



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
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# Bridges

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### LEAD STORIES

DOHA ROUND: CAN ST. PETERSBURG SUMMIT  
YIELD A BREAKTHROUGH? 1

### OTHER STORIES

MEMBERS CONTINUE TO DEBATE HOW TO  
ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS 3

### IN BRIEF

US AND CANADA FINALISE SOFTWOOD LUMBER  
DEAL 5

### WTO IN BRIEF

TALKS TO CONTINUE ON S&D MONITORING  
MECHANISM 5

CIVIL SOCIETY THROWS WEIGHT BEHIND BRAZIL IN  
RETREADED TYRES DISPUTE 6

WTO MEMBERS FORMALLY ADOPT AGREEMENT  
ON RTA TRANSPARENCY 6

### EVENTS & RESOURCES

EVENTS 7  
RESOURCES 8

### LEAD STORIES

#### DOHA ROUND: CAN ST. PETERSBURG SUMMIT YIELD A BREAKTHROUGH?

As WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy continues his attempts to promote consensus in the troubled Doha Round negotiations, several trade diplomats are looking to the upcoming G8 summit in St. Petersburg for major trading nations to come up with a way out of the deadlock.

The group of eight leading industrialised nations (G8) is holding its annual leaders' meeting from 15-17 July. Although the gathering's focus will be on energy security, education, and infectious diseases, the heads of state – from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the UK, and the US, in addition to European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso – are expected to discuss trade as well.

Their counterparts from developing countries Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa – all members of the G-20 group at the WTO – will also be in St. Petersburg, thus bringing together several of the key players in the Doha Round talks. Sources report that Lamy, too, will be present.

Many think that WTO Members have to strike a framework deal on cutting farm subsidies as well as tariffs on both industrial and agricultural products by the end of July in order to meet their goal of concluding the round by the end of the year. After failing to do so at a high-profile ministerial-level meeting in Geneva at the end of June, Members asked Lamy to step up consultations with governments in an attempt to facilitate an agreement as soon as possible (see BRIDGES Weekly, 3 July 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-07-03/story1.htm>).

The WTO chief believes that a 'modalities' agreement – formulae and figures to determine the extent of reductions and exceptions to them – would require parallel concessions on a 'triangle' of issues: the US would have to agree to make deeper cuts to domestic farm support, the EU to increased agricultural market access, and developing countries such as Brazil and India to offer more on industrial tariffs.

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During the recent meeting in Geneva, the US in particular was insistent that it would not budge on farm subsidy cuts unless other countries agreed to slash agricultural tariffs more deeply. The US has been seeking an average farm tariff cut of 66 percent from developed countries, compared to the G-20's favoured 54 percent and the 39-46 percent proposed by the EU. Speaking in Washington on 7 July, US Trade Representative Susan Schwab ruled out the possibility that the US would downgrade its demands on market access, suggesting that this would "risk generating a downward spiral" in the negotiations.

### **Lamy in Japan**

Lamy started his 'shuttle diplomacy' in Japan last week, where he met with several members of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's cabinet. Japan, which is a member of the G-10 group of countries with highly-protected farm sectors, is also part of the all-important G-6 along with the EU, the US, Australia, Brazil, and India. According to Kyodo News, Koizumi hinted at willingness to move on his country's traditionally high agricultural tariffs, telling Lamy that 'aggressive action' was necessary in the sector.

Following his meetings in Tokyo, Lamy said on 6 July that he was "encouraged by the commitment to the round" that he had seen from top Japanese officials, though his new role as "confidante to Member governments" prevented him from responding to questions about the evolution of any country's positions.

Lamy added that he would continue his consultations with other G-6 countries, during which he would "try to test with them different hypotheses and different numbers" in an attempt to discern their "red lines." He suggested that he would ask questions such as "What if your trading partners moved more in this direction? What if they asked you to do more in that direction? What if you gained more market access for product 'x' but less for product 'y'? What if this type of agriculture subsidy was reduced more than that one?" The answers to such questions, he said, would help determine the shape of a modalities compromise.

Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath arrived in Geneva on 12 July to meet with Lamy as well as to hold talks with other Members. Prior to his departure, he told journalists in New Delhi that the onus remained on developed countries to initiate the moves necessary to push the talks forward.

