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### LEAD STORIES

#### NAMA WEEK: MEMBERS DISCUSS ARGENTINA-BRAZIL-INDIA PROPOSAL

A recent proposal (TN/MA/W/54) from Argentina, Brazil, and India for reducing tariffs on non-agricultural goods dominated discussions during the first two days of talks in the WTO Negotiating Group on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA). The US was particularly critical of the proposal, arguing that it would not guarantee increased market access for global goods trade.

The three proponents of the controversial paper kicked off the 'NAMA week' on 25 April by presenting it to a plenary session of the negotiating group. The submission calls for a tariff reduction formula that would link a Member's tariff cuts to its existing average level of tariff protection -- so that the higher a country's average tariff rate, the higher its tariffs would remain even after the formula is applied on an item-by-item basis. The proposal would also link the formula to differentiated coefficients for developed and developing countries so as to ensure that the latter are permitted to make less onerous tariff reductions; it specifies that the values of these coefficients would be tied to market access commitments in "other areas" of the Doha Round talks. (For more about the proposal, see BRIDGES Weekly, 20 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-04-20/story2.htm>)

The proposal generated much discussion and questions from Members across the spectrum of developmental levels, both during the plenary meeting and the following day's more technical 'Room D' discussions. The latter, named after a room in the WTO building, are attended by a maximum of three representatives from each delegation, as per NAMA Chair Ambassador Stefan Johansson's structure for the work of the Negotiating Group.

#### Several Members unhappy with formula proposed by Argentina, Brazil, India

Delegates report that the US, the EU, Costa Rica, Chile, and some other Latin American countries were not pleased with a tariff-average-based reduction formula, since they had bound their tariffs at fairly low

levels. Some of them also complained that the formula would not lead to substantial liberalisation.

During the Room D meetings on 26 April, advocates of a 'Swiss formula' approach to tariff reduction -- according to which higher duties are slashed more sharply towards a harmonised level for all tariffs -- argued that the three countries' joint proposal did little to address tariff peaks.

Some Members said that though Argentina, Brazil, and India based their tariff reduction formula on the one put forward in May 2003 by then-NAMA Chair Ambassador Pierre-Louis Girard, their proposal neglected to include the mandatory 'sectoral' liberalisation that was an important component of his overall plan.

Members also asked several questions about the submission's ideas for the treatment of 'unbound' tariff lines, i.e., items for which a tariff ceiling had not yet been established. Sources indicate that a number of developing countries, including Malaysia, the Philippines, and other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) contended that the paper's treatment of unbound tariffs was not equitable for developing countries that had bound all of their tariffs, or that applied low tariffs even to unbound lines. They pointed out that only about 20 developing countries, India among them, had a high enough proportion of unbound tariffs that they stood to benefit from a formula that did not require unbound tariffs to be cut on a line-by-line basis.

Trade news sources quote US negotiator Nancy Adams as slamming the proposal for being "based on already rejected ideas," warning that the US would be unable to deliver on expanded market access and reduced subsidies in agriculture in the absence of a "significant commercially meaningful result in NAMA." She described the proposal as "Girard minus, minus in terms of ambition and balance."

Some North African and Caribbean countries, on the other hand, expressed support for the proposal. China and Egypt allowed that the proposal could help serve as a basis for future discussion. However, countries benefiting from trade preference schemes expressed concerns about the potential erosion of their preferential access to rich country markets. They pointed out that a tariff average-based formula would cut EU tariffs -- already at a low average level -- to nearly zero, rendering much of their preferential access irrelevant.

The week of market access talks will conclude on 29 April with a formal meeting of the Negotiating Group on NAMA.

ICTSD will round up coverage of the NAMA week in the next issue of BRIDGES Weekly.

ICTSD reporting; "US Slams Argentina-Brazil-India Proposal for NAMA Tariff Formula," WTO REPORTER, 26 April 2005.

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## EU LAUNCHES TEXTILES SAFEGUARD INVESTIGATIONS

EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson announced on 24 April that he had decided to launch investigations into surges in Chinese textile exports to the EU. The process could potentially culminate in the imposition of restrictions on certain Chinese imports.

The decision was triggered by data showing that increases in imports from China range from 51 percent to 534 percent since the start of 2005 in nine categories of textiles, thus exceeding the "alert levels" for Chinese imports established by the EU earlier this month (see BRIDGES Weekly, 6 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-04-06/story1.htm>).

