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# Bridges

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### LEAD STORIES

#### LAMY WARNS MEMBERS: COMPROMISE SOON OR FACE FAILURE

WTO Member governments "will be forced to confront the unpleasant reality of failure" in the Doha Round negotiations if they do not compromise soon, Director-General Pascal Lamy said on 9 May. Speaking to a meeting of the General Council, the WTO's top permanent decision-making body, he highlighted the steps countries must take during the coming months in order to meet their stated aim of concluding the talks by around the end of the year.

Lamy focused primarily on the ongoing efforts to step up the intensity of discussions in Geneva, where the chairs of the various Doha Round negotiating groups are seeking Members' input to draft papers that will become the basis for finalising agreements. Although he said that concluding the round by the end of the year was possible, the WTO chief shied away from commenting on whether or not he was hopeful that this would actually happen. "My life would be absolutely terrible if I were optimistic or pessimistic," he said.

The Director-General did, however, report that the EU and the US had taken an important step in narrowing their agendas on agriculture, although he emphasised that this was not enough to signal an imminent conclusion. One of the main questions now is "whether they are doing this fast enough to meet the sort of time constraints we have," he said. Furthermore, added Lamy, all Members need to reach agreement on every issue area of the negotiations, and not just focus on the contentious agriculture and industrial tariffs discussions.

Praising agriculture Chair Ambassador Crawford Falconer's (New Zealand) recent "challenges paper" for provoking Members into an active discussion about what an agreement should ultimately look like, Lamy said that such engagement was a "prerequisite for moving to the next phase, which will be convergence." He also pointed to the efforts of industrial goods negotiations Chair Ambassador Don Stephenson (Canada) to draft a new text based on Members' inputs.

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As for the other issues in the talks, Lamy added that in services, rules, and fisheries, discussions were moving from "the theory of what we should do" to a "to do list," indicating "more serious engagement in line with more serious commitments."

Yet again, the head of the WTO stressed that political leadership and compromise would be essential for reaching a deal. "Saying yes sometimes needs a bit more leadership than saying no," he said.

Lamy concluded his address by reiterating that letting the negotiations fail would not only mean losing significant deals on trade opening, but would also entail "breaking the commitment for a more developing-friendly world trading system" made when they were launched in 2001. After a litany of missed deadlines – the round was initially scheduled to conclude in time to be implemented in 2005 – delegates are not openly setting specific new target dates. Nevertheless, they are focusing on concluding the talks by the end of this year, and sources report that it is widely believed that doing so would require a framework deal on formulae and numbers for tariff and subsidy cuts before the WTO's August holiday.

Notably, Lamy directly addressed the issue of the US presidential administration's soon-to-expire 'trade promotion authority' (TPA), the unmentioned elephant in the room during trade talks in recent weeks. Unless Congress agrees to renew the mandate after the end of June, the White House will lose its ability to force lawmakers to vote yes-or-no to trade agreements without the possibility of changes. Without TPA, countries are reluctant to sign commercial accords with the US, since they risk being picked apart by Congress. Lamy openly acknowledged that "there is no way you can conclude trade agreements without trade permission authority." However, he admits that this will be an internal US decision.

Peter Allgeier, the US' ambassador to the WTO, has reiterated the view that Congress would be more likely to agree to a new TPA mandate if talks in Geneva appeared likely to produce an agreement that substantially increases market access. At the centre of developments over the next month will be discussions among the US, India, Brazil, and the EU -- otherwise known as the G-4 – which have promised to make some sort of joint contribution to the multilateral talks by mid-June. Allgeier suggested that convergence was not out of reach. "I certainly believe that within the next 50 days it's possible to narrow the differences and to reach a convergence on the fundamental issue in agriculture, but obviously that depends on trading partners beyond the United States," he said.

Representatives from several WTO Member governments will be present at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) 16-18 May ministerial gathering in Paris. Officials from the G-4 are expected to meet in Paris as well as in Brussels soon after to discuss the Doha Round negotiations. They have also scheduled meetings in mid-June.

