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LEAD STORIES

DOHA ROUND SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY AFTER G-6 TALKS COLLAPSE

The Doha Round of trade negotiations was put into deep freeze on 24 July, after a meeting of ministers from six key trading nations collapsed over divisions on how to cut farm subsidies and tariffs.

It is not clear when -- or if -- the talks, which started nearly five years ago, will resume. There is no timetable for doing so. Kamal Nath, India's commerce minister, said that the round, though not dead, "is between intensive care and the crematorium."

"It will not be possible to finish the round by the end of 2006," WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy told an informal meeting of all Member delegations the day after ministers from the EU, the US, Australia, Brazil, India and Japan -- the so-called G-6 -- failed once again to bridge their differences. Saying that "the gaps remain too wide," he recommended suspending the talks indefinitely. This "time-out," Lamy suggested, would be an opportunity for Members to examine what was at stake, and reconsider their positions. Ambassadors at the meeting agreed with his recommendation, saying that they shared his disappointment and remained committed to reaching an agreement.

The suspension halts all negotiations currently underway at the WTO. Another G-6 ministerial meeting, which had been scheduled for the end of this week, has been cancelled. Lamy said that the end of the timeout would depend on Members.

Furious recriminations have followed the breakdown, particularly between the EU and the US. Brussels blames Washington for refusing to offer any new cuts to farm subsidies; the latter counters that the EU gave too little on market access to make any such movement possible.

Many of the ministers maintained that the divisions were not insurmountable. Brazilian Foreign Minister

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Celso Amorim attributed the collapse to a lack of "political will."

It was widely believed that Members needed to agree on agriculture and industrial goods 'modalities' -- formulae and figures for tariff and subsidy cuts, as well as exceptions to them -- by the end of July, in order to finalise a Doha Round package of legal agreements before the mid-2007 expiry of the Bush administration's Congressional mandate to negotiate trade agreements. US Trade Representative Susan Schwab indicated in a conference call that she no longer thought this possible.

Agriculture reason for breakdown

What many are calling the most serious crisis in the WTO's decade-long history comes little over a week after heads of state from leading industrialised and developing countries vowed at the G8 summit in St. Petersburg to show greater flexibility in the trade talks (see BRIDGES Weekly, 19 July 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/06-07-19/story1.htm>).

Lamy has long held that unblocking the negotiations would require parallel progress on a 'triangle' of issues: the US would have to agree to deeper cuts to domestic farm support; the EU to increased agricultural market access, and developing countries such as Brazil and India to lower industrial tariffs. Each group has been urging the others to budge first. Following the St. Petersburg summit, G-6 ministers set up the two meetings in Geneva to attempt to translate the promises of increased flexibility into a modalities deal.

This did not happen. Even though Lamy said that some potential compromise numbers were informally floated at the 14-hour long G-6 meeting on 23 July, the divisions on agriculture were so pronounced that industrial tariffs were not even directly addressed.

In the wake of the latest setback, many governments have promised to step up efforts to pursue bilateral and regional trade agreements, which already stand accused of weakening the multilateral trading system.

EU, US blame game over subsidies, market access

The EU openly blamed US intransigence for the collapse. "Having been mandated by heads of government at the G8 to come together to indicate further flexibility, I felt that each of us did, except the United States," EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson told the press after the talks were halted. "The United States was unwilling to accept, or indeed to acknowledge, the flexibility being shown by others in

the room and, as a result, felt unable to show any flexibility on the issue of farm subsidies."

The US' proposal to cut trade-distorting farm subsidies by 53 percent is projected to slash its current spending limit from USD 48.2 billion to roughly USD 22.5 billion -- which is still higher than the USD 19.7 billion that it actually doled out in such payments last year.

Trade diplomats from other delegations also expressed disappointment that the US, alone among the G-6, did not come up with any new proposals during the meeting.

Washington hit back with accusations of its own. The US trade mission in Geneva issued a statement on 25 July describing the EU's views as "false and misleading," warning that Brussels' "blamesmanship and finger pointing" risked jeopardising "the few chances we have left to save the Doha Round."

US officials insist that they had come to Geneva prepared to offer further cuts to their domestic subsidies, but did not do so only because the EU and India failed to table meaningful improvements on agricultural market access. Schwab claimed that when she communicated the US' flexibilities privately to Lamy, he conceded that the differences between Members' positions remained irreconcilable.