Countries around the world have been struggling with the effects of the 31 December 2004 elimination of trade quotas in the textiles and clothing sector. "Europe cannot stand by and watch its industry disappear," Mandelson said. "Chinese exports should, of course, be allowed to grow at a normal speed following the removal of quotas. But we must also extend protection to European industry if it is faced with a ruinous surge of unprecedented proportions."

China's terms of accession to the WTO included a 'textile specific safeguard clause' that allows WTO Members to impose quantitative restrictions on imports of Chinese textiles and clothing if they are found to disrupt markets. Under the safeguard, Members can limit specific products to an increase of 7.5 percent above the preceding year's import levels.

The EU will hold informal consultations with China for the length of the two-month investigations, which could begin as early as 29 April. During the first 21 days of the process, the EU will hear opinions from interested parties. If the investigation confirms that there has indeed been a surge in imports in the specified categories, and China has not taken any voluntary action to rectify the situation, the EU could request a three-month formal WTO consultation process with China as per the terms of the textile safeguard process. During the formal consultation process, China would be expected to impose quantitative export restrictions on its textile exports to the EU that hold them to a level no more than 7.5 percent higher than that for the first twelve of the fourteen months prior to the launch of the investigation. If no action is taken by the end of the

three months, the EU will be free to impose import limits retroactive to the beginning of the formal consultations.

Thirteen of the 25 EU member states, including France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Belgium, have called on the EU's executive European Commission to skip the five-month process and instead impose restrictions within weeks. France formally asked Mandelson on 26 April to impose emergency measures, saying that support from Brussels would bolster French enthusiasm for the EU constitution ahead of their 29 May referendum. The Commission responded that such action could trigger a trade dispute with China at the WTO, but added that they were closely monitoring trade in eleven additional textile categories.

WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi, on the other hand, has said that countries struggling with a surge in Chinese textile exports should wait at least a year before taking any protectionist measures. After only a few months of evidence, he suggested, the final impact of the trade rules remains unclear.

#### **Effect on other developing countries central to EU's decisions**

The European Commission has said that the impact of increased Chinese imports on "textile producers in developing countries with an historic dependence on exports to the EU market" was another of their key concerns. The April 9 guidelines for investigations into Chinese imports pointed to the new competitive pressures facing "vulnerable developing countries like Bangladesh," as well as countries such as Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. The guidelines noted that "a sudden, steep and sustained surge in Chinese textiles exports could be highly damaging" for industries in these countries.

Preliminary data indicate that some African countries have been strongly affected by the phase-out. Asian firms which had invested in Southern Africa to take advantage of preferential access to the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) have pulled out, according to Agrina Mussa, president of the Association of Southern African Development Community Chambers of Commerce and Industry. In addition, Kenyan Trade and Industry Minister Mukhisa Kituyi said that six export processing zone-based textile companies have shifted production to China and India in the past four months. Similarly, South Korea's textiles and finished clothing exports for the first quarter of 2005 were 6.1 percent lower than last year. Asia News reports that that South Africa has lost as many as 30,000 jobs.

#### **Chinese export taxes may increase**

In its indignant response to the EU decision to launch the investigations, the Chinese government warned that European limits on Chinese textile imports would hurt wider trade relations. A spokesman for China's Commerce Ministry said the investigation violated basic WTO provisions and "goes against the EU's consistent free-trade position." After talking with officials in Hong Kong on 26 April, Mandelson renewed his call for China to take the initiative and voluntarily slow textile shipments. "It is in China's interest to take the necessary action to avoid formal safeguard measures," he said.

China is reportedly considering increasing the export taxes on certain categories of textiles announced in December 2004 by as much as a factor of ten (see BRIDGES Weekly, 15 December 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-12-15/story4.htm>). Although no export tax increases have been confirmed, Chinese textile industry representatives expect a decision on the extent of the rise within the next month. US textile importers suggest that China could announce a decision in early May and impose the additional duties by mid-month.

While the EU has indicated that it would welcome such a move, Assistant US Trade Representative Charles W. Freeman said that the US would prefer to use the textile specific safeguard clause rather than leave it up to China to restrain its textile and clothing exports. Nonetheless, apparel importers and retailers have said that an increased export tariff would be unlikely to have a short-term impact on China's exports to the US or the EU, because prices for textile and garment orders are fixed several months before shipment.

