multilateral or bilateral agreements. Within this new strategy, the Commission outlined the following goals: identification of priority countries; cultivation of awareness regarding IP laws in third world countries; ensuring the exchange of ideas with other leading IP producers; providing technical assistance to poorer nations focused on enforcement; raising enforcement concerns in WTO, multi and bilateral agreements; making use of dispute settlement; and encouraging public-private partnerships.

"EU strengthens fight against piracy and counterfeiting beyond its borders," EC RELEASE, 10 November 2004.

WTO IN BRIEF

WTO TRADE FACILITATION NEGOTIATIONS LAUNCHED

Members met in a first formal WTO meeting on trade facilitation negotiations on 15 November, and agreed on a work programme and tentative schedule of meetings for 2005, based on previous informal discussions (see BRIDGES Weekly, 10 November 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-11-10/WTOinbrief.htm#1>). The meetings will be held back-to-back with those of the Negotiating Group on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) to enable more capital-based officials to attend, and will be left somewhat flexible, providing Members with the possibility of introducing new issues. At the meeting, delegates agreed that among the issues on the agenda, none would be given priority over another. Commenting on the planned negotiations, some countries with small delegations said they would have problems attending the meetings, which are set to be held every month during the first half of 2005. While Taiwan supported holding frequent meetings, India, Tanzania, Jamaica, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka preferred fewer meetings. On the way forward, some countries felt trade facilitation issues were lagging behind other areas of the Doha Round, and needed to be expeditiously addressed. Other countries felt that agreement to go ahead with negotiations, reached as part of the Doha Round July Package, already constituted substantial progress. Nigeria, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, Egypt and Uruguay, while welcoming the talks on trade facilitation, stressed the need for developing countries to receive support to meet their obligations under a new agreement in this area. Landlocked countries Nepal and Rwanda expressed their hope that negotiations

would benefit them in practical terms, pointing to border delays and their higher transport costs relative to other Members.

The Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation will convene again from 22-23 November. Other relevant international organisations working on trade facilitation, including the IMF, World Bank, OECD, UNCTAD and the World Customs Organisation, have been invited to attend.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO Members Agree on Meeting Dates, Work Program for Trade Facilitation Talks," WTO REPORTER, 16 November 2004; "WTO Starts Bid for Global Pact on Customs Rules," REUTERS, 15 November 2004; "WTO Launches Negotiations on Trade Facilitation," WTO RELEASE, 15 November 2004.

WTO MEMBERS TAKE STOCK OF KAZAKHSTAN ACCESSION PROCESS

The WTO Working Party on the Accession of Kazakhstan met for the seventh time on 7 November, and Kazakhstan engaged in bilateral talks with interested Members around that date. Topics under discussion in the Working Party included agriculture, Kazakhstan's customs system, price controls, legal reform, services, and trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS). The delegation from Kazakhstan stressed the country's adherence to the principles of market economy and trade liberalisation, as well as its determination to intensify the negotiations process. The Members of the Working Party affirmed their support of Kazakhstan's accession, and outlined measures to accelerate the negotiations process in 2005. According to trade sources, progress in the Working Party is slow but steady, and the first draft of the Working Party accession report is expected soon.

ICTSD reporting; "7th Meeting Of The Working Party On The Accession Of Kazakhstan To WTO," PERMANENT MISSION OF REPUBLIC OF KAZAKSTAN, 4 November 2004.

WTO EXTENDS DEVELOPING COUNTRY ACCESS TO EXPORT SUBSIDIES

Meeting on 4 November, the WTO Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM) decided to grant 19 developing countries the right to continue using export subsidies in key sectors for another year. The transition period for the elimination of export subsidy programmes was extended under an implementation decision at the Doha ministerial

conference in September 2003, allowing annual renewal until 2007, providing certain criteria are met. Without the decision, most developing countries would have been obliged to give up their export subsidies by 2002. The countries concerned are Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Fiji, Grenada, Guatemala, Jamaica, Jordan, Mauritius, Panama, Papua New Guinea, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Uruguay.

The next regular meeting of the Committee is set for 14-15 April 2005.

"WTO body extends date for export subsidy," ASIA PULSE, 10 November 2004; "Transition Period Extended For Export Subsidies Of Developing Countries," WTO RELEASE, 4 November 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: 18-24 November

17-18 November, Santiago, Chile: ANNUAL APEC MINISTERIAL MEETING. At this annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) event participants will consider, among others, trade and investment issues including regional trade agreements and free trade arrangements, trade facilitation policies and APEC support for the WTO. For further information visit <http://www.apec2004.cl/>

17-21 November 2004, Geneva, Switzerland: FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION (COP-1). COP-1 of the Convention on Prior Informed Consent (PIC), preceded by a last meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in September, is tentatively scheduled for November 2004. For more information contact the Joint Interim Secretariat: Niek van der Graaff, FAO; tel: +39-6-5705-3441; fax: +39-6-5705-6347; e-mail: Niek.VanderGraaff@fao.org; or Jim Willis, UNEP Chemicals; tel: +41-22-917-8111; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: chemicals@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.pic.int>.

