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LEAD STORIES

AGRICULTURE NEGOTIATIONS SUSPENDED OVER AVEs - AGAIN

On 19 April, New Zealand's WTO Ambassador Tim Groser, who chairs the WTO agriculture negotiations, suspended a meeting of the Committee on Agriculture (CoA) special (negotiating) session due to Members' differences over the process for converting 'specific' agricultural tariffs based on quantities imported into 'ad valorem' equivalents (AVEs), i.e., tariffs based upon the price of the product. The 'agriculture week,' which started on 13 April and was set to conclude on 19 April, focused intensely on clearing the hurdle of AVE conversion, with key Members meeting informally on the issue. AVE conversion had also been left inconclusive at the end of the previous agriculture week on 18 March (see BRIDGES Weekly, 23 March 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-03-23/story2.htm>).

At the close of the meeting, India's ambassador to the WTO, Ujal Singh Bhatia, expressed concern about the impasse, saying "we need a solution very quickly or we are in trouble." Members are working to come up with a 'first approximation' of agriculture modalities by July, with the actual modalities -- percentages of tariff and subsidy cuts, reduction formula, criteria for domestic support, deadlines, or transition periods -- to be completed at the December WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong. AVE conversion represents a transparency exercise that will allow Members' tariffs to be classified into different brackets slotted for different reduction requirements under the tiered formula for tariff cuts that Members have agreed to use.

Key Members close to agreement on AVE conversion

AVE conversion is straightforward for some tariff lines; Members are set to use the 'unit value' method in these cases, basing the conversion on import volumes and notified import values in the WTO Integrated Database (IDB). Complications arise, however, with products such as sugar and some cheeses, where preferences or tariff quotas are involved. In such cases, import prices often differ significantly from the world prices compiled in the UN commodity trade statistics

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(ComTrade) database. Members have discussed a formula for 'filtering' out cases in which there are significant gaps between world prices and import prices, based on comparisons between the WTO and UN sets of data. They would then proceed with the conversion in a way that is different from simply using the IDB. Disagreement and misunderstandings emerged over how the conversion would take place, and this technical issue could not be resolved, leading to suspension of the formal CoA special session. This happened after a Canada-hosted meeting of senior trade officials from 31 Member countries had reportedly arrived at a solution to the issue.

AVE conversion has pitted the EU and G-10 countries against the US, the Cairns group of agricultural exporters and the G-20. The former groups make use of a large number of specific tariffs. Agricultural exporters would like to see the conversion based more closely on the lower world prices, which would lead to higher AVEs, and eventually, steeper tariff cuts.

The next agriculture week is scheduled to start on 30 May.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO farm talks deadlocked, threaten deal deadline," REUTERS, 19 April 2005.

ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, INDIA PUT FORWARD PROPOSAL ON NAMA

Argentina, Brazil, and India have put forward a long-awaited proposal (TN/MA/W/54) for liberalising trade in non-agricultural products in the ongoing round of WTO talks, calling on Members to entrench favourable treatment for developing countries in both the structure and implementation of the formula for cutting tariffs.

Describing the proposal as a significant political move, Darlan Fonseca-Marti, a trade and development researcher at the Geneva-based international organisation South Centre, said that it put the Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) discussions back "in the right direction, when they had been going in a totally inappropriate direction, particularly regarding the developmental concerns of poor countries."

Brazil and India had slammed recent EU and US submissions in the NAMA Negotiating Group for demanding more from poor countries than from rich ones, thus contravening the NAMA mandate in Annex B of the July Package (WT/L/579, available online at http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dda_e/draft_text_gc_dg_31july04_e.htm), which provided for various kinds of favourable treatment for developing countries (see BRIDGES Weekly, 23 March 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-03-23/story3.htm>). The

two countries had been under pressure from other Members as well as from the NAMA Chair, Ambassador Stefan Johannesson of Iceland, to come up with proposals of their own and not just critiques of other countries' submissions.