"A warning from China on textile trade curbs," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 27 April 2005; "Beijing may raise textile tariffs to curb exports," FINANCIAL TIMES, 15 April 2005; "EU warns on threat of China Textiles," FINANCIAL TIMES, 15 April 2005; "Citing Early Statistics, EC Moves To Investigate Chinese Textile Imports," WTO REPORTER, 25 April 2005; "US Importers, Textile Makers Weigh Impact of Rumored China Export Tariffs," WTO REPORTER, 25 April 2005; "Africa's Textile Firms Fight for Survival," IPS NEWS, 23 April 2005; "European Commission launches investigations into sharp surge in Chinese textiles imports," EU PRESS RELEASE, 24 April 2005; "Guidelines for the use of safeguards on Chinese textiles exports to the EU," EU PRESS RELEASE, 6 April 2005; "13 EU Members Seek Emergency Action, Not Long Probe Into Chinese Textile Surge," WTO REPORTER, 26 April 2005; "South Africa : Sh2.6b US aid under AGOA to rescue garment industry from Comesa region," FIBRE2FASHION, 27 April 2005;

"Textile exports down after global curbs lifted," ASIA TIMES, 27 April 2005; "Chinese textile tsunami hits Africa and Asia," ASIA NEWS, 26 April 2005.

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### ASIAN, AFRICAN LEADERS SIGN COOPERATION PACT AMIDST FLURRY OF FTA NEGOTIATIONS

Asian and African leaders signed an agreement 24 April promising economic, political and security co-operation, including expanded trade. The pact coincides with a flurry of free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations involving countries from the two continents.

Trade figured high on the agenda during the two-day summit meeting at Bandung, Indonesia, which culminated in the 'New Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership' agreement. Representatives from several of the 106 countries in attendance vowed to put forward a more united front in WTO negotiations. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called on developed countries to dismantle trade-distorting agricultural subsidies and barriers to farm exports from developing countries. He also urged countries to protect biodiversity, and to lower obstacles to the movement of people and services. Trade between the two continents is becoming more significant, notably because of China's rapidly-expanding imports of energy and primary resources from countries across Africa.

At the Bandung meeting, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong told the press that his country was aiming to conclude an FTA with India within a month, after two-and-a-half years of negotiations. Singapore held a fifth round of FTA talks with Chile, New Zealand and Brunei from 18-23 April; the four countries are hoping to finalise the terms of a free-trade area that would span three continents this year. Over the same week, an FTA was also signed between New Zealand and Thailand to cut tariffs on goods. The agreement will be extended to cover trade in services in three years.

During a recent trade and investment mission to Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea, Malaysia's trade minister said on 22 April that her country was working towards signing a comprehensive trade pact with Japan by December. Negotiations for the agreement started in December 2003.

In Riyadh, officials from China and the six oil-producing Arabian peninsula states that form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) announced on 24 April that they were aiming to reach a deal to cut tariffs on goods by the end of 2006. The GCC is also in free trade talks with the EU. GCC members Oman and the United Arab

Emirates are negotiating separate bilateral FTAs with the US.

The relatively recent fashion for bilateral and regional trade agreements in Asia and Africa thus appears to be growing, in spite of concerns that the proliferation of such accords is undermining the multilateral trading system.

ICTSD reporting; "Nations conduct 5th round of trade talks," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 25 April 2005; "United States pursues more free-trade agreements in the Middle East," DAILY STAR (Beirut), 26 April 2005; "Thailand signs FTA with NZ," BANGKOK POST, 20 April 2005; "PM calls for removal of trade barriers," REDIFF.com, 23 April 2005; "Trade must help the poor: PM," THE STATESMAN, 24 April 2005; "China, Gulf states aim for free trade pact in 2006," REUTERS, 24 April 2005; "Singapore, India to seal trade pact in a month," REUTERS, 25 April 2005; "Rafidah: Nearing Accord," SIN CHEW DAILY, 26 April 2005; "Japan-Malaysia economic pact may be signed in December," THE STAR (Malaysia), 23 April 2005.

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### RUSSIAN, SAUDI ACCESSIONS INCHING ALONG TOWARD HONG KONG

Political momentum for completing the WTO accession negotiations of both Russia and Saudi Arabia has been building up recently, though some bilateral agreements with crucial trading partners remain unfinished.

The WTO Working Party on the Accession of Russia met on 13 and 15 April. At the Working Party, Russia concluded bilateral negotiations on goods with 29 countries accounting for 87 percent of its goods imports. According to the rules for the WTO accession process, would-be members of the WTO must negotiate bilateral market access deals with all Members that request them.