### **Can G8 summit break the deadlock?**

Some Geneva-based negotiators have expressed scepticism about whether the discussions at and around the G8 summit will be able to address some of the technically complex issues that must be addressed for a modalities deal to be possible. Heads of state meetings, they suggest, often tend to focus on broad generalities.

Foremost among these technical issues is the specific nature of various exceptions to farm tariff disciplines -- the 'sensitive products' that all Members will be able to designate for lower tariff cuts; the 'special products' that developing countries alone will slate for special tariff treatment based on food security, livelihood security, and rural development concerns; and the 'special safeguard mechanism' for developing countries.

US officials have complained that these flexibilities make up a "black box" of loopholes that render it impossible to measure the true extent of market access offers. For example, Schwab said during her recent speech that the EU's favoured approach to sensitive products would have the effect of diluting the G-20's proposed farm tariff cut from 54 percent to 40 percent. Sources suggest that the exceptions will figure prominently in Lamy's consultations, since they will need to be clarified prior to any modalities deal.

Nevertheless, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio 'Lula' da Silva has vowed to try to give a boost to the Doha Round talks at the St. Petersburg summit. He told the Financial Times that with trade negotiators deadlocked, governments could use the meeting to send a clear signal that they want progress.

World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz, for his part, sent a letter on 9 July to the leaders going to St. Petersburg, urging the US, the EU, and developing countries to take advantage of a "unique opportunity" to make "a collective pledge" to move towards the controversial '20-20-20' targets for a potential deal outlined by Lamy in late June (see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 June 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-06-28/story1.htm>). This would require the EU to accept the G-20's farm tariff proposal, countries like Brazil and India to assent to a 20 percent ceiling on industrial tariffs, and the US to agree to limit overall trade-distorting farm subsidies at a level below USD 20 billion.

### **Lull in ag, NAMA negotiations**

Meanwhile, at WTO headquarters in Geneva, the negotiating groups on both agriculture and non-agricultural market access (NAMA) have not been holding meetings. Agriculture Chair Ambassador Crawford Falconer (New Zealand) told Members that this was to leave "sufficient time and space" for Lamy's consultations. Both he and the NAMA chair are

available to meet with Members in the capacity of 'friends' of TNC Chair Lamy.

Work in other negotiating areas is continuing, albeit with an eye on progress on farm and manufactureds trade. Bilateral market access talks on services are currently underway.

EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson and his Indian counterpart Nath, so often at odds in the negotiations, recently co-wrote an article in the International Herald Tribune urging Members not to neglect the trade facilitation talks, in which a preliminary agreement is due by the end of the month. They steered pointedly clear of addressing agriculture and NAMA.

ICTSD reporting; "Lamy says WTO in 'red zone,' seeks urgent action to save process," KYODO NEWS, 6 July 2006; "Developed countries must take initiative to push WTO talks," TIMES OF INDIA, 12 July 2006; "Brazil's Lula to promote Doha trade talks during G8 summit," FINANCIAL TIMES, 12 July 2006; "Doha round: It's not only what we trade, but how," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 5 July 2006; "G8 may hold key to WTO deal," REUTERS, 7 July 2006.

## OTHER STORIES

### MEMBERS CONTINUE TO DEBATE HOW TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS

WTO Members continue to search for an acceptable approach for identifying 'environmental goods' to slate them for expedited trade liberalisation. At the Committee on Trade and Environmental Special Session (CTE-SS) meeting on 6-7 July, familiar divisions reappeared as delegates debated how best to fulfil the Paragraph 31(iii) mandate of the Doha Declaration to negotiate on the "reduction or, as appropriate, elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to environmental goods and services."

Some (primarily developed) countries want the WTO Membership to agree to a 'list' of specific environmental goods for liberalisation. However, many developing countries in particular are sceptical of this approach, since they fear that products of export interest to them may fail to figure in the list.

Nevertheless, negotiators have spent recent meetings examining the 480-odd products in the potential environmental goods lists put forward by nine Members. These technical discussions have been marked by disagreement between developing and

developed countries -- the former argue that a single non-environmental end use should suffice to disqualify a product from consideration for being an 'environmental good'; the latter counter that this would exclude all but a handful of items (see BRIDGES Weekly, 21 June 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-06-21/story6.htm>).