At a press conference following the General Council session, Lamy rebutted suggestions that developing countries were being left out of the negotiating process, pointing out that they made up two-thirds of the WTO's Membership, and it would be up to them to agree to a conclusion. "I am not going to decide, you're not going to decide, NGOs are not going to decide, they are going to decide," he asserted.

ICTSD reporting; "Key Players At Crucial Stage In Salvaging Stalled WTO Talks," THOMAS FINANCIAL, 15 May 2007; "G4 To Meet In Brussels To Review Trade Talks," PRESS TRUST OF INDIA, 15 May 2007.

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### WHITE HOUSE, DEMOCRATS REACH DEAL ON BILATERAL FTAs, SPARKING HOPES FOR TPA

The Bush administration and senior Democratic lawmakers have struck a deal on environmental, labour, and drug patent protections in pending US bilateral free trade agreements, boosting their chances of receiving Congressional approval. Movement towards broader bipartisan cooperation on trade may also herald brightened prospects for the troubled Doha Round multilateral negotiations at the WTO.

As per the accord, which was the product of months of negotiation between Congress and the White House, Washington will seek to modify its FTAs to require the enforcement of some International Labour Organization (ILO) standards as well as several multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). It will also change intellectual property rights rules in FTA to make it somewhat easier for developing country trading partners to expand access to generic copies of patented drugs. These changes were largely in line with a list of objectives set out by senior Democrats at the end of March (see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 March 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-03-28/story2.htm>).

According to the House Ways and Means Committee, the powerful body with jurisdiction over trade issues, the agreement "clears the way for broad, bipartisan support for the Peru and Panama FTAs." Unresolved concerns about the already-concluded agreements with

Korea and Colombia means that their future remains murky.

The compromise on trade policy was announced on 10 May by Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (California), Congressional leaders from both parties, and top administration officials. Charles Rangel, the New York Democrat who chairs the Ways and Means Committee, played a major role in brokering the deal with Republican lawmakers and the White House.

US Trade Representative Susan Schwab said that the administration and Congress had "seized an historic opportunity to restore the bipartisan consensus on trade." Notably, she added that "the new trade policy template also opens the way for bipartisan work on trade promotion authority (TPA)."

The White House's current TPA mandate, which lets it require Congress to vote either for or against trade agreements without the possibility of amendments, expires at the end of June. This 'fast-track' will have to be in force for WTO Members to be able to finalise a Doha Round agreement – without it, other countries would be reluctant to sign an agreement that could then be picked apart by US lawmakers.

### **Labour, environment, pharma patent rules**

Ironically, the countries that signed bilateral FTAs with the US in time for them to be considered under TPA now face last-minute modifications -- or else risk having the deals torpedoed by Congress.

Under the bipartisan agreement, the FTAs will have to require countries to enforce worker protections set out in the ILO's 1998 Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. These include freedom of association, the right to organise, and prohibitions on forced and most kinds of child labour. They will also have to implement seven MEAs, including the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Convention on Marine Pollution, and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Significantly, both the labour and environmental obligations would become subject to the same dispute settlement procedures as the core commercial rules on tariff cuts. Furthermore, it would be more difficult for countries to plead insufficient resources as a reason for not enforcing labour laws. However, violations of both sets of provisions would only become subject to dispute settlement if they demonstrably affect trade and investment. This and the fact that the US has adopted the ILO principles in question appear to have assuaged fears among some Republicans that worker protections

in FTAs could be used by union groups to force changes to US labour legislation.

The accord specifically directs the US trade representative to negotiate a new annex on forest sector governance with Peru, aimed principally at beefing up rules to prevent trade in endangered forest products.