Specific issues raised at the meeting included the fate of state trading enterprises, intellectual property rights (IPRs) and commercial secrets, as well as agricultural products. When asked after the meeting whether Russia would join the WTO by the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference in December, Maxim Medvedkov, head of the Russian delegation at the WTO accession talks, simply said, "We do not exclude this possibility."

After the EU signed off on Russia's accession a year ago (see BRIDGES Weekly, 2 June 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-06-02/story5.htm>), the US remains the main trading partner with which Russia



needs to reach a bilateral agreement in its accession process. US Senators Chuck Grassley and Max Baucus, both members of a powerful Senate finance committee, recently sent a letter to Acting US Trade Representative (USTR) Peter Allgeier flagging some concerns that they wanted to see resolved before Washington gives its assent to Russia's accession. Among the issues raised were Russia's incomplete IPR laws and their lax enforcement; US market access in areas such as meats, aircraft and cars; and Russia's dual energy pricing policy, according to which natural gas is sold on the domestic market at prices that do not cover the cost of extraction, and are far below world market levels.

At a meeting in February, US President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin had issued a joint statement saying that they intended to complete the bilateral negotiations for Russian accession in 2005. Russia began its drawn-out WTO accession process some 11 years ago.

#### **Bush signals support for Saudi accession at Texas ranch summit**

US President Bush and Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah met at Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas on 25 April to discuss a host of issues, including oil production, terrorism and the situation in Iraq. The talks also focused on Saudi Arabia's WTO accession process, and were preceded by intensive talks in Washington focusing on key US concerns such as Saudi IPR protection, state-owned enterprises and the services sector. In addition, a number of US senators had expressed concern over Saudi Arabia's boycott against Israel, alleged support for terrorist groups, and human rights situation in a letter to the USTR before the meeting.

The Bush-Abdullah meeting did not end with a bilateral deal on Saudi accession. Rather, the two parties issued a joint statement that included a section on the WTO accession. The leaders said they welcomed the renewed determination of Saudi Arabia to join the WTO, and said they would "work together as partners to complete our negotiations and with other WTO members in Geneva with the aim of welcoming Saudi Arabia into the WTO before the end of 2005." On his return from the US, Saudi Finance Minister Ibrahim Al-Assaf said "We have reached an agreement on major topics during talks with the US Secretary of Commerce and Industry and the US negotiating team. Only technical aspects are remaining which could be settled within the coming days or weeks."

Both the Russian and Saudi Arabian accessions have been suggested as possible "deliverables" at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference.

ICTSD reporting; "Russia concludes goods negotiations with 29 members," WTO RELEASE, 20 April 2005; "Russia finished talks on access to markets of goods with 28 countries and EU in frame of WTO accession," PRIME-TASS 18 April 2005; "Riyadh closer to joining WTO: U.S. trade official," AL JAZEERA, 24 April 2005; "Joint Statement by President Bush and Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah," WHITE HOUSE RELEASE, 25 April 2005; "Al-Assaf Hopes for Speedy WTO Accession," ARAB NEWS, 27 April 2005.

### **IN BRIEF**

#### **EU COMMISSIONERS STRESS DEVELOPMENT DIMENSION OF EPAs**

Parliamentarians from both the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states and the EU met in Bamako, Mali on 19 April. EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel reported to the "Joint Parliamentary Assembly" on the EU's humanitarian and development relations with the ACP countries, as well as on recent proposals adopted by the EU on its contribution to the UN's review of the Millennium Development Goals in September this year. Calling for support for cotton producers in West Africa, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson reported on progress in the EU's Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations with the six ACP regions. Speaking before the meeting, Mandelson emphasised his promise to reshape the ongoing EPA negotiation process in a way "that would benchmark it against development goals."

In related news, the EU's executive European Commission proposed 12 April to set a new EU official development aid target for 2010 at 0.56 percent, and "to undertake action to increase coherence and make sure the different EU policies use all their potential to contribute to development." The same day, the Commission also approved a communication to EU member states calling for a specific EU-Africa Partnership on infrastructure aimed at "strengthening the interconnectivity and the supply side capacity of our partners."

The EC press release on the Joint Parliamentary Assembly is available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/bilateral/regions/acp/pr180405\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/bilateral/regions/acp/pr180405_en.htm).

ICTSD reporting

## WTO IN BRIEF

### EU REVISED SERVICES OFFER NEARING APPROVAL

On 20 April, the EU's executive European Commission presented its revised market access offer for the ongoing WTO services negotiations to its 25 member states for approval and consultations. The offer will not, however, be circulated to all WTO Member countries until May.