In response to earlier criticisms regarding the issue of dual or multiple-use products, list approach proponents New Zealand (TN/TE/W/49/Rev.2) and Canada (TN/TE/W/50/Rev.1) submitted revised versions of their lists of environmental goods. Both reiterated their view that it would be impractical to exclude all but single end-use products, and instead spoke of the need to consider the 'environmental benefits' of the goods in question. Thus, their revised lists excluded items with no 'direct environmental benefits' such as some chemicals and recyclable material. Each suggested that the move could facilitate progress in the negotiations. Japan, too, submitted a modified informal version of its environmental goods list.

In spite of the revisions, developing countries including Egypt, India, Brazil, and South Africa expressed doubts regarding the environmental use of some of the remaining products, such as lasers, electromagnets, and electricity meters. They also repeated their opposition to the practice of identifying specific products for liberalisation solely by name rather than by HS code, arguing that this so-called 'ex-out' approach would be too complex for their national authorities to implement.

### India responds to criticisms of project approach

Developing countries have proposed some alternative methods to liberalising trade in environmental goods. India, for instance, has proposed a 'project approach' that would temporarily liberalise trade in environmental goods and services being used in approved environmental projects (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 24 June 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/05-06-24/story1.htm>).

At the recent meeting, India attempted once again to respond to sceptics' claims that the methodology would not lead to liberalisation that was predictable and transparent. Several countries, including the US, argued that it would be incompatible with WTO rules to enable a 'designated national authority' to decide, on the basis of multilaterally agreed criteria and parameters, whether an environmental project should be eligible for market access concessions on goods and services.

As during the previous informal CTE session, India argued that the multilaterally-agreed definitions and criteria for environmental projects would be subject to WTO dispute settlement, and that market access concessions would be bound and extended to all Members for the duration of the project (see BRIDGES Weekly, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-06-21/story6.htm>).

The US questioned how dispute settlement would offer additional certainty to importers and exporters, pointing out that bringing a dispute to the WTO takes time and thus would not be compatible with the limited timeframe available to implement a project.

### **Uruguay floats potential compromise based on MEAs**

Uruguay presented an informal 'non-paper' (JOB(06)/144) proposing new parameters for the identification of environmental goods and services. It suggested that they should be based on the broader concept of "environmental activities" -- those whose methodologies or related projects are sanctioned by multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Uruguay also suggested that environmental activities could include health, sustainable development, and poverty reduction programmes that aim to mitigate the major causes of environmental degradation, such as poverty.

According to the proposal, all exported goods used in environmental activities would be identified by the CTE as environmental goods for the purpose of expedited trade liberalisation. The WTO and the MEAs would develop agreed international criteria and methodologies to certify that a national project is environmental. Uruguay stressed that this approach would strengthen cooperation between the multilateral trading system and the MEAs, and would afford Members the opportunity to export goods and services determined by their own interests, needs and national capabilities.

Several countries welcomed this attempt at compromise between the proponents of the 'list approach' and the supporters of the 'environmental project approach.' Some cautioned that products linked to national environmental activities may not qualify for a list based on globally-applicable MEAs, adding that a number of developing countries are not party to many MEAs. Delegates also questioned how exactly the WTO and the MEAs would develop the 'international certification' of environmental projects that Uruguay was proposing.

### **Cuba reiterates importance of S&D**

Cuba tabled a submission (TN/TE/W/69) stressing the need to address special and differential treatment (S&D) in the negotiations. It called on the CTE to undertake an in-depth analysis of the development dimension of the talks and of potential forms that S&D could take.

The paper also expressed support for the project approach, arguing that it was "best suited to making S&D viable" because it required the environmental objective to be clearly defined. On the contrary, the development dimension would not be guaranteed by the list approach, Cuba argued.

### **Market access modalities premature?**

The US, Canada, the EU, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore and Switzerland reiterated their call for developed countries and developing countries "declaring themselves in a position to do so" to eliminate tariffs on environmental goods by 2008 (TN/MA/W/70; TN/TE/W/65), with other developing countries to subsequently follow suit (see BRIDGES Weekly, 17 May 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-05-17/story3.htm>). That paper had suggested that the market access concessions would be based on the environmental goods identified in the CTE-SS.

As before, this prompted protests from a number of developing countries, including Egypt. They described the proposal's consideration of modalities for liberalising trade in environmental goods as premature, since Members had not even agreed on the best way to approach the negotiations, let alone a final list of goods. They also argued that the CTE was not a forum for market access negotiations.

