



# Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

*Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective*

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## LEAD STORIES

### “Doha Light” Takes Shape as WTO Members Lower Ambitions

After weeks of consultations following an impasse in the long-running Doha Round negotiations, WTO members say they are now ready to pursue clinching an “early harvest” package focused on least-developed countries (LDCs) by the end of the year.

Following high-level meetings among political leaders in the context of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference and an Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Ministerial, WTO members convened on 31 May in an informal Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) meeting in Geneva. At the TNC, WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy outlined a “three lane” approach to eventually resolving the Doha Round. His proposal would put LDC-specific subjects on a “fast lane” and set up an LDC-plus “middle lane,” which would include additional issues that are near maturity and maintain a development focus. Outstanding issues such as agriculture, services, and non-agricultural market access (NAMA) would be left on a “slow lane” for resolution after the much-anticipated December Ministerial Conference in Geneva.

While many members expressed disappointment at the current state of the negotiations, they all recognised that agreement on a full Doha package by year’s end was unlikely. Therefore, an abridged version for December represented the next best alternative. Even so, the inability of members to reach the original Doha “Plan A” left some disappointed.

“The current impasse is weakening the whole multilateral trade system, and for all the wrong reasons,” the EU said in a statement.

### Broad agreement on development focus

While agreeing to Lamy's proposal, members insisted that the principle of a 'single undertaking' – in which "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" – should remain under this new plan. They called for the implementation of an "early harvest" as discussed in Paragraph 47 of the Doha Declaration. Under this paragraph, agreements reached "at an early stage" may be "implemented on a provisional or a definitive basis." These would then be considered when members evaluate the balance in the negotiations as a whole.

Lamy's "three lane" proposal was met with broad support from WTO members. They generally agreed that the December mini-package must have a development focus, and there must be a clear work programme in place to deal with the remaining issues. Just one day prior to the TNC meeting, South African Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies had told reporters that his country would be against any version of Doha that might stray from the development goals of the Round. That same sentiment was echoed by various members at Tuesday's TNC gathering.

### Challenges in defining LDC-plus

However, members disagreed on what issues should be added to the LDC-plus package for December. Areas of disagreement regarding the "plus" part of the "LDC-plus" package included special and differential treatment proposals, trade facilitation, and export substitution. Fisheries subsidies provide a prime example of countries' varying perceptions on the maturity of "plus" issues: while the US asserted that the subject was ready to be included in the December package, Japan and Korea made a point to disagree.

The potential inclusion of cotton among the December deliverables also proved contentious. Burkina Faso, speaking on behalf of itself and fellow Cotton-4 countries Benin, Chad, and Mali, urged for the cotton issue to be resolved by December, stressing that the US and EU could do more to make that possible.

However, US Ambassador Michael Punke's response made clear that "[i]f people wish to discuss cotton, everyone's cotton programs must

be on the table." This would "require a degree of transparency that is sorely lacking," he said, adding that the US would "not negotiate in the dark" on this matter.

The prospect of future disagreement over what to include in the LDC-plus package left various members concerned. China stressed that members should "make it clear upfront [that] what is supposed to be an LDC Plus should not end up destroying deliverables for LDCs."

Punke reminded fellow members that "all major players must take steps that are politically difficult" if the December package was to succeed. He added that "flowery speeches about supporting LDCs and care for the WTO system mean very little if they are not backed up by a clearly-stated willingness to make politically-difficult choices."

Outside the WTO, Stuart Harbinson – Hong Kong's former WTO ambassador – raised similar concerns. In a [new e-book](#) he agreed with the idea of identifying a smaller package of deliverables for the December Ministerial. However, he warned against holding high hopes for such a process, considering that "the last thing the WTO needs at present is to have a lengthy and acrimonious discussion about 'deliverables' culminating in a paltry agreement or, worse still, no agreement at all."

### Paris meeting sets the stage

A meeting on 26 May in Paris among twenty trade ministers paved the way for the next steps in the Doha Round, as discussed in the TNC. At the meeting, which took place on the sidelines of the OECD Ministerial, trade ministers already indicated that the WTO should look to pursue a 'Plan B' for Doha. They were ready to push for a positive Doha outcome by the end of the year, even if it was not a full Doha package.