The US continued its criticism of the exceptions to farm tariff cuts that the EU and many developing countries have been seeking, arguing that they were looking for loopholes to avoid liberalisation.

Mandelson rubbished the US' complaints, saying that the EU had, during the G-6 meeting, offered to go from its original proposal of a 39 percent average cut to farm tariffs to about 51 percent -- "close to the [54 percent] level requested by the G-20 group of developing countries." He also said that he had indicated that he was "ready to talk about the number and treatment of sensitive products," which will be subject to lower tariff cuts in exchange for expanded import quotas. US Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns argued that Brussels was exaggerating the extent to which these quotas were likely to expand under its proposal.

Washington has asked for tariff cuts of close to 66 percent. It wants the EU to agree to deeper tariff cuts since they will serve as the basis for calculating increased access to growing developing country markets like China and India.

US farm and business groups, as well as members of Congress, lauded Schwab and Johanns for refusing to budge on domestic support in the absence of gains in market access.

Nath blames 'gap in mindset'

The Indian minister was incensed at the US' demands, saying that Washington was seeking to displace millions of subsistence farmers with subsidised products. Nath said that the notion that subsidy cuts should be paid for in market access represented a 'gap in mindset' that would need to be transcended for the round to succeed. Trade-distorting subsidies "should not be there to start off with," Nath added, and "if developing countries are asked 'please pay us to remove these distortions,' I'm afraid that's not going to work."

He emphasised that the US' position was tantamount to renegotiating the July 2004 Framework and the Hong Kong Declaration, which provided for allowing developing countries to assign 'special products' lenient tariff treatment based on food security, livelihood security, and rural development concerns. India has been seeking to designate as many as 20 percent of products as 'special,' but sources suggest that Nath had indicated some flexibility on the issue during the discussions.

Brazil, India: EU moved, domestic support was the obstacle

Both Nath and Amorim recognised "movement" by the EU on market access. Amorim said that Brussels was nevertheless still short of the G-20 proposal, especially in terms of the significantly lower cuts it was proposing for the highest tariffs.

Speaking in Geneva immediately after the meeting, the two leaders of the G-20 hinted that Washington's refusal to move on domestic support was the principal reason for the stalemate, though they refused to point fingers explicitly. "Everybody put something on the table, except one country which said 'we can't see anything on the table,'" said Nath. Amorim, too, admitted that domestic support was "the area in which we were lagging behind more clearly."

Preserving what is on the table

Lamy warned Members of the risk that existing proposals on the negotiating table might disappear, such as the elimination of agricultural export subsidies, duty- and quota-free market access for least-developed country (LDC) exports (albeit with significant exceptions), and hastened cuts to cotton subsidies. The suspension of the negotiations put this progress "on hold," he said.

He has previously indicated his belief that the existing proposals would make the Doha Round worth two to three times more than previous trade rounds. Urging

Members not to withdraw their proposals, Lamy suggested that reflecting on what stood to be lost in the talks might help change different groups' positions.

Political deadlines complicate resuscitation

Breakdowns are not new to global trade negotiations. The Uruguay Round talks fell apart in December 1990 and only resumed a year later when the then-Director-General of the GATT took the controversial step of coming up with a potential compromise agreement, better known as the 'Dunkel draft.' Following the collapse of the Cancun Ministerial Conference in September 2003, the Doha Round itself saw negotiating work frozen for about four months, before the US helped revive the talks in early 2004.

Officials from many countries have suggested that the US' firm opposition to further subsidy cuts may have been motivated by the Bush administration's desire not to antagonise the influential farm lobby before the closely-fought mid-term Congressional elections in November.

Mandelson has urged President George W. Bush to ask Congress to extend his trade promotion authority past mid-2007, which is thought to be unlikely. He also asked Bush to veto attempts to renew existing farm subsidy programmes, since doing so would weaken the US' ability to make concessions at the WTO.

Some trade analysts believe that the negotiations might be able to resume after the US elections this fall. Others think that the round may be frozen until 2009, when a new presidential administration takes over in Washington with a better chance of receiving trade promotion authority. Without it, the US is not considered to be a credible negotiating partner -- multilaterally or bilaterally -- since Congress would then be able to pick apart carefully-assembled deals provision-by-provision, instead of having to give each package a straight up or down vote.

Political changes are also due elsewhere, with a new prime minister in Japan expected later this year and presidential elections in Brazil and France in 2007.