Chair Ambassador Toufiq Ali (Bangladesh) concluded the discussions by saying that there was still "no convergence" on how to achieve the mandate. He added that the technical sessions had helped begin to clarify what might be acceptable to different Members, but that they "still have a long way to go."

The next formal CTE meeting will likely be held in September.

ICTSD reporting.

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**IN BRIEF**

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**US AND CANADA FINALISE SOFTWOOD LUMBER DEAL**

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The US and Canada on 1 July signed an agreement regulating trade in softwood lumber, marking a new truce in their two decade-long dispute.

Based on a tentative deal struck in April, the formal accord halts all legal battles and retaliatory duties on softwood lumber. Of the USD 5 billion the US has collected since 2002 from antidumping and countervailing duties on Canadian lumber, it will return USD 4 billion to Canada. The remaining USD 1 billion will be split between the US government and forestry industry.

The agreement effectively manages trade in softwood lumber by requiring Canadian regions to levy export taxes that will rise from 0 to 15 percent based on export price triggers and US market share. It also contains safeguard measures in the event that a region exceeds its allocated share. The accord is meant to last for seven years, although each country will be able to terminate it after three.

The crux of the disagreement was over Washington's allegation that the 'stumpage fees' Canada charges for harvesting timber on state-owned land were so low that they constituted a subsidy (see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 May 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-05-28/wtoinbrief.htm>). Washington has maintained retaliatory duties on Canadian lumber imports since 2002, throughout extensive legal battles in the both the WTO and NAFTA dispute settlement systems.

Some critics of the deal have argued that it allows the US government to retain too much of the money collected in extra duties. Other commentators have countered that a better deal was unlikely, since the US had not shown any indication that it would comply with various NAFTA rulings in favour of Canada. Canadian government officials insist that the deal will make softwood lumber trade stable and predictable.

The agreement requires approval by Canadian industry and provinces, as well as the parliament. It does not require legislation in the US.

The text of the agreement is available at <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/eicb/softwood/menu-en.asp>.

ICTSD reporting; "US, Canada Ink Deal To End Timber Row," AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 1 July 2006; "Canada, U.S. Reach Deal in Softwood Lumber

Dispute," BLOOMBERG, 1 July 2006; "Emerson unwilling to revisit softwood lumber deal," CTV.CA, 10 July 2006; "Better than nothing: That's the real dirt on the softwood deal," GLOBE AND MAIL, 6 July 2006.

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**WTO IN BRIEF**

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**TALKS TO CONTINUE ON S&D MONITORING MECHANISM**

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WTO Members continued to differ on the role that a monitoring mechanism should play in the implementation of special and differential treatment (S&D) for developing countries, at a 7 July meeting of the Committee on Trade and Development Special (negotiating) Session (see BRIDGES Weekly, 12 April 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-04-12/story3.htm>). Some delegates said that there needs to be more clarity about the objectives of the mechanism. While certain Members want the mechanism to evaluate how much S&D provisions are being used, others said it was more important for it to examine how developing countries are benefiting from them.

However, Kenya called for Members to also consider the possibility of a Framework Agreement for the operationalisation of S&D, as proposed in 2001 by a number of developing countries (WT/GC/W/442). The 2001 proposal calls for a stand-alone agreement that would make all S&D provisions legally binding and enforceable through the dispute settlement system. It also seeks to protect sufficient policy flexibility for developing countries to promote economic development.

Chair Ambassador Burhan Gafoor (Singapore) indicated he would hold consultations on both issues in advance of the next meeting. At that gathering, Members will examine a new paper from the African Group that proposes changes to the S&D texts that were present in the never-adopted Cancun Ministerial Declaration, in order to make them more effective and enforceable (TN/CTD/W/29).

On behalf of the Group of Least-developed Countries, Zambia made a submission to the meeting (TN/CTD/W/31) that suggests that the 97 percent tariff-free coverage of LDC exports required by the Hong Kong mandate on duty-free quota-free market access should be defined as 97 percent of the tariff lines in which positive duties are still applied to existing LDC exports. This would vastly reduce the number of products covered by the 3 percent exception. There was little discussion on the proposal.

ICTSD reporting.