Proposal revives May 2003 tariff reduction formula

The three-country proposal expands on the July Package's NAMA framework, saying that the "less than full reciprocity in reduction commitments" that it refers to must be "an in-built component of the [tariff reduction] formula." Specifically, they argue that the formula should reflect a country's overall tariff profile, and that coefficients incorporated into the formula for developing countries should be "sufficiently higher" than those associated with developed countries, "resulting in higher percentage reductions for developed countries." Furthermore, the paper says that references in the July Package to special and differential treatment (S&D) for developing countries refer to "flexibilities in the application of the formula, including longer implementation periods, less than formula cuts and the exclusion of some tariff lines."

Argentina, Brazil, and India's attitude towards favourable treatment for developing countries thus rejects the US and the EU's insistence that Members must choose between a differentiated tariff reduction formula and flexibilities in applying it. It is consistent with a widely-held view among developing countries that S&D should permeate all elements of any modalities eventually agreed.

The three developing countries also rejected as too onerous the 'Swiss' formula approach to tariff reduction favoured by the US and the EU, which would see steeper reductions to higher tariffs aimed at 'harmonising' the tariffs of all WTO Members at a particular level. Instead, they revived a modified version of the Swiss formula first put forward in May 2003 by then-NAMA Chair Ambassador Pierre-Louis Girard of Switzerland in the run-up to the Cancun Ministerial Conference later that year (see BRIDGES Weekly, 21 May 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-05-21/story1.htm>).

The 'Girard formula' links a country's item-specific tariff cuts to its overall level of tariff protection -- the higher a country's average tariff rate, the higher its tariffs will remain even after the formula is applied on an item-by-item basis. The proposal would have Members apply this formula, in association with differentiated coefficients (to be negotiated) for developing and developed countries, to reduce all of their 'bound' tariff lines, i.e., products for which they have agreed to a tariff ceiling.

Developing countries, which in general have higher average tariffs than their developed counterparts, would retain relatively higher tariff levels even after reduction - a 50 percent tariff in the US would be reduced more than a 50 percent tariff in India, which has a much higher average tariff.

The paper declared that the overall tariff reduction this formula would impose would be, in percentage terms, "proportional amongst developed and developing countries," unlike the "simple Swiss formula." It went on to say that once the formula was agreed upon, Members could address other developing country needs through S&D measures such as "longer implementation periods, less than formula cuts for some tariff line and the exclusion of some tariff lines from any formula cut."

Notably, neither developed nor developing countries seemed enamoured of the Girard formula in 2003. Developed countries opposed it for not cutting high tariffs steeply enough. Some developing countries, on the other hand, felt that it was going too far, too quickly (see BRIDGES Weekly, 17 July 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-07-17/story3.htm>).

Methodology for unbound tariffs

Unbound tariff lines have posed a problem in negotiations, since they have no specific tariff ceilings that can be plugged into a tariff reduction formula. To address developing country concerns about having to bind and reduce tariffs in sensitive sectors, the paper proposes first multiplying the average tariff applied to unbound tariff lines by a to-be-negotiated factor of 'x,' and then using this newly marked-up figure as a basis for tariff reduction. This too is based on the Girard formula, although that called for a factor of only two.

Furthermore, it specifies that the tariff reduction formula would not be applied to unbound tariffs on an item-by-item basis, but only to the marked-up average. This would allow countries to maintain high tariffs in sectors of particular interest to them, so long as they ensure that the average tariff does not pass the permissible level.

In any case, the July Package exempts least-developed countries and countries with fewer than 35 percent of their tariffs bound (these tend to be among the poorest) from having to apply the tariff-reduction formula altogether.

A reorientation of NAMA discussions

The South Centre's Fonseca-Marti observed that it spoke volumes about the nature of the NAMA talks thus far that developing countries were now turning to the

very Girard formula that they had rejected two years ago, "since it offers them more flexibility than the other proposals currently on the table." He welcomed the proposal's incorporation of existing tariff levels and rejection of demands for tariff harmonisation, stressing that "tariff cuts should depend on a country's ability to absorb them."