In response to Democrats' complaints that the intellectual property protections in FTAs were restricting access to lifesaving medicines in developing countries, the new template for trade agreements will allow trading partners to bring generic drugs to market more quickly. For instance, pharmaceutical test data will not be protected in partner countries beyond the period that it is in the US, which will make it possible for generics to be brought to market at the same time in both. A public health exception from data exclusivity obligations will also be introduced. Furthermore, patent extension requirements for pharmaceutical products will be softened, and drug regulatory agencies will be allowed to approve generics without having to first establish that no patents have been violated. Finally, the new policy calls for making side letters on public health concerns part of the formal text of the FTAs, along with a reaffirmation of countries' right under WTO agreements to suspend patents in order to expand access to essential medicines.

Additional modifications to the FTAs will include a provision in the preamble making clear that foreign investors in the US will not benefit from stronger protections than domestic investors. Washington's earlier model for FTAs included investor protections so far-reaching that they were often accused of undermining the ability of governments to regulate in the public interest.

US trade officials say that they are working with partner countries to see how these changes can be made into new legal language in the FTAs. Whether or not this will require a new legislative vote in countries such as Peru that have already ratified the agreements remains to be seen.

To complement the new provisions in the FTAs, the compromise also provided for expanded worker assistance and training in the US, along with support for making health and pension benefits portable between different employers. In theory, these policies would help soften the blow of trade-related adjustment, and make it easier for workers to change jobs without losing benefits.

The agreement may only smooth the Congressional passage of the FTAs with Peru and Panama. Democrats want the administration to seek greater

access to the Korean market, particularly with regard to automotive, agricultural, and services trade. They also want the Colombia FTA to include special judicial measures to address violence against trade unionists.

Under the previous Republican-controlled Congress, trade-related legislation passed by razor-thin majorities. Moreover, upporting trade deals will not be easy for all Democrats, several of whom were helped to power in last November's elections by anxieties over trade-related job losses. However, the Bush administration's willingness to renounce its past opposition to stronger environmental and labour protections might help trade legislation receive support from enough Democrats to succeed.

### **Possible cooperation on TPA?**

Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle broadly welcomed the deal, although not without some grumbling from more trade-sceptical sections of the Democratic caucus.

Rangel said that "for decades now, trade has been a polarising issue in Congress, but today's agreement signals a new direction and a renewed spirit of bipartisanship." He expressed hope that the new policy would help boost employment and thus make "trade work, not just for shareholders, but for all Americans." Wally Herger, the California representative who is the top Republican on the House trade subcommittee, said that the "breakthrough agreement" provided a way forward not only on the FTAs, but also on the "reauthorisation of TPA."

Nevertheless, fast-track extension faces an uphill struggle. Speaking to journalists in Geneva on 11 May, US WTO Ambassador Peter Allgeier said that the agreement was "a very important step in the process toward TPA renewal." However, he noted that "what would be most helpful now [for encouraging renewal] is to give the Congress a real indication that we here in Geneva are going to be able to produce a genuinely market access opening agreement." The extent of tariff and subsidy cuts continues to leave WTO Members deeply divided. The AFL-CIO, a major US union, has indicated that it will oppose TPA extension despite the deal in Washington. The spike in the US' trade deficit for March will make the issue even more politically contentious.

Of course, TPA is not technically necessary for negotiating – US trade diplomats will still be able to bargain with their WTO counterparts after it expires in a few weeks. However, officials from many other countries say that it will be difficult to seriously negotiate with the US in the absence of signs that TPA renewal is genuinely in the offing.

ICTSD reporting; "Bush and Democrats in Accord on Trade Deals," NEW YORK TIMES, 11 May 2007; "Labour, Drugmakers Not Sold on New Trade Accord Rules," BLOOMBERG, 11 May 2007; "Bush, Congress Agree on Trade Standards," WALL STREET JOURNAL, 11 May 2007..

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## **OTHER STORIES**

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### **DEEP DIVISIONS PERSIST ON NAMA**

WTO Members remain deeply divided on the extent to which they should have to cut tariffs on industrial goods as part of the Doha Round negotiations, on the basis of a week of discussions from 8-11 May.