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## CIVIL SOCIETY THROWS WEIGHT BEHIND BRAZIL IN RETREADED TYRES DISPUTE

A number of environmental and human and animal rights groups have submitted two 'amicus curiae' ('friends of the court') briefs to the WTO dispute panel examining the EU's complaint against Brazil's import restrictions on retreaded tyres. Both supported Brazil's defence of the policies under WTO provisions protecting measures taken to safeguard health and the environment (see BRIDGES Weekly, 14 June 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-06-14/wtoinbrief.htm>).

Brazil has argued that since retreaded tyres have a shorter lifespan than new ones, and cannot be reprocessed for subsequent use, they are more strongly linked to the adverse environmental and health effects caused by waste tyres. It has thus banned imports of retreaded tyres, except from its Mercosur partners Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Picking up on this, the amicus briefs lay out a number of legal arguments claiming that the measures were indeed necessary, and therefore justifiable. One of the documents, submitted on 3 July, came from the Center for International Environmental Law and several Brazilian human rights and pollution control groups, including the Centre for Human Rights and the Environment (CEDHA). The other, dated 16 June, was sponsored by US-based animal rights organisation Humane Society International.

Whether the panel will take the briefs into consideration is uncertain. To date, WTO dispute authorities have maintained that they have the right to accept and consider amicus briefs, but no obligation to do so. Brazil is currently considering making the two briefs part of its submission in the case.

Meanwhile, Brazilian Environment Minister Marina Silva met with civil society representatives in Geneva on 7 July, following the first panel hearing. She suggested that an adverse ruling in the case could open the door for poor countries to become waste dumping spaces for rich ones. To avoid such a scenario, she said, the principle that waste should be managed in proximity to where it is used should be applied to retreaded tyres, even if they are not yet 'waste' per se.

The amicus briefs are available at <http://www.hsus.org/web-files/PDF/Brazil-Retreaded-Tyres-Submission-of-Non-Party-Humane-Society-International.pdf> and [http://ciel.org/Publications/Brazil\\_Tires\\_Amicus\\_3Jul06.pdf](http://ciel.org/Publications/Brazil_Tires_Amicus_3Jul06.pdf).

The EU's submission, which has now also made public, is available at <http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/wtodispute/show.cfm?id=285&code=1>

ICTSD reporting.

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## WTO MEMBERS FORMALLY ADOPT AGREEMENT ON RTA TRANSPARENCY

WTO Members formally approved a new set of rules for examining each others' regional trade agreements (RTAs) at a 10 July meeting of the Negotiating Group on Rules. They had agreed to the deal in principle at the end of June (see BRIDGES Weekly, 5 July 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-07-05/story3.htm>).

The 'transparency mechanism' sets out a series of notification requirements for signatories of RTAs. Members are to inform the WTO of the pending conclusion of RTA negotiations and provide factual information on the agreement, such as its scope and implementation timetables. Individual Members will be required, for example, to outline the pact's rules of origin requirements, specific tariff concessions, and import data. One trade diplomat said that the transparency procedures would help Members establish a "clearer picture" of the rapidly-growing 'spaghetti bowl' of overlapping RTAs.

"This decision will help break the current logjam in the WTO on regional trade agreements," said Director-General Pascal Lamy following the adoption of the mechanism. "Hopefully this decision is a good omen for much needed progress in other areas of the talks, such as agriculture and industrial goods trade, where agreement is urgently needed."

The new mechanism will be implemented on a provisional basis. If necessary, Members will modify the decision and replace it with a permanent mechanism as part of the overall results of Doha round negotiations.

ICTSD reporting; "Lamy welcomes WTO agreement on regional trade agreements," WTO NEWS, 10 July 2006.

## 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).

#### Upcoming Events: 13-19 July

15-17 July, St. Petersburg, Russia: G8 SUMMIT. The Group of Eight (G8) is an unofficial forum of the heads of the leading industrialised democracies (Russia, the US, Britain, France, Japan, Germany, Canada and Italy), along with the European Commission. This forum was designed to harmonise attitudes to acute international problems, and will focus on issues such as global energy security, infectious diseases, education, counterterrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the settlement of regional conflicts, the development of the global economy, finance and trade, as well as protection of the environment. For further information visit: <http://en.g8russia.ru/>.