Amorim nevertheless told delegations on 24 July that "we must set our sights at the resumption of negotiations in the near, rather than remote, future."

Schwab is set to travel to Brazil from 27-29 July to discuss how to push the negotiations forward. She has also said that on her way to meet counterparts in Southeast Asia in August, she would "probably make one or two stops along the way to talk about the Doha

Round negotiations and how we might resuscitate them in September." A Cairns Group meeting in September and a November summit of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) provided further opportunities for seeing "where there is potential for breaking loose the logjam."

Nevertheless, South Africa's lead negotiator Xavier Carim told Johannesburg daily Business Day that prospects looked "quite bleak." One trade observer said that while the attitude among negotiators was almost surprisingly measured immediately after the collapse, the increasingly vitriolic blame game might make it harder for countries to come back to the bargaining table.

If a negotiated deal on reducing farm payments seems increasingly unlikely, there is a possibility that developing countries may turn increasingly towards litigation to address their grievances against rich country subsidy schemes. This might in turn weaken governmental support for the WTO dispute settlement mechanism, according to several trade experts.

International charity Oxfam believes that resurrecting the talks will be impossible unless the US and the EU agree to cut their agricultural subsidies without demanding extensive market opening from developing countries in return. "Give them four more months, give them four more years, give them four more centuries -- but unless the EU and the US make fundamental changes to their offers then these talks will fail development," said Celine Charveriat, head of Oxfam's Make Trade Fair campaign. EU business group Unice called the collapse "unacceptable," and warned of a "return to protectionism." US textiles groups, however, appeared to be relieved at the breakdown.

Meanwhile, in a speech on 25 May, Mandelson called for proceeding with a 'development package' in spite of the overall suspension. This, he suggested, would entail continuing negotiations on issues such as aid for trade, trade facilitation, duty- and quota- free access for LDC exports, and special and differential treatment (S&D). Preliminary reactions to the proposal have been lukewarm (see related story, this issue).

The informal agreement to suspend the Doha Round still needs to be approved by the General Council, the WTO's highest permanent decision-making body, which is set to meet on 27-28 July.

ICTSD reporting; "Mandelson hopes Bush will seek extended trade power," REUTERS, 25 July 2006; "WTO talks may take months to resume," THE HINDU, 25 July 2006; "WTO talks -- the end?," BUSINESSDAY.CO.ZA, 24 July 2006; "Collapse of WTO trade talks adds to global woes," DEUTSCHE

PRESSE AGENTUR, 25 July 2006; "US, EU swap blame for trade talks failure," REUTERS, 25 July 2006; "World trade talks fail over impasse on farm tariffs," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 25 July 2006; "US was unwilling to move, so talks failed," TIMES OF INDIA, 25 July 2006; "Africa 'to feel brunt of Doha collapse,' BUSINESS DAY, 25 July 2006.

OTHER STORIES

WITH ROUND IN DISARRAY, MANDELSON PROPOSES CARVING OUT 'DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE'

With the Doha Round trade talks suspended indefinitely following the collapse of high-level discussions in Geneva, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson called on 25 July for "extract[ing] from the rubble of the negotiation a significant development package" aimed at benefiting "the most needy developing countries." However, initial reactions from many developing country WTO Members were lukewarm, particularly with regard to continuing negotiations in some areas while those in others are frozen.

In a speech in Brussels, Mandelson outlined a seven-point plan for "salvaging... the development agenda," so as to ensure that these countries "do not fall victim to the inability of the WTO Membership as a whole to strike a deal." He called for discussions to continue on aid for trade, "because developing countries' capacity constraints remain unchanged." In addition, he suggested that Members continue negotiations on trade facilitation as well as those on proposals for changes to the special and differential treatment (S&D) provisions of specific WTO agreements, which would imply taking both out of the Doha Round 'single undertaking.'

Furthermore, the EU trade chief called for the Hong Kong decision on duty- and quota-free access to exports from least-developed countries (LDCs) to be "fully implemented outside the round and possibly improved." That decision mandated developed countries and "developing countries declaring themselves in a position to do so" to provide such access to LDC exports -- albeit with a controversial exception for up to 3 percent of tariff lines that LDCs worry could be used to cover large proportions of their exports. Brussels already provides duty- and quota-free access to almost all LDC exports under its 'everything but arms' initiative, and thus would not have to change anything in order to comply. Mandelson also said that ongoing work to reform WTO rules of origin requirements should continue, so as to make them less

of an impediment to market access for developing countries.