Fonseca-Marti added that if other developing countries "choose to work with this proposal," it could potentially mark the start of meaningful cooperation among developing countries to pursue developmental concerns in the NAMA negotiations.

NAMA discussions will continue at the WTO from 25-29 April.

ICTSD reporting.

DG RACE: SEIXAS OUT, LAMY 'ENJOYED HIGHEST LEVEL OF SUPPORT'

Brazilian WTO Ambassador Luiz Felipe de Seixas Correa has become the first candidate to withdraw from the race to succeed Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi. WTO General Council Chair Ambassador Amina Chawahir Mohamed of Kenya reported on the first round of the selection process she is leading to an informal 15 April meeting of heads of Member delegations, describing Seixas Correa as "the candidate least likely to attract consensus."

The three remaining candidates are former EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy of France, Mauritian Trade Minister Jaya Krishna Cuttaree, and former Uruguayan WTO Ambassador Carlos Perez del Castillo. Of the three, Mohamed told delegates that Lamy "enjoyed the highest level of support" among the 142 of the 148 WTO Members that took part in the consultations, followed by Cuttaree and then Perez del Castillo. She did not specify the level of support for each candidate.

Trade sources, however, report that 60 Members reported a first preference for the Mauritian, compared to 40 for Lamy and 24 for Perez del Castillo. Fewer than ten said Seixas Correa was their candidate of choice. However, Lamy dominated second preferences among Members that made them known, with the support of over 40 delegations.

Mohamed did tell delegates that "a very small number of Members expressed concern" over Lamy's ability to head the WTO, which could potentially affect his ability to become the most likely consensus candidate. She also announced that she would start a new round of consultations -- during which preferences voiced during the first round will no longer be valid -- on 21 April.

Mohamed is assisted in these consultations by Dispute Settlement Body Chair Ambassador Eirik Glenne of Norway and Trade Policy Review Body Chair Ambassador Don Stephenson of Canada. A General Council meeting has been scheduled for 26-27 May to formally approve Supachai's successor. The next Director-General's four-year term will start 1 September.

For more on the Director-General selection process, see BRIDGES Weekly, 26 January 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-01-26/story1.htm>

ICTSD reporting; "Lamy ahead in WTO race, Brazil knocked out," REUTERS, 15 April 2005; "Brazilian Candidate Eliminated From WTO Leadership Race; Lamy Faces Veto Threat," WTO REPORTER, 18 April 2005.

RULES: MEMBERS DISCUSS ANTI-DUMPING, FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

Fisheries subsidies and anti-dumping remained on the agenda as the Negotiating Group on Rules meeting concluded on 15 April.

After debating a Brazilian paper on fisheries-related special and differential treatment (S&D) for developing countries (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-04-13/story5.htm>), Members discussed an EU paper on mechanisms for enforcing WTO fisheries subsidy disciplines (TN/RL/W/178, available online at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). Drawing on its own experience, the EU suggested that the enforcement of WTO fisheries subsidies rules could be enhanced by domestic control systems in which Members formalise all fisheries subsidies in national law and make information about all subsidies awarded available to WTO Members. Alternatively, Members could notify the WTO before granting fisheries subsidies, and subject the notification to review by other Member states. Individual Members could choose between the two control mechanisms. The EU paper was met with some scepticism: Chinese Taipei commented that WTO Members might be reluctant to cede sovereignty in this manner. Many countries stated they needed more time to study it closely.