17-25 November, Bangkok, Thailand: THE 3RD IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS: "PEOPLE AND NATURE, MAKING THE DIFFERENCE". Organised by the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The Congress will consist of a three-day World Conservation Forum and a four-day Members' Business Assembly. During the Forum, IUCN members, partners and interested stakeholders will debate options that safeguard the ecosystems upon which future prosperity depends. During the Assembly, IUCN members - governments and NGOs - will approve the 2005-2008 Programme Framework and Financial Plan, elect officers, consider resolutions and recommendations, and set the membership dues. For further information, contact: IUCN, tel: (+41 22) 999-0232; fax: (+41 22) 999-0020; email: ursula.hiltbrunner@iucn.org; Internet: <http://www.iucn.org>

17-26 November, Prague, Czech Republic: 16TH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL. Delegates attending MOP-16 will continue their negotiations to phase out the use of various ozone-depleting substances such as hydrochlorofluorocarbons and methyl bromide. For further information contact the Ozone Secretariat, UNEP, tel: +254-2-62-3850; fax: +254-2-62-3601; email: ozoneinfo@unep.org; Internet: http://hq.unep.org/ozone/Meeting_Documents/mop/16mop/16mop.asp

19-21 November, New Delhi, India: OECD GLOBAL FORUM ON INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT: INVESTMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT - FORGING PARTNERSHIPS. This event will explore how governments can enhance their business environments and maximise the benefits of investments. Sessions will focus on three areas: the OECD initiative on a Policy Framework for Investment as an operational tool to promote investment for development; promoting corporate responsibility; and maximising official development assistance. For further information visit http://www.oecd.org/document/56/0,2340,en_2649_33763_32233656_1_1_1_1,00.html

20-21 November, Santiago, Chile: ANNUAL APEC ECONOMIC LEADERS MEETING. This annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) event will follow a number of meetings among APEC officials and business representatives. Participants will consider, among others, trade and investment issues including regional trade agreements and free trade arrangements, trade facilitation policies and APEC support for the WTO. For further information visit http://www.apec.org/apec/news___media/media_releases/101104_aelm2004.html

22-23 November, Brussels, Belgium: ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL LEGAL TRADE POLICY AND

IMPLEMENTATION: CHALLENGES FOR THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION. Organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Hull University, this colloquium will include sessions on a variety of topics related to the WTO such as domestic regulation within the context of GATS, the impact on national environmental policy of TBT-rules, and the question of the sufficiency of the WTO regime to provide for sustained economic development for developing countries. For further information, contact Shirley De Meue at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, tel: +32 (0)2 629 2638; fax: +32 (0)2 / 629 3698; email: sdemeue@vub.ac.be; Internet: <http://www.law.hull.ac.uk/newsevents/wto.html>

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.pdf. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, and are open to WTO Members and accredited observers only.

18 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

18 November: WTO TEXTILES MONITORING BODY.

18 November: WTO WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

19 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE - SPECIAL SESSION.

22 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON BUDGET, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION.

22 November: WTO WORKING PARTY ON DOMESTIC REGULATION.

22-23 November: WTO NEGOTIATING GROUP ON TRADE FACILITATION.

23 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE IN FINANCIAL SERVICES.

23 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON SAFEGUARDS.

24 November: WTO WORKING PARTY ON GATS RULES.

24 November: WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY.

Other Upcoming Events

29-30 November, Vienna, Austria: NEW FOUNDATIONS FOR EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE? THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EUROPE'S CONSTITUTIONALISATION. This international conference is going to discuss the impact of the "Constitutional Treaty for Europe". Are there European concepts of global governance? Will the constitutional treaty strengthen Europe's position as a global player in international fora? In what way are the interfaces between European and global governance affected by the constitution, especially regarding the WTO? For more information and registration, visit <http://fgr.wu-wien.ac.at/institut/ef/events.html>

24-25 January 2005, Porto Alegre, Brazil: TRADE UNIONS, GLOBALISATION AND DEVELOPMENT-STRENGTHENING RIGHTS AND CAPABILITIES OF WORKERS. The Global Union Research Network (GURN) will organise a workshop immediately before the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre in the hopes of creating important synergy effects with the participants of the WSF. Special attention will be focused on the following themes: trade unions and bilateral and regional trade agreements; trade unions, poverty reduction strategy papers, and international financial institutions; social and labour impact of multinationals; the role of trade unions on economic alternatives and poverty eradication; trade unions and migration; and determinants of a worker friendly corporate governance regime in a developing or transition country. GRUN has also launched a call for papers to incite research on trade unions, globalisation and development for the above conference in Brazil. The focus of all papers should be on the impact of the issues on labour and trade unions. For further information and to submit proposals contact Verena Schmidt, Global Union Research Network Publication, Information and Research Unit; tel: +41 22 799 74 48; fax: +41 22 799 65 70; email: researchnet@ilo.org; Internet: <http://www.gurn.info>