Although delegations turned to the core issue of the tariff reduction formula for the first time since the talks were suspended last July, negotiators reported that the debate in the multilateral sessions remained all too familiar: several developing countries complained that industrialised states were demanding tariff cuts far deeper than those that they were willing to make themselves. One negotiator suggested that things may be different in bilateral meetings, but otherwise, the utter lack of flexibility meant that an agreement "seems really difficult."

Ambassador Don Stephenson (Canada), chair of the non-agricultural market access (NAMA) talks, is currently seeking Members' views on where a plausible compromise might lie, as he works to draft a new text that could serve as a basis for further negotiations and an ultimate agreement. However, he told delegations last week that a deal seemed unlikely in the face of such wide gaps. "What we need is convergence," he said, pointing out that Members were trying to agree on a framework deal for cutting tariffs and subsidies within less than three months.

### **Wide gaps on formula**

On 8 May, Stephenson urged Members to look at "the central tension" in discussions on the formula: the demand of some primarily developed countries for "real market access," and the response from many developing countries that requiring them to cut bound tariffs by greater percentages than industrialised countries would violate the Doha mandate's stipulation for "less than full reciprocity in reduction commitments."

The US and the EU have called for a 'Swiss' tariff reduction formula with a 'coefficient' of 10 for developed countries and 15 for developing ones. Roughly similar views have been expressed by Canada, Japan,



Norway, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Turkey, particularly with regard to the coefficient for developing countries.

Under the 'Swiss' formula, a Member's coefficient effectively becomes its new tariff ceiling: when fed through the formula, all duties are slashed to below the level of the coefficient, with lower ones reduced more gently. Since developed countries in general have tariffs averaging about 6 percent, while developing countries' average tariff is closer to 30 percent, coefficients of 10 and 15 would require substantially more effort from the latter.

Thus, several developing countries took issue both with the level of the proposed coefficients and the relatively modest 'spread' between them. Brazil said that 15 was a disproportionately low coefficient for developing countries. Malaysia said that the figure should be no less than 20. Pakistan said that developed countries should have a coefficient of 5 or 6 instead of 10. As for the difference between the coefficients, sources report that Mexico suggested a range of 5 and 25; China, 5 and 35.

The NAMA-11 group of developing countries traded barbs with countries including Canada, the EU, the US, and Korea over the notion of "real market access." The NAMA-11 argued that there was no mandate to require cuts to applied rates, and that the Doha Round was focused primarily on the need for developed countries to expand market access for products from developing ones. WTO reductions – whether to tariffs or farm subsidies – are traditionally based on bound caps. However, the others countered that unless currently-levied duties were lowered, no new trade flows would arise for developed countries from this round – thus defeating the purpose of the exercise.

To draw an example from calculations carried out last year by the WTO Secretariat, a coefficient of 10 would entail a reduction of roughly 23 percent to the EU's average bound tariff level, while a coefficient of 15 would require India to reduce its bound tariffs by 63 to 70 percent. The cuts to their applied tariff rates would be more comparable, in the neighbourhood of 25 percent, though possibly somewhat higher for India.

#### **Chair: Members not yet ready for text**

During the week's talks, Members also discussed non-tariff barriers (NTBs), voluntary sectoral liberalisation initiatives, and environmental goods. Sources report that in the discussions on NTBs, it is becoming clearer which proposals may be able to garner consensus – one may be a US proposal on standardised labelling requirements for clothing and footwear. Stephenson expressed dissatisfaction with progress on the sectoral initiatives; India suggested that negotiations on

voluntary sector-specific liberalisation could take place even after the round is concluded. Many developing countries are still lukewarm to the notion of negotiating a list of specific 'environmental goods' to be slated for expedited liberalisation.

In light of the substantial differences of opinion, Stephenson suggested that Members were not yet ready for a text to negotiate on. Instead, he announced that he would continue to meet with Members over the next three weeks, both individually and in small groups, with 'transparency sessions' open to all countries at the end of each week. During these meetings, he is hoping for constructive input for his new paper. Delegates expect the chair to present the text some time after the week of 4 June; Stephenson acknowledges that he will wait for a comparable text in the agriculture negotiations before doing so.

ICTSD reporting.