The EU trade chief also called on Members to implement the expanded Integrated Framework for trade-related technical assistance to least-developed countries (LDC). The WTO task force charged with providing recommendations on how to enhance the programme submitted its report earlier in July.

Finally, Mandelson urged countries to continue the review of dispute settlement procedures in order to ensure that they can be made easier for developing countries to use. Developing countries often find the cost of engaging in WTO litigation to be prohibitive; smaller economies also find that the threat of retaliatory tariffs can be insufficient to get other Members to comply with their obligations.

Mandelson said that these issues could be part of an 'early harvest,' implying that they would be implemented separately from the conclusion of the overall Doha Round.

Initial reactions lukewarm

Preliminary reactions to Mandelson's suggestions have been lukewarm. On 26 July, during talks in the Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation (which met because the suspension of the Doha Round still needs to be formally approved by WTO Members) no other countries spoke up in support of the EU's proposal to continue work towards an agreement. The trade facilitation negotiations are aimed at streamlining customs procedures, cutting trade-related red tape, and enhancing poor countries' ability to take part in international commerce.

However, a large number of developing countries, as well as the US, expressed opposition to the idea. These countries, which included Argentina, Bangladesh, Botswana, Chile, Costa Rica, Egypt, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Mauritius, Nepal, Nigeria, the Philippines, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Venezuela, and Zambia, argued that the trade facilitation talks cannot go ahead in isolation from the others. They also said that they had not agreed to take trade facilitation out of the single undertaking, and that the negotiating group in any case was not empowered to do so.

Members' views on other aspects of Mandelson's proposal are not yet clear.

No time frame has been set for the Doha Round talks to continue.

ICTSD reporting.

IN BRIEF

US-KOREA FTA TALKS END EARLY AMIDST DISAGREEMENT

Free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations between the US and Korea were called off ahead of schedule on 14 July, the day after US officials boycotted sessions on trade remedies and services in response to disagreements on several issues, particularly pharmaceuticals.

Korea's planned reform of a government programme for pharmaceutical reimbursements has emerged as one of the principal sticking points in the talks. The regulations for the scheme, which were drafted in May, set up a 'positive list' of prescription drugs for which the government will reimburse people.

US pharmaceutical manufacturers are concerned that many of their own drugs may not be on the list eligible for reimbursement. Deputy US Trade Representative Wendy Cutler, Washington's chief negotiator in the talks, said that Seoul's decision to proceed with the reform plan was "inconsistent with... the market-opening spirit of the FTA" and "precluded meaningful negotiations." She argued that it was necessary to suspend work on services as well as trade remedies such as anti-dumping duties and countervailing measures "in order to ensure continued balance in the overall negotiations."

Nevertheless, both Cutler and Korean lead negotiator Kim Jong-hoon maintained that the differences were not insurmountable, and that they remained committed to finding common ground.

Rice -- specifically access to Korea's highly protected market -- remains another contentious issue. Korean press reports quote Kim as insisting that rice tariffs and import volumes were not up for negotiation, even though Cutler said that it was "no secret" that the US would seek increased market access for rice.

The US is also seeking more open access for its automotive exports and insurance companies.

Korea's famously militant farmers' groups are strongly opposed to the talks, and organised several protests during the recent negotiations.

Civil society groups have expressed concern about how Washington's demands might affect drug prices.

The next round of negotiations is scheduled to take place in September. The US and Korea are hoping to conclude the talks in time for the mid-2007 expiry of the Bush administration's fast-track authority to negotiate trade agreements.

ICTSD reporting; "US boycotts discussions on medicines in FTA talks with S. Korea," HANKYOREH, 13 July 2006; "Korea-US FTA Talks Bog Down," KOREA TIMES, 14 July 2006; "S. Korea, US Reach Impasse on Drugs, Rice in \$29 Bln Talks," BLOOMBERG, 13 July 2006; "Korea, US fail to complete second FTA talks," KOREA HERALD, 14 July 2006.

FOCUS ON BUILDING LDCs' CAPACITY TO PRODUCE GOODS AND SERVICES: UNCTAD

Least-developed countries (LDCs) must build and enhance their ability to produce goods and services in order to achieve substantial and sustained poverty reduction, according to a new report by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

The 2006 Least Developed Countries Report, released on 20 July, focuses on developing 'productive capacities,' which it defines as "the productive resources, entrepreneurial capabilities and production linkages which together determine the capacity of a country to produce goods and services and enable it to grow and develop."