26-31 January 2005, Porto Alegre, Brazil: WORLD SOCIAL FORUM 2005. The World Social Forum is an open meeting place where groups and movements of civil society opposed to neo-liberalism and a world dominated by capital or imperialism, engaged in building a planetary society centred on the human person, come together to pursue their thinking, to debate ideas democratically, for formulate proposals, share their experiences freely and network for effective action. The WSF is set to debate alternative means to building globalisation in solidarity, respecting universal human rights and those of all men and women of all nations and the environment, and is grounded in democratic international systems and institutions at the service of social justice, equality and the sovereignty of peoples. Over 1900 events have already been

registered for the WSF 2005. For further information see <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/home.asp>

RESOURCES

ACCOMMODATING MEAs IN TRADE AGREEMENTS. By Kevin Gray (IDDRI, 2004). This paper examines different methods to accommodate multilateral environmental agreements in international trade agreements. Several options are discussed with the overall conclusion being that they all have merits and are best used in the context of the actual agreement and are suitable to the characteristics of the parties. In addition, a combination of the various approaches may be needed in light of the negotiating circumstances. The paper is available at http://www.iddri.org/iddri/telecharge/gie/communication/s/4e_gray.pdf

LIMITS TO GROWTH: THE 30-YEAR UPDATE. By Dennis Meadows, Donella Meadows and Jorgen Randers (Earthscan, November 2004). In 1972, Limits to Growth shocked the world and forever changed the global agenda by demonstrating that unchecked growth on our finite planet was leading the Earth towards ecological overshoot and pending disaster. This substantially revised, expanded and updated edition follows on from Limits to Growth and its sequel Beyond the Limits. Marshalling a vast array of new, hard data, more powerful computer modelling and incorporating the latest thinking on sustainability, ecological footprinting and limits, this book presents future overshoot scenarios and makes an even more urgent case for a rapid readjustment of the global economy toward a sustainable path. For further information visit <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/asp/bookdetails.asp?key=5025>

ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE MEDICINES: DEVELOPING RESPONSES UNDER THE TRIPS AGREEMENT AND EC LAW. By Katharina Gamharter (Springer, 2004). To ensure access to affordable medicines, particularly in developing countries, is one of the great challenges the international community faces. At the 2001 Doha Ministerial Conference, the Declaration on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement and Public Health was adopted. In its aftermath, new legal instruments were developed both at WTO and EC level. While the focus at the WTO lay on how countries with insufficient or no manufacturing capacity for pharmaceuticals could make effective use of compulsory licensing, the EC adopted a regulation to promote differential pricing for needed medicines. The author provides a comprehensive analysis of these developments and highlights contrasts and interlinkages between the pursued strategies. For

further information visit
<http://www.springer.at/main/book.jsp?bookID=3-211-22670>

EXPLORING THE LINKS: HUMAN WELL-BEING, POVERTY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES. By the International Institute for Sustainable Development (2004). This book sets out to: demonstrate how human well-being is dependent upon ecosystems and ecosystem services; identify barriers and drivers that prevent the poor from using these ecosystem services to improve their well-being, in essence perpetuating poverty; and identify policy response options to remove the barriers, re-design or even introduce new intervention strategies to allow the poor to improve their well-being through an ecosystem approach. For further information visit
<http://www.iisd.org/publications/publication.asp?pno=644>

GMOS AND BIOSAFETY: A BACKGROUND PAPER FOR DECISION-MAKERS AND OTHERS TO ASSIST IN CONSIDERATION OF GMO ISSUES. By the World Conservation Union - IUCN (August 2004). Prepared by the IUCN Environmental Law Centre, with Tomme Young as the lead author and contributions from many others, this paper was commissioned by IUCN's Director General and Council as a response to a call from the second World Conservation Congress held in October 2000, in Amman, Jordan. It reviews the controversy surrounding GMOs, including scientific, economic, policy, and socio-cultural issues, as well as crosscutting principles and the institutional framework. It also includes a series of recommendations on responsible decision-making regarding biosafety and GMOs. To access the paper visit
http://www.iucn.org/themes/law/pdfdocuments/GMO_English.pdf

Electronic Resources

INVESTMENT TREATY ARBITRATION (ITA) RESOURCE WEBISTE. A new ITA website has been launched on investment treaty disputes. The site serves as a resource for lawyers, academics, government officials, researchers and members of civil society who are interested in international investment law. ITA provides: access to all publicly available investment treaty awards; information and resources relating to investment treaties and investment treaty arbitration; and links to further resources. Visit the website at
<http://ita.law.uvic.ca/>

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