The offer expands on some of the market-opening commitments present in the EU's 2003 initial offer, and extends them to the ten countries that joined the Union in 2004. The Commission emphasises that its proposed offer "fully safeguards" public services within the EU. It also does not contain commitments to liberalise sensitive areas such as education, health, and audiovisual services to foreign competition.

In the WTO, trade in services is liberalised through a bilateral process of requests and offers of market access. Once agreed, commitments are extended to all WTO Members. The EU's revised offer reflects requests made by other Members in response to its initial offer. The Commission specified that it would be "conditional on other WTO members making substantive offers."

According to the July Package (WT//579), Members are supposed to make their revised offers by May. However, many have not yet done so (see BRIDGES Weekly, 2 March 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-03-02/story3.htm>). Services talks resumed on 27 March.

ICTSD will provide coverage of the ongoing services negotiations in upcoming issues of BRIDGES Weekly.

"European Commission presents revised offer on services for Doha Development Round," EUROPEAN COMMISSION (Press Release), 20 April 2005.

## 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](mailto:events@ictsd.ch).

### Coming Up: 28 April - 4 May

28-30 April, Brussels, Belgium: INTERNATIONAL BANANA CONFERENCE II. The second International Banana Conference is organised by Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Sindicatos Bananeros (COLSIBA), the Association of Caribbean Farmers (WINFA), the European Banana Action Network (EUROBAN), International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Tobacco & Allied Workers' (IUF), and the United States Labor Education in the Americas Project (US/LEAP). It aims to place the specific needs of women workers and small farmers firmly on the international agenda; explore mechanisms to control over-production and to stabilise prices; elaborate a definition of a 'fair price'; and create a permanent mechanism/forum in which to continue dialogue between the different actors. For further information contact Stephen Coats, tel: (+1 773) 262 6502; fax: 262 6602; email: [usglep@igc.org](mailto:usglep@igc.org); Internet: <http://www.ibc2.org/>.

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](mailto:fgccgp@dfo-mpo.gc.ca); Internet: [http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fgc-cgp/program\\_e.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fgc-cgp/program_e.htm).

May 2-3 Entebbe, Uganda, THE FUTURE OF SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE IN EASTERN AFRICA: THE ROLES OF STATES, MARKETS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY. This conference is organised by the International Food Policy Research Institute's Eastern Africa Food Policy Network. The objectives of the conference are to share the results of seven years of the network's existence with food and agricultural policy makers and stakeholders in the region through the findings of the projects it has been supporting and to launch a new partnership program between the Eastern and Central Africa Program for Agricultural Policy Analysis (ECAPAPA) and IFPRI. For further information contact Steven Were Omamo by e-mail: [IFPRI-EastAfrica@ifpri.bushnet.net](mailto:IFPRI-EastAfrica@ifpri.bushnet.net); Internet: <http://www.ifpri.org>.

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](http://www.oecd.org/site/0,2865,en_21571361_342252_93_1_1_1_1,00.html).

2-6 May, Punta del Este, Uruguay: FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION (COP-1). The First COP of the global treaty to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (POPs). For further information contact the Stockholm Convention Secretariat, tel: 41-22-917-8191; fax: 41-22-797-3460; email: ssc@chemicals.unep.ch, Internet: [http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/cop\\_1/meeting\\_info.htm](http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/cop_1/meeting_info.htm).

## WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: [http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/meets.pdf](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.

28 - 29 April: WTO SERVICES SYMPOSIUM

28 April: TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

29 April: TRADE POLICY REVIEW BODY - PARAGUAY

29 April: SUB-COMMITTEE ON COTTON

29 April: INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK STEERING COMMITTEE

29 April: NEGOTIATING GROUP ON MARKET ACCESS

2 - 4 May: NEGOTIATING GROUP ON TRADE FACILITATION

## Other Upcoming Events

16-27 May, Bonn, Germany: 22ND SESSIONS OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES TO THE UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC). SB-22 will be preceded by a "Seminar of Government Experts," which will seek to promote an informal exchange of information on actions concerning mitigation and adaptation, and on policies and measures adopted by governments supporting implementation of existing commitments under the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol. For further information contact the UNFCCC Secretariat, tel: 49-228-815-1000; fax: 49-228-815-1999; e-mail: [secretariat@unfccc.int](mailto:secretariat@unfccc.int); Internet: <http://unfccc.int/meetings/sb22/items/3369.php>.