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## **IN BRIEF**

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### **SOUTH KOREA, EU START TALKS ON FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

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South Korea and the EU completed their first round of free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations in Seoul on 11 May, with both sides reporting substantial progress.

Negotiators set themselves the goal of eliminating at least 95 percent of tariffs on bilateral trade within 10 years of the signing of an agreement. While no hard deadline for a deal has been set, they agreed to work toward finalising an accord as soon as possible, hopefully within the year.

Studies estimate that the deal could boost trade between the two partners, which amounted to nearly USD 80 billion in 2006, by as much as 25 percent.

An FTA presents significant opportunities for both trading partners. Seoul is looking to increase its exports of automobiles, textiles, and electronics to the world's largest trade bloc, while Brussels hopes to both boost auto sales in the Asian nation and gain greater access to the South Korean services sector. Even though both sides have agreed to exclude their famously-sensitive agricultural sectors from the deal, the FTA would require significant concessions: Seoul wants its European partner to ease anti-dumping rules

and reduce countervailing duties, while Brussels insists that Korea strengthen intellectual property protections and soften regulations on imported cars. During Seoul's recently-concluded FTA negotiations with the US, agriculture and automotive trade were the principal sticking points.

South Korea's lead negotiator, Kim Han-Soo, praised the first round of talks as "highly successful," while his counterpart from the EU, Ignacio Garcia Bercero, claimed that the week of negotiations was "very constructive." However the talks, which covered investment, goods and services, trade regulations, and dispute resolution, failed to fully resolve disagreements in several critical areas, including services, rules of origin, and sustainable development.

The next round of negotiations is set to take place in Brussels in mid-July; a third round has been scheduled for September.

Many economists and trade experts warn that the proliferation of bilateral trade deals has created a "spaghetti bowl" of overlapping regulations that raise transaction costs for businesses and weaken the multilateral trading system. Moreover, to the extent that bilateral tariff reductions discriminate against products from other countries, FTAs can distort trade. EU officials insist that the prospective accords will not cause significant trade diversion.

"South Korea, EU kick off free trade negotiations," REUTERS, 7 May 2007; "South Korea, EU conclude 'highly successful' first round of free trade talks," AP, 11 May 2007; "First Round of Korea-EU FTA Talks Opens," KBS GLOBAL, 7 May 2007; "South Korea-EU free trade talks got off to fast start, both sides say," THE HANKYOREH, 11 May 2007.

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## FTA NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY BETWEEN SWITZERLAND, JAPAN

Switzerland and Japan opened their first round of trade negotiations in Tokyo on 15 May, taking steps toward what would be Japan's first free trade agreement (FTA) with a European nation.

The talks, which are scheduled to run through 19 May, will cover trade in goods and services, investment, and intellectual property rights. Both countries' heavily-protected agriculture sectors will not be on the bargaining table.

Trade between the two nations is significant. In 2006, Japanese exports to Switzerland amounted to USD 2.1 billion, while Japanese imports of Swiss products totaled USD 4.6 billion. Japan is Switzerland's third-

largest trading partner, after the EU and the US. Currently, automobiles, machinery, and chemical and pharmaceutical products represent Japan's primary exports to Switzerland, while the main Swiss export items to Japan are pharmaceuticals, machinery, watches, and jewelry. Trade in agricultural products is low.

Japan's primary aim in negotiating the agreement is to increase exports of electronic goods to Switzerland, while Swiss negotiators hope to boost exports of pharmaceutical products and watches in the opposite direction. Both sides are looking to strengthen protection of intellectual property rights and promote trade in other goods and services.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Swiss President Micheline Calmy-Rey agreed in January to begin FTA talks, following a study of trade possibilities.

Negotiators aim to finalise an agreement by the end of the year. Prospects for the negotiations are good, as there appear to be few areas of major disagreement between the two countries.

While bilateral trade agreements appear to offer significant commercial benefits to the parties involved, many economists and businesses complain that FTAs distort trade, complicate the international trade regime, and undermine the principle of comparative advantage.