According to the study, the development of productive capacities in LDCs faces three basic limitations: poor physical infrastructure, weak domestic private sectors and financial and knowledge systems; and insufficient demand. Policies need to mobilise currently underutilised resources and abilities. Developing productive capacities will help LDCs compete in international goods and services markets in ways that go beyond preference-dependent exports of primary commodities.

LDCs need to increasingly rely on domestic resource mobilisation for the funding of economic growth, reduce aid dependency and attract private investment to support development, the report added.

UNCTAD says that the interrelated processes of capital accumulation, technological progress and structural change are very weak in most LDCs, producing low labour productivity and widespread underemployment, and hence persistent mass poverty. It suggests that national and international policies should seek to start and sustain a cycle of investment and building capacity both in dynamic sectors and those where the majority of labour is employed. Expanding opportunities for

productive employment and wealth creation would help reduce poverty.

The report suggests that a simply trade-centric policy orientation will be insufficient for sustained and inclusive growth. Instead, a development-driven approach to trade would be necessary. The need for assistance for building infrastructure and improving the business climate in developing countries has been a central part of WTO discussions on aid for trade.

The report is available online at <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/WebFlyer.asp?intltemID=3881&lang=1>.

ICTSD reporting.

WTO IN BRIEF

VIETNAM NEARS END OF LONG ROAD TO WTO ACCESSION

WTO Members may formally agree to Vietnam's accession to the global trade body as early as October, the chair of the Southeast Asian nation's membership negotiations said on 19 July. This would bring to a close negotiations that have lasted over 11 years.

Vietnam concluded the series of bilateral market access agreements that are required of all membership applicants in May, when it signed deals with the US and Mexico. It must still finalise 'schedules' setting out its specific liberalisation commitments, along with a draft 'protocol of accession' and a report describing how Hanoi will modify domestic laws to comply with WTO rules. Vietnam's commitment schedules will detail how it will formally bind tariffs, tariff quotas, farm subsidies, and access for foreign companies to different services sectors.

At the 19 July meeting of the working party on Vietnam's accession, Chair Ambassador Eirik Glenne (Norway) expressed the hope that a draft accession agreement package would be ready in early September. This would allow for any last-minute changes to be completed in time for the 10-11 October session of the General Council. Once its membership is approved, Vietnam will have to ratify the deal, a month after which it will become a full Member.

Civil society organisations such as Oxfam have been critical of Vietnam's accession process, alleging that some countries used the bilateral market access negotiations to extort concessions from Hanoi that went beyond what WTO rules required of comparable

countries (see BRIDGES Weekly, 22 December 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-12-22/story3.htm>).

At the meeting, Vietnamese Trade Minister Truong Dinh Tuyen also said that his country had been asked to make deeper liberalisation commitments than other developing countries in transition, such as agreeing to the immediate elimination of agricultural export subsidies. Nevertheless, he described both WTO membership and the associated reforms as necessary for Vietnam's economic growth.

Vietnam will immediately implement the Agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade; it had originally sought a two-year delay. It has also promised to refrain from using export taxes.

ICTSD reporting; "Bilaterals done, multilateral nearly, Viet Nam's membership now in sight," WTO NEWS, 19 July 2006.

WORLD TRADE REPORT POINTS TO LACK OF TRANSPARENCY ON SUBSIDIES

The release of the WTO's 2006 World Trade Report, focusing on subsidies, coincided with the potentially irretrievable collapse of the Doha Round negotiations, in which disagreements over farm subsidies played a key role.

In the report, WTO economists estimate that worldwide subsidy grants -- agricultural and otherwise -- totalled USD 300 billion in 2003. Of this, around USD 250 billion was spent in 21 developed countries.

The study notes that governments use subsidies for a wide variety of purposes, such as building infrastructure, helping struggling or new industries, promoting research and development, and redistributing income. It says that while subsidies are often the most efficient way of pursuing certain objectives, government grants can distort trade flows if they are used to give an artificial leg up to exporters or import-competing industries.

According to the report, the bulk of agricultural domestic support is provided by three Members, the EU, the US and Japan. Between 1995 and 2001 the EU spent an average of USD 96.1 billion, the US spent USD 66.2 billion and Japan USD 41.8 billion. Nevertheless, it did point to a downward trend in rich country farm subsidies, though industrial subsidies were not possible to assess.