The Rules group also considered a New Zealand submission on subsidies to management services in the fisheries sector (TN/RL/GEN/36). It is generally acknowledged that these subsidies are harmless, and therefore should be allowed under WTO rules. However, some countries did disagree on the categories of subsidies for research and development (R&D) that could come under the rubric of management

services. The US suggested they might submit a proposal on R&D at a later stage. The Friends of Fish, a group seeking clear disciplines on fisheries subsidies, may also make a submission on subsidies to infrastructure (such as ports, cold storage, etc.). (For more information on the fisheries subsidies disciplines see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 15 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.com/biores/05-04-15/story1.htm>; and BRIDGES Weekly, 13 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.com/weekly/05-04-13/story5.htm>)

Anti-Dumping Proposals On Public Interest

The Rules session also saw Hong Kong, China present a proposal on "Public Interest" (TN/RL/W/174) on behalf of the Friends of Anti-Dumping Negotiations (FAN), a group seeking to tighten rules on the application of anti-dumping measures that includes Chile, Costa Rica, Hong Kong China, Israel, Japan, Korea, Norway, Switzerland, Chinese Taipei, and Thailand.

Drawing attention to the widespread economic impacts of anti-dumping measures, the FAN called for all concerned stakeholders such as consumer groups, producers and importers to be involved before a decision to impose anti-dumping measures is taken. While the EU strongly supported the proposal, other Members including Peru, Brazil and India were concerned about the possible cost and time implications of the idea. The US also supported this concern and questioned the impact that such a policy would have on the affected domestic industry.

Taking up more time than the two days originally set out, the meeting resumed on Friday 15 April to deal with a Brazilian paper on "Treatment of Government Support for Export Credits and Guarantees Under the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures" (TN/RL/W/177). Brazil claimed that current Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) arrangements on export credits could potentially come into conflict with WTO obligations, and proposed specific language for the Agreement of Subsidies and Countervailing Measures that would prevent export credits from hurting developing country Members of the WTO. Export credits were also the issue of a paper submitted by Australia (TN/RL/GEN/34).

The next meeting of the Negotiating Group on Rules is scheduled for 30 May - 3 June.

ICTSD reporting.

IN BRIEF

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CALLS ON STATES TO USE TRIPS FLEXIBILITIES

The UN Commission on Human Rights has called on its 53 members to consider taking full advantage of the flexibilities included in the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) in order to fight diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Meeting in Geneva for its sixty-first annual session, the Commission adopted a 'resolution on access to medication in the context of pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.' The resolution called upon countries to improve access to treatments and technologies vital for public health. It also urged them to use national legislation to make use of TRIPS flexibilities, and to take these flexibilities into account when entering into international trade agreements.

TRIPS Agreement provisions that countries can use in the context of a public health emergency include compulsory licensing and parallel imports, though the Commission did not specifically mention these. The resolution also called upon states to conduct an impact assessment of the effects of international trade agreements with regard to public health. The resolution follows a trend of intellectual property provisions in developing countries being strengthened through bilateral and regional trade agreements rather than in multilateral fora such as the WTO or the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The Commission will return to the issue next year.

ICTSD reporting; "Commission Adopts Five Resolutions And Three Decisions On Economic, Social And Cultural Rights", UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA, <http://www.unog.ch>.

EU, US BATTLE OVER ILLEGAL GM CORN FINDS TRUCE

The EU voted on 15 April to introduce emergency measures restricting the import of genetically-modified (GM) corn feed from the US, following the discovery of the presence of an unapproved biotech corn strain (Bt10) in corn feed imports that were supposed to consist of a legal strain, Bt 11. However, US Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns has said that there "should be no trade disruption" as a result of the targeted measure (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 15 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/05-04-15/story4.htm>)

The EU import restrictions require all imports of GM corn feed to be accompanied by an analytical report issued by an accredited laboratory certifying that the import is free of illegal GM corn.

Claiming that the two strains were identical, the US told the EU on 22 March about the movement of Bt10 corn through Bt11 export channels. However, on 31 March international agribusiness giant Syngenta told EU officials that unlike Bt11, Bt10 corn contained a gene conferring resistance against the antibiotic ampicillin. The EU fears that increased consumption of animals fed on Bt10 corn would lead people become resistant to the antibiotic, which is used to treat a variety of infections. However, both the European Food Safety Authority and Syngenta said that no health or environmental threat is likely.