19-21 July, Cuzco, Peru: LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCY POLICY ADVOCACY. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) have organised this training workshop to provide participants with the tools to analyse policy problems and effect policy changes that will attract foreign direct investment (FDI) in support of sustainable development. The training materials draw primarily from best practices -- and at times not-so-best practices -- from around the world. Each case study is followed by questions and exercises intended to elucidate the process of effective policy advocacy. For further information visit: <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Meeting.asp?intItemID=2068&lang=1&m=11838&year=2006&month=5%20>.

17 July-4 August, Budapest, Hungary: UNITAR'S FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME ON INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW. Organised by the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Hundreds of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have been negotiated to address environmental problems. Several countries, however, do not possess the required resources to deal with the national implementation of environmental obligations. Today, many states have to face the challenge of implementing numerous MEAs with limited financial, technical and particularly human

resources capabilities. The international community is in wide agreement that education and training about environmental law play essential roles in enhancing environmental management for sustainable development. The programme will provide an intensive three-week course in environmental law and policy. For further information, contact Marcel A. Boisard, tel: +41 22 917 8474; fax: +41 22 917 8047; email: [elp@unitar.org](mailto:elp@unitar.org); internet: <http://www.unitar.org/elp/fellowship.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.

13 July: WORKING GROUP ON TRADE AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

14 July: COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN SERVICES: SPECIAL SESSION

17-21 July: NAMA WEEK

18 July: COMMITTEE ON ANTI-DUMPING PRACTICES

18 July: WORKING GROUP ON TRADE, DEBT AND FINANCE

19 July: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY

#### Other Upcoming Events

4-6 September, Geneva, Switzerland: EXPERT MEETING ON BUILDING PRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES. Organised by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The meeting will explore successful policies and approaches to building productive capacity and international competitiveness in developing countries, including programmes of assistance. This includes policies to attract foreign direct investment and complementary technology and innovation policies, including enterprise development policies, to enhance the benefits of foreign direct investment (FDI). The expert meeting will also consider development concerns and issues confronting developing countries as they seek to attain national objectives related to FDI and the attendant package of benefits, including enterprise competitiveness,

technology, managerial know-how and privileged access to world markets for the attainment of development goals. For further information visit: <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Meeting.asp?intltemlD=1942&lang=1&m=11897&year=2006&month=7>.

## RESOURCES

**SIGNED AND SEALED? TIME TO RAISE THE DEBATE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE TALKS.** By Panos London, July 2006. A new media brief on trade explores how journalists can draw attention to the issues, exploit public interest, and raise the debate on whether trade deals will positively or negatively affect people's lives. While the Doha Round has sparked further tensions between various governments of the world, the real impact will be felt by common people. The brief questions how much does the general public really know about the international trade agreements that their governments are negotiating on their behalf. It also raises the issue whether ordinary people can have any say in the decisions. The brief can be downloaded at <http://www.panos.org.uk/PDF/reports/prsptoolkit2.pdf>.

**GUIDANCE IN GOOD PRACTICES ON CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DISCLOSURE.** By the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), June 2006. The report draws attention to good corporate governance disclosure practices that enterprises in different parts of the world may wish to emulate. It is essentially a technical aid for regulators and companies, particularly in developing countries and transition economies, and is intended to help those responsible for preparing company reports to produce disclosures on corporate governance that address the major concerns of investors and other stakeholders. The focus of the report is two-pronged, on financial and non-financial corporate governance disclosures and also on disclosure issues regarding general meetings, timing and means of disclosure and compliance with best practices. The full report may be downloaded at [http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/iteteb20063\\_en.pdf](http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/iteteb20063_en.pdf).

**POLICY ENGAGEMENT; HOW CIVIL SOCIETY CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVE.** By J. Court, E. Mendizabal, D. Osborne and J. Young. Overseas Development Institute, June 2006. The report explores the potential for progressive partnerships between civil society organisations (CSOs) and policymakers in developing countries in light of increased democratisation, reductions in conflict, and advances in information and communication technologies. The report also examines the role of CSOs which have been criticised for having a limited impact on policy and practice, as well as on the lives of poor people. It also raises questions about their legitimacy and accountability, and challenges the

bases and feasibility of their policy positions. The report addresses these problems and proposes context assessment, engaging policymakers, getting rigorous evidence, working with partners and communicating well as possible solutions to the problem. The report may be downloaded at [http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/Documents/Policy\\_engagement\\_web.pdf](http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/Documents/Policy_engagement_web.pdf).

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