The report noted that several Members had not regularly notified their agricultural subsidies to the

WTO, or notified amounts that were substantially lower than the amount reported in national accounts.

In its standard survey of trends in international trade, the report found that trade growth slowed the fastest in the leading net oil-importing countries: the EU, the US and Japan.

Least developed countries (LDCs) have increased their share of world trade in recent years but still only account for a very small portion of it, and most suffer from a lack of product diversification. Developed country markets have gradually declined in importance as a destination for LDC exports, the report found. China is now the third largest market for LDC exports, with developing countries importing a growing proportion.

The 2006 World Trade Report is available online at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres06_e/pr447_e.htm.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO Sees Discrepancies in Subsidy Data," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 24 July 2006; "Governments Fail to Come Clean on Subsidies: WTO", TODAYONLINE, 24 July 2006; "Government Subsidies Can Distort Trade", XINHUA, 24 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.

Upcoming Events: 27 July-2 August

31 July-1 August, Istanbul, Turkey: DISSEMINATION OF THE UNCTAD/IDRC PUBLICATION 'COMPETITION PROVISIONS IN REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS: HOW TO ENSURE DEVELOPMENT GAINS.' Organised by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The aim of this seminar is to review the progress achieved since book was launched at a November 2005 conference to review UN rules on anti-competitive business practices. The discussion will focus on whether competition policies and regional trade agreements ensure growth, equity and poverty alleviation. Other issues to be examined include the role for competition policy in the energy sector; how regional competition law and policy can contribute to the effective implementation of trade

pacts; and the impact of competition-related provisions in regional trade agreements on domestic competition law and policy. Expected participants include experts and academic involved in trade and competition issues, the authors of the publication, and participants from competition agencies, regional and international organizations. For further information, email: regionalcomp@unctad.org; internet: <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Meeting.asp?intItemID=2068&lang=1&m=12016&year=2006&month=7>

2-10 August, Indonesia: ORIENTATION WORKSHOP ON THE CONSULTATION PHASE OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY. The 'consultation phase' provides access to people negatively affected by an Asian Development Bank (ADB) supported project to help them solve their problems. The policy aims to provide information and opportunities for those affected by ADB operations to influence decisions that shape their lives. The discussion aims to achieve the active participation in improving communication with stakeholders about ADB operations. For further information contact Karin Oswald, tel: + 632 63 25551; fax: + 632 63 62490 email: koswald@adb.org; internet: <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2006/Orientation-Workshop-Consultation-Phase/default.asp>.

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.

27-28 July: GENERAL COUNCIL

Other Upcoming Events

29-30 August, Cape Town, South Africa: THIRD GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY ASSEMBLY. As the principal governing body of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the third GEF Assembly will be hosted by the South African government and will chart the forthcoming years' agenda and work program. For more information email: jwaller@thegef.org; internet: http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Assembly/3rd_Assembly/3rd_assembly.html

RESOURCES

SIGNED OPTIONS FOR LIBERALISING TRADE IN ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS IN THE DOHA ROUND. By Robert Howse and Petrus van Bork. International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), July 2006. The study examines and further develops the different approaches that have emerged in the WTO talks on liberalising trade in environmental goods, taking into account existing and expected trends in international trade in such products. The authors propose ways to overcome disagreements in the negotiations and agree on environmental goods liberalisation that can provide win-win outcomes for the environment and development for all WTO Members. Available at http://www.ictsd.org/pubs/ictsd_series/env/EGSHowse_Bork.pdf.

THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES REPORT 2006: DEVELOPING PRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES. By the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), July 2006. The first part of this report reviews recent economic trends in least-developed countries (LDCs) and progress towards the development targets agreed at the Third UN Conference on the LDCs. The second part focuses on the issue of developing productive capacities in the LDCs. To access this report visit: <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=7011&intItemID=3881&lang=1&mode=downloads>

AQUACULTURE: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND TRADE. By Frank Asche and Fahmida Khatun. International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), July 2006. The study assesses current and future trends in global aquaculture production. Following an evaluation of trade in and market access constraints faced by aquaculture products, the paper explores the social and economic issues arising from the increased production and trade in aquaculture and how they could be addressed. The authors conclude by identifying a number of policy implications and options for sustainable aquaculture development. Available at http://www.ictsd.org/pubs/ictsd_series/nat_res/Asche_Khatun_2006.pdf.

Back issues of *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest® can be accessed at: <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/archive.htm>.

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