The US at first reacted with hostility towards the restrictions, but accepted EU reassurances that a system for testing imports would be up and running "within days."

"Commission unable to stop unauthorised GMO," EU OBSERVER, 4 April 2005; "Commission seeks clarification on Bt10 from US authorities and Syngenta," EU PRESS RELEASE, 4 April 2005; "EU RESTRICTS US MAIZE IMPORTS: De facto ban on maize-based animal feeds," FOE EUROPE NEWS RELEASE, 15 April 2005; "U.S. calls EU move on GMO maize an over-reaction," REUTERS, 15 April 2005; "Sees no trade disruption on corn gluten to EU," REUTERS, 18 April 2005.

REGIONALISATION IDENTIFIED AS TOP PRIORITY BY ICPM

The need to identify regions within countries was the top priority at the 7th session of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM) held in Rome from 4-8 April. The ICPM is the governing body of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), an international expert body that sets plant and phytosanitary standards with WTO support.

Currently, when trade bans are imposed under the IPPC because of the presence of plant and animal diseases, they are placed on the entire country in question, or even a whole trading bloc in the case of the EU. This has raised problems because regions within the exporting country or trading block may in fact be disease- and pest-free. Late or no recognition of this fact, due to the absence of provisions for recognising regions within or across national borders in the IPPC, may result in export bans being imposed where they are unnecessary, or for longer than is required.

The need to develop new procedures for recognising regions has been debated extensively in the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (see BRIDGES Weekly, 16 March 2005, <http://www.ictsd.com/weekly/05-03-16/story4.htm>), and the ICPM decided to convene a working group during the meeting to identify possible ways to recognise disease-free regions. The working group's report called for standards and guidelines for the recognition of pest free regions to be "urgently developed," a process that will start with a meeting of the IPPC's Standards Committee on 25 April.

The 8th session of the ICPM is scheduled for 27-31 March 2006.

For more information please visit <https://www.ippc.int/id/37390>

ICTSD reporting.

G7 COUNTRIES FURTHER TALKS ON DEBT RELIEF FOR AFRICA

Ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) industrialised countries failed once again to reach a detailed agreement on debt relief for Africa, though they made some progress on the issue during their 16-17 April meeting. (see BRIDGES Weekly, 9 February 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-02-09/story4.htm>). The group's final statement acknowledged that additional funds would be necessary for debt relief, but provided no details as to how to raise such money. There was however, some consensus on debt cancellation, though the US favoured writing off the stock of multilateral debt mostly owed to the World Bank while Canada, the UK, and other European countries prefer to pay for the interest that the countries owe on debts to international institutions. The eradication of poverty in Africa is a key policy priority of the UK, which currently holds the 2005 presidency of the Group of Eight (G8), made up of the G7 and Russia. A G8 summit to be held in July in Scotland is expected to finalise a deal on debt relief, aid and trade.

In a related development, on 11 April, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported that official aid to poor developing countries rose by 4.6 percent in 2004 from the previous year. Increases in the US, UK, Spain and Canada more than compensated for declining aid from Japan and Germany. However, the report noted that in spite of this increase, total aid from rich countries remained well below the 0.7 percent of national income target adopted at the UN decades ago.

Some developed countries including France, Spain, Ireland and the UK have now set timelines to achieve those UN targets.

The OECD report is available at http://www.oecd.org/document/3/0,2340,en_2649_201185_34700611_1_1_1_1,00.htm

ICTSD reporting; "G7 nations find some common ground on debt relief for Africa," FINANCIAL TIMES, 18 April 2005; "Aid to poor nations climbs by 4.6%," FINANCIAL TIMES, 11 April 2005.