ICTSD reporting; "Japan, Switzerland Open Free Trade Talks," INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES, 14 May 2007; "Japan, Switzerland Launch Free Trade Talks," OHMYNEWS, 14 May 2007.

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## WTO IN BRIEF

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### SECOND INSTALMENT OF AG CHAIR'S CHALLENGES PAPER DELAYED

The chair of the WTO talks on farm trade has postponed issuing the second instalment of a paper outlining parameters for a plausible deal on a number of areas in the troubled negotiations. The document, which will cover subjects not addressed by an earlier paper that also aimed to goad Members towards compromise by forcing them to discuss various issues, was originally due on 14 May (see BRIDGES Weekly, 2 May 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-05-02/story1.htm>). It is now expected the week of 21 May.

As in the first instalment, the text is likely to set out Chair Ambassador Crawford Falconer's (New Zealand) assessment of the 'centres of gravity' in the negotiations: the approximate areas in which he thinks consensus will most likely be found, often expressed as a narrower range of figures than those encompassed by Members' various bargaining positions. Issues not covered in the first paper included 'green box' farm subsidies and the treatment of small and vulnerable economies.

The paper was ostensibly postponed "because of various competing demands on [the chair's] time." However, trade sources speculated that Falconer may be awaiting the results of meetings between the 'G-4' group of major trading powers (Brazil, the EU, India, and the US), on the margins of an OECD meeting in Paris from 16-18 May.

Falconer intends to hold a series of consultations with small groups of Members to discuss their reactions to his papers. Discussions on export competition issues are expected on 22-23 May; domestic support, on 24-25 May; and market access, on 29-30 May.

An informal meeting open to all Members would be held on the afternoon of 30 May, in order to review the results of the discussions and to promote transparency. Further consultations will be held after that.

The chair also told negotiators that they would be left with some time to organise their own internal meetings, and to hold consultations within and among coalitions and groups.

The first instalment of the chair's paper is available online at: [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/agric\\_e/chair\\_texts\\_07\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/agric_e/chair_texts_07_e.htm).

ICTSD reporting.

## 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: 17-23 May

17 May, Washington, DC. INVESTMENT TREATY ARBITRATION: A DEBATE AND DISCUSSION.

Hosted by the Juris Conferences, this event will feature a presentation of papers by ten "up-and-coming" players in the field of investment treaty arbitration. A discussion by expert panels on the papers will follow the initial presentations. For more information, visit <http://www.jurisconferences.com/arbitration.php?id=5>.

18 May, Washington, DC. INVESTMENT PROTECTION AND THE ENERGY CHARTER TREATY. Organised by the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes and co-sponsored by the Energy Secretariat and the Arbitration Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce, this event will concentrate on issues arising under Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) arbitrations. The key areas to be examined will be related to substance and procedure. For more information visit <http://www.worldbank.org/icsid/highlights/03-18-07.htm>

21 May, London, UK. GATS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES SEMINAR. Hosted by the British Institute of International and Comparative Law, this afternoon seminar, for business and academia, includes presentations on cross-border trade in banking, investment, and insurance, domestic regulation, and the Doha negotiations in light of WTO norms and rules for services trade. internet: <http://www.biicl.org/events/>

22-23 May, London, UK. SEVENTH ANNUAL WTO CONFERENCE. Hosted by the Institute of International Economic Law and the British Institute of International and Comparative Law, this conference will gather practitioners, officials, and leading academics in the fields of trade and dispute settlement to analyse current issues of the WTO dispute settlement system and major issues faced today by the world trading system, including the genetically modified organism (GMO) dispute, dispute settlement mechanisms under free trade agreements (FTAs), importance of international juridical institutions, and WTO institutional reform. For more information, email [eventsregistration@biicl.org](mailto:eventsregistration@biicl.org). internet: <http://www.biicl.org/events>

22-23 May, Hanoi, Vietnam. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE: LINKAGES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY. This meeting will provide a forum for decision makers, researchers, development agencies, non-governmental organizations, as well as the concerned public to discuss the interplay between climate change, sustainable development, and rural poverty. The conference is jointly sponsored by the German and Vietnamese governments, as well as by the International Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Conservation Union. For more information contact Ines Igney at [inesig@gmail.com](mailto:inesig@gmail.com).