27 May, Leuven, Belgium: GENE PATENTS AND PUBLIC HEALTH. Organised by the Centre for Intellectual Property Rights at the Catholic University of Leuven. The conference offers a survey of the varied and complex issues that occur in patenting diagnostic methods based on genes. The conference also provides empirical evidence on well-established strategies for using patents and explores new measures for gaining access to patents. For further information contact Ms. Linda Mees, tel: (+32 16) 32 3732; fax: 32 3730; email: [Linda.mees@law.kuleuven.ac.be](mailto:Linda.mees@law.kuleuven.ac.be); Internet: [http://www.law.kuleuven.ac.be/cir/conference\\_27may.htm](http://www.law.kuleuven.ac.be/cir/conference_27may.htm).

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## RESOURCES

BIG SUGAR AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF US AGRICULTURAL POLICY. By Kimberly A. Elliott. Center for Global Development (CGD), April 2005. This brief investigates the effects of sugar subsidies on developing world producers and US consumers. It outlines the political economy behind US sugar subsidies, and specifically looks at the ramifications of the Central American Free Trade Agreement -- vigorously opposed by the US sugar industry -- for trade in sugar. To access this paper please visit [http://www.cgdev.org/docs/CGDEV\\_BigSugar3a.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/docs/CGDEV_BigSugar3a.pdf).

"Will The Doha Round Play A Role In Ending Global Poverty?" By Sophia Murphy. In AU COURANT, Canadian Council for International Co-operation, Spring 2005. As civil society organisations unite to call for action against global poverty, government trade officials are immersed in the WTO's Doha round of negotiations. This article describes how trade rules can support poverty eradication. To access this article please visit [http://www.ccic.ca/e/docs/004\\_au\\_courant\\_spring\\_2005.pdf](http://www.ccic.ca/e/docs/004_au_courant_spring_2005.pdf).

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED WTO NEGOTIATIONS.** Colin Kirkpatrick and Clive George. Impact Assessment Research Centre, Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester, April 2005. This report is an independent assessment of the impacts that trade negotiations may have on sustainable development commissioned by the European Commission. It describes the principal findings of three studies assessing the sustainability impacts of liberalisation in agriculture, forestry and distribution services and provides recommendations for negotiators and policy-makers. To access this report please visit <http://www.tradeobservatory.org/library.cfm?refID=72771>.

**ROAD DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN CHINA.** By Shenggen Fan and Connie Chan-Kang. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) Research Report 138, 2005. This study evaluates how Chinese investment in roads has contributed to poverty reduction and economic growth in China over the last two decades. It disaggregates road infrastructure into different classes to account for differences in their quality, and then estimates the impact of road investments on overall economic growth, agricultural growth, urban growth, urban poverty reduction, and rural poverty reduction. The report shows how investing in low-quality and rural roads will generate larger marginal returns, raise more people out of poverty per yuan invested, and reduce regional development disparity more sharply than investing in high-quality roads. To access this report please visit <http://www.ifpri.org/>.

**TAXES VS. PERMITS: OPTIONS FOR PRICE-BASED CLIMATE CHANGE REGULATION.** By Suzi Kerr, Isabelle Sin and Joanna Hendy. New Zealand Treasury, March 2005. This paper provides an overview of key issues involved in the choice among market-based instruments for climate change policy. Specifically, it examines the potential net benefits from shifting to a permit system for emission reduction, and the preconditions necessary for this change. It also draws out the implications of New Zealand's specific circumstances and current climate policies for future policy development. To access this report please visit <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/workingpapers/2005/wp05-02.asp>.

**CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY: CHARTING A NEW ENERGY FUTURE.** By the Bioenergy and Agricultural Working Group, Energy Future Coalition. This report illustrates how sustainably produced biomass is highly undervalued and underutilised as energy asset in the US and around the world. Leaders in the chemical and biotech industries are currently

developing new technology to make ethanol, a biofuel, from almost anything that grows or once grew. The working group recommends the continued development of biofuel technologies in the US including through incentives for energy crops, government-led competitions, and increases in research and development. It suggests that the US Trade Representative propose shifting funds from agriculture export subsidies to bioenergy subsidies. To access the report visit [http://www.energyfuturecoalition.org/new\\_fuels.cfm](http://www.energyfuturecoalition.org/new_fuels.cfm).

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