DISCUSSIONS ON DEVELOPMENT AGENDA CONTINUE IN WIPO COMMITTEE

After three days of debate on how to integrate developmental concerns into the functioning of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) (see BRIDGES Weekly 13 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-04-13/story1.htm>), discussions shifted to the fourth session of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation for Development Related to Intellectual Property (PCIPD) on 14-15 April. The Chair suspended the meeting after two days in the absence of consensus. Members rejected Canada's draft proposal seeking a strengthened role for the PCIPD.

Sources report that the Canadian draft proposal proposed to broaden the scope of the PCIPD's work to include several of the issues that had been raised during the 'development agenda' debates, such as having the committee examine the effects of intellectual property regimes on innovation and economic growth in developing countries. The developing country advocates of a WIPO 'development agenda' opposed the Canadian approach, arguing that their concerns needed to be addressed in WIPO's core debates -- not marginalised in a technical committee such as the PCIPD. They argued that the PCIPD should limit itself to operationalising concrete tasks such as technical cooperation.

At the end of the meeting, the majority of WIPO members formally rejected the summary of the meeting's outcomes that the Chair had prepared in consultation with delegations. However, they did agree that the September meeting of the PCIPD would consider adopting the report of the meeting's proceedings -- a document seen by a number of members to be more representative of their concerns than the Chair's summary.

ICTSD reporting; "Reform Debate Trips Up WIPO Development Aid Meeting," INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY WATCH, 15 April 2005.

Textile Quota Elimination," WTO REPORTER, 21 July 2004.

WTO IN BRIEF

'PATCHWORK' EXPECTED FOR JULY 'APPROXIMATIONS,' SENIOR OFFICIALS SAY

Senior trade officials from 31 influential WTO Member countries have begun to converge in their views on feasible progress in the ongoing trade talks, according to Canadian WTO Ambassador Don Stephenson, who hosted the 18-19 April meeting in Geneva. Trade news sources report that Stephenson said the end-July 'first approximations' of a potential deal to be adopted at the WTO's December Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong would likely contain some detailed language on agriculture and non-agricultural market access (NAMA), with fewer specific provisions on services, rules and trade facilitation.

At the meeting -- organised to prepare for a 4 May 'mini-ministerial' gathering in Paris -- participants discussed negotiating areas including agricultural trade liberalisation, in particular the controversial issue of converting specific tariffs and other tariffs not based on the value of the imported good into 'ad valorem equivalents' (AVEs). However, a compromise on tariff conversion fell through soon afterwards during negotiations in the special session of the Committee on Agriculture (see related story, this issue). Stephenson said that participants had talked about recent proposals that had been made in the NAMA talks, as well as ways to move the services negotiations forward.

Countries attending the meeting included Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, the EU, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, the US, and Zambia.

"Canadian Official Cites Convergence Points In Meeting of Senior Trade Officials at WTO," WTO REPORTER, 20 April 2005; "Canada Sets Out Agenda for Senior Officials Meeting Ahead of Paris WTO Mini-Ministerial," WTO REPORTER, 15 April 2005; "Misunderstanding' on AV Tariff Equivalents Threatens WTO Ag Deal; Exporters Blame EU," WTO REPORTER, 20 April 2005. "Mauritius Requests WTO Meeting To Discuss

EVENTS & RESOURCES

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar at: <http://www.ictsd.org/cal/index.htm>. If you would like to submit an event, please email events@ictsd.ch.