23-25 May, Prague, Czech Republic.  
ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING AND  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS 2007.

The conference mission is to promote awareness of sustainable development concepts and tools by using indicators and an environmental accounting framework. The main theme of the Conference will be the urgent need to take steps by international organisations, states, local authorities, and non-governmental organisations towards sustainable development. In this way, the Conference will contribute to the worldwide debate and efforts in strengthening the bridge between theory and practice in meeting environmental threats and challenges. The Conference aims to bring together around 250 environmental experts, academics, statisticians, officials, accounting and financial managers, other business specialists, scholars and researchers in order to discuss environmental issues from a variety of perspectives. For more information, contact [conference@ea-sdi.ujep.cz](mailto:conference@ea-sdi.ujep.cz). internet: <http://ea-sdi.ujep.cz/>

23-25 May, Nairobi, Kenya. ELEVENTH AFRICAN OIL AND GAS, TRADE AND FINANCE CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION. Organised by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Kenyan Ministry of Energy, the National Oil Corporation, and ITE Group, this conference will provide a platform for Kenya to demonstrate the opportunities it can offer to exploration companies and give oil and gas executives the opportunity to network with key decision makers in Africa. The main focus of the 2007 agenda is the 'Interface between Hydrocarbons and Finance'. Social functions and an exhibition will run alongside the event to facilitate contacts and create an environment conducive to initiating business. For more information, contact Frida Youssef ( [frida.youssef@unctad.org](mailto:frida.youssef@unctad.org)) or Rachid Amui ([rachid.amui@unctad.org](mailto:rachid.amui@unctad.org)); tel. + 41 22 917 5022. internet: <http://www.africa-ogtf.com/home.html>

## 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.

21 May. COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS

22 May. DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY

25 May. COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND  
DEVELOPMENT

## Other Upcoming Events

24 May 2007, Brussels, Belgium. ENERGY SECURITY, ENVIRONMENT, AND DEVELOPMENT: THREE ISSUES FOR THE G8. Hosted by the French Institute for International Relations (IFRI), this half-day conference will consider key energy issues to be discussed by heads of state at the upcoming Group of 8 (G8) Summit, set to take place 6-8 June in Germany. The event will also feature a public discussion with José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, and Thierry de Montbrial, the Director of IFRI. For more information, contact Nadia Fraioli at [fraioli@ifri.org](mailto:fraioli@ifri.org). internet: [http://www.ifri.org/frontDispatcher/ifri/manifestations/s\\_minaire\\_1033636016876/publi\\_P\\_energie\\_mjn\\_taskforce\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_1178719368838](http://www.ifri.org/frontDispatcher/ifri/manifestations/s_minaire_1033636016876/publi_P_energie_mjn_taskforce_____1178719368838)

24-25 May, Paris, France. WORLD CONFERENCE ON INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL FOR COMMUNITIES. Organised by the World Bank, this event will explore the challenges and opportunities stemming from today's increasingly knowledge-based economy. It will look, in particular, on how to measure intellectual capital, and how countries can benefit from their intellectual capital abroad (diasporas). Presentations at this year's conference will place a particular focus on developing countries. For more information, contact Michelle J. Lemarie ([mlemarie@worldbank.org](mailto:mlemarie@worldbank.org)). internet: <http://go.worldbank.org/MMESDKX5W0>

3-15 June, The Hague, Netherlands. FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO CITES. Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) will consider 40 new proposals for rules changes regarding the protection of specific species. Participants will also discuss enforcement of CITES regulations, the control of illicit trafficking, and the effects of CITES rules on the rural poor. The meeting's agenda also includes the establishment of a new strategic vision for 2008 to 2013. For more information, email [cites@unep.ch](mailto:cites@unep.ch). internet: <http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/index.shtml>