ICTSD Events

21 April, Geneva, Switzerland: DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS: INCORPORATING THE CBD PRINCIPLES IN THE TRIPS AGREEMENT ON THE ROAD TO HONG KONG. This dialogue is organised by ICTSD, the Centre for International Environmental Law (CIEL), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO). It will address the relationship between the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the protection of traditional knowledge and folklore. The discussion will focus on the possible use of disclosure requirements as a tool for reducing conflict between the trade and environment regimes, as called for by the Doha Declaration. The aim of the dialogue will be to support preparation for the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial Conference at the end of the year by highlighting and discussing some of the recent and potentially promising proposals made in this area. It will be held from 15:00-18:00 at the WTO Public Symposium on 21 April, in Room A, Centre William Rappard, 154 rue de Lausanne, Geneva. For further information contact Andrew Stevenson, tel: + 41 22) 917-8492; email: astevenson@ictsd.ch; Internet: www.iprsonline.org.

21 April, Geneva, Switzerland: IMPLEMENTING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE: PRESENTATION OF THE UNCTAD-ICTSD RESOURCE BOOK ON TRIPS AND DEVELOPMENT. This reception celebrates the publication of the UNCTAD-ICTSD Resource Book on TRIPS and Development. The Resource Book is conceived as a thorough guide to the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). It provides a detailed analysis of each provision of the Agreement, aiming at a sound understanding of WTO Members'

rights and obligations. It highlights the areas in which the treaty leaves leeway to Members for the pursuit of their own policy objectives according to their respective levels of development, and will be an indispensable tool to all those involved in the field of intellectual property and development. The reception will be held from 18:00-21:00 in the restaurant on the top floor of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Avenue de la Paix 7bis, Geneva. For further information contact Andrew Stevenson, tel: + (41 22) 917-8492; email: astevenson@ictsd.ch; Internet: <http://www.iprsonline.org>.

Coming Up: 21-27 April

26 April, Washington D.C., US: THE DRAGON GOES SHOPPING: A LOOK AT CHINA'S IMPORTS. The meeting, organised by the Global Business Dialogue (GBD) will take place from 8:30-10:00 a.m. at the St. Regis Hotel, 923 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. Price: \$40 general admission. There is no charge for GBD members, US Government staff, or press. To register, and for further information, contact Global Business Dialogue, tel: +(1 202) 463 5074; fax: (+1 202) 463 7075; email: registrations@gbdinc.org; Internet: http://www.gbdinc.org/main_html/events.htm.

26-27 April, London, UK: FOOD CROPS IN A CHANGING CLIMATE. Food crop production is inherently sensitive to climate and weather. Changes in both the mean and the variability of climate pose a threat to crop production globally. This meeting looks at how to forecast the impacts of climate variability and change on food crops, including the climatic aspects of food security in Africa. For further information contact The Royal Society, tel: (+44 20) 7451 2500; fax: (+44 20) 7930 2170; email: info@royalsoc.ac.uk; Internet: <http://www.royalsociety.ac.uk/event.asp?id=2844&month=4,2005>.

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.

20-22 April: WTO PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM

25 April: NEGOTIATING GROUP ON MARKET ACCESS

26 April: WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF TAJIKISTAN

26 April: COMMITTEE ON BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS

27 April: TRADE POLICY REVIEW BODY - PARAGUAY

27 April: NEGOTIATING GROUP ON MARKET ACCESS

Other Upcoming Events

1-5 May, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada: CONFERENCE ON THE GOVERNANCE OF HIGH SEAS FISHERIES AND THE UN FISH AGREEMENT - MOVING FROM WORDS TO ACTION. "Moving From Words to Action" is the theme of this conference, hosted by the government of Canada. The meeting provides the international community with an opportunity to join Canada in determining how management of high seas fisheries can be improved and identifying what steps need to be taken to ensure the immediate protection and the rebuilding of fish stocks in the years to come. For further information contact the organisers, email: fgccgp@dfo-mpo.gc.ca; Internet: http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fgc-cgp/program_e.htm.

2-4 May, Paris, France: OECD FORUM 2005: FUELLING THE FUTURE: SECURITY, STABILITY, DEVELOPMENT AND OECD MINISTERIAL SUMMIT. The OECD Forum will discuss policy issues in the areas of international trade and investment, economic development, the Millennium Declaration, and energy. For more information contact John West, tel: (+33 1) 45 248 025; fax: (+33 1) 44 306 346; email: john.west@oecd.org; Internet: http://www.oecd.org/site/0,2865,en_21571361_342252_93_1_1_1_1,00.html.

RESOURCES

OCCASIONAL PAPER NO.13: GATS CONDITIONS TO ACHIEVE DEVELOPING COUNTRY POLICY OBJECTIVES, South Centre, March 2005. General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) Article XIX: 2 allows developing countries and LDCs to attach conditions to liberalisation commitments to achieve the objectives of GATS Article IV, which aim to increase the participation of such countries in world trade. It is well recognised that in order to meet these Article IV objectives, countries must first fulfil broader human development policies such as those enshrined in the Millennium Development Goals, e.g. access to jobs, education, and health services. Thus, conditions on liberalisation commitments in GATS can be utilised to

meet both economic and non-economic development goals and objectives. This occasional paper aims to assist those developing countries and LDCs engaged in market access negotiations to not miss the opportunity to attach conditions that achieve national policy objectives to their liberalisation commitments. For access to this paper, visit <http://www.southcentre.org/publications/occasional/paper13.pdf>.

No. 8: FOOD AID IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC MARKETS AND THE DOHA ROUND. Food and Agriculture Organization, 2005. This technical note reviews major developments in the international food aid system and different positions on the effectiveness and impact of food aid. The paper attempts to define and clarify terminology and concepts in order to help focus on the current debate on food aid disciplines in the WTO, integrating trade and market concerns as well as humanitarian aspects. The technical note will soon be made available on the FAO website http://www.fao.org/trade/policy_en.asp.

GOLIATH AGAINST DAVID: WHO WINS AND WHO LOSES WITH THE CAP IN SPAIN AND THE POOR COUNTRIES. By Gonzalo Fanjul, Intermón Oxfam Spain, March 2005. The EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) hurts developing countries and farmers in Europe alike by granting massive subsidies to a few wealthy large producers in Europe, according to this report by the Spanish affiliate of Oxfam International. The concentration of CAP subsidies amongst the largest farmers has hit small-scale farmers hard in Spain, the report shows, with 40 percent of subsidies going to four percent of producers, and has put producers in developing countries at a disadvantage. It calls for more equitable distribution of subsidies, along with respect for fair trading practices that do not hurt the world's poor nations. The report can be found at <http://www.intermonoxfam.org/>.

REGULATING BIOPROSPECTING: INSTITUTIONS FOR DRUG RESEARCH, ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING. By Padmashree Gehl Sampath, United Nations University Press, 2005. This book examines issues in bioprospecting and the search for useful biochemical compounds and genes in nature, specifically focusing on issues related to traditional knowledge, access to genetic resources, and benefit-sharing. It addresses the contractual complexities of bioprospecting for drug research, and is aimed at policymakers, practitioners, and scholars in law, economics, ethnobotany, anthropology, and environmental sciences.

INCORPORATING GENDER CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL PRODUCTS IN WTO AGRICULTURE NEGOTIATIONS. By M.P. Hernandez (International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN), 2005). This paper reflects on the current situation of women in agriculture and puts forward several recommendations regarding the need to integrate gender-sensitive trade policies into negotiations. Focusing on paragraphs 41 and 42 of Annex A of the July Package on Special Products (SPs) and a Special Safeguard Measure (SSM), the paper says that determining appropriate criteria in order to identify SPs should be seen as a protective tool required by developing countries in order to protect their economies and local markets. In order to identify key socioeconomic groups that need to be protected, a wide range of indicators should be considered, and gender analysis should be understood as a crosscutting indicator running through all categories; considerations for the use of an SSM would also require an in-depth analysis of several internal factors to reflect a positive win-win situation, both for the development and trade objectives. To access the paper visit <http://www.eldis.org/cf/rdr/rdr.cfm?doc=DOC18067>

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