5 June, International. WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY. Organised by the UN Environment Programme, this day of international celebration of the environment will feature street rallies, bicycle parades, green concerts, tree planting, as well as recycling and clean-up campaigns. The theme for this year's World Environment Day is "Melting Ice—A Hot Topic?" internet: <http://www.unep.org/wed/2007/english/>



6-8 June, Heiligendamm, Germany. G8 SUMMIT 2007. Heads of state and government from the Group of 8 (G8) leading industrialized nations will meet in Germany, which holds the current G8 presidency. German Chancellor Angela Merkel has declared growth and responsibility, including transparency, freedom of investment, protection of intellectual property, and sustainable resource consumption, to be the central concerns of her G8 presidency. internet: <http://www.g-8.de/Webs/G8/EN/Homepage/home.html>

## RESOURCES

**SOUTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC COOPERATION: ENHANCING GMS-INDIA RELATIONSHIP.** CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics and Environment, 2007. Trade experts have identified South-South trade cooperation as a critical tool for helping developing countries diversify their exports beyond primary commodities and reduce their dependence on the developed world. Inspired by such claims, this study analyses how India and the three countries of the Greater-Mekong Subregion (GMS) – Cambodia, Lao PR, and Vietnam – might work toward greater economic cooperation. Drawing on the results of both field research and a thorough review of relevant literature, the authors provide a detailed account of current and historic patterns of trade and investment, and present recommendations as to how governmental trade and investment policies might be amended to promote business interaction in the region. For information on how to order a copy of the report email [citee@cuts.org](mailto:citee@cuts.org).

**SOUTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC COOPERATION: EXPLORING THE IBSA INITIATIVE.** CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics and Environment, 2007. Thanks to a host of new South-South preferential trade agreements, trade among developing countries has increased substantially in recent years and now accounts for over 10 percent of world trade, compared with only 6 percent in 1991. To build on this progress, in 2003 the Foreign Ministries of India, Brazil, and South Africa (IBSA) established an 'IBSA Dialogue Forum' meant to increase economic cooperation among the three countries. In this report, the authors present a detailed analysis of the current trade relations among the IBSA countries, evaluate the impacts of various IBSA initiatives, and explore the possibilities for greater economic cooperation in the future. For information on how to order a copy of the report, email [citee@cuts.org](mailto:citee@cuts.org).

**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, BILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A STRATEGY NOTE.** By Ellen 't Hoen. Center for International Environmental Law, 2007. Over 40 million people worldwide live with HIV, yet only 1.3 million of

those infected currently have access to antiretroviral therapy, largely due to the high cost of the drugs. This paper examines the effects of free trade agreements on intellectual property rights, especially as related to access to medicines in developing countries. Writing for government officials, civil society groups, as well as other stakeholders, the author analyses emerging challenges and opportunities in the negotiation of intellectual property provisions in bilateral and regional free trade agreements. The report is available at [http://www.ciel.org/Publications/IP\\_StrategyNote\\_Apr07.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Publications/IP_StrategyNote_Apr07.pdf).

**THE EUROPEAN APPROACH TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS WITH THE AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC GROUP OF COUNTRIES.** Center for International Environmental Law, 2007. This discussion paper addresses the EU's recent attempts to impose TRIPS-plus standards on 76 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Drawing on a detailed analysis of recent trade negotiations, the authors conclude that, despite official statements to the contrary, gaining stricter intellectual property (IP) protection is a critical aim of EU officials as they negotiate trade agreements with ACP countries. The authors warn that the establishment of such provisions could undermine current multilateral alliances among developing nations, as only a handful of Latin American and Asian countries would be left standing in opposition to the expansion of IP rights in international fora such as WIPO and the WTO. To access the report visit [http://www.ciel.org/Publications/EU\\_EPAs\\_Draft\\_18Apr07.pdf](http://www.ciel.org/Publications/EU_EPAs_Draft_18Apr07.pdf).

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