Lamy told reporters in Paris that ministers now see December's Ministerial as "not a deadline and [...] not a package," but rather a "restating, re-sequencing of the Doha agenda in trying to sort of crop fruits which are riper than others – and which are politically the most important in terms of development, starting of course with LDCs."

Australian Trade Minister Craig Emerson, who convened the meeting among trade ministers, noted that “a down-payment in December could generate much-needed momentum for the stalled negotiations.”

However, Emerson warned against reaching a “situation that if we are able to reach agreement on a December package, the other matters that are more complex simply get deferred to the never-never.”

The next informal TNC meeting, which aims to have clearer targets in place for the December Ministerial, will be held on 9 June.

ICTSD reporting; “Doha Trade Talks Won’t Be Concluded This Year, South Africa’s Davies Says,” BLOOMBERG, 30 May 2011; “US lays out principles for limited WTO Doha package,” THE HILL, 31 May 2011.

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## US Trade Pacts with Colombia, Korea, Panama Face New Setback

The pending free trade agreements that the US is pursuing with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea hit another roadblock this past week, as US President Barack Obama’s administration insisted that the US Congress reauthorise the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programme before ratifying any of the deals.

Obama’s announcement was followed by a public letter of support signed by 41 Senate Democrats – an indication of the overwhelming support that the TAA has within that party. Those senators stated that, despite their “differing views on elements of the trade agenda,” they were still “unified in our belief that the first order of business, before we should consider any FTA, is securing a long-term TAA extension.”

The TAA provides support for US workers that lose jobs as a result of foreign competition. The programme underwent a series of reforms in 2009, but they expired in February of this year. The reforms expanded the programme to cover both services workers and those workers displaced by import competition from non-FTA countries, among other changes. The 2009 reform and

reauthorisation was part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, more commonly referred to as the US economic stimulus package.

The Senate Finance Committee recently concluded a three-week series of hearings on these pacts, with the goal of approving them by the August recess; however, this deadline is looking increasingly infeasible. The hearings, which began on 11 May and finished last Thursday, were part of the ongoing review process that is necessary before US Congress votes on the FTAs (see Bridges Weekly, [11 May 2011](#)).

## Unexpected TAA link complicates August deadline

The demand that the TAA be used as a condition of the FTAs’ ratification was met with strong opposition from several Republicans, including Orrin Hatch, the party’s top member on the Senate Finance Committee. In his [opening statement](#) at the Korea hearing, Hatch insisted that “failure to submit the agreements [to a vote] sends a chilling signal around the world that the United States is not a trusted ally on trade.”

The new linkage to the TAA programme has left some in Washington doubting whether these FTAs will be ratified before the August deadline. At the Korea hearing, Hatch told his colleagues that “[w]e don’t have the votes to pass TAA through this Congress, so why hold up three trade agreements to do this.”

The chairman of the Senate Finance Committee – Max Baucus, a Democrat – while supporting the FTAs at each of the Senate Finance Hearings, insisted in his own [opening statement](#) at the Korea hearing that Congress has “a duty to help American workers meet the challenge of global competition” – i.e. by reauthorising the 2009 TAA reforms.

“What we are reasonably assured of is that the FTAs have the votes in the House and the Senate to pass as clean bills, all three of them,” Scott Lincicome, a Washington-based international trade lawyer, told Bridges. “The question becomes whether those votes remain when TAA is attached.”

However, Lincicome added that, overall, opposing the TAA reforms would be a “difficult political position for Congressional Republicans,” despite the TAA’s high cost and its association with the controversial stimulus programme in the States.

He noted that, while Congressional Republicans object because of cost, policy, and politics, it would be difficult to do so for long, as it would require going “on record saying, according to their political opponents, they don’t support worker retraining based on import competition, and they’re willing to hold off votes on these great FTAs in order to spite the American worker. [...] Right or wrong, that’s the kind of messaging that they’ll inevitably face.”

While the TAA announcement dominated headlines on the US FTA subject, there were some positive developments from the Senate Finance hearings. With market access issues for automobiles and beef resolved in the case of the Korea FTA, and recognition that both Colombia and Panama have made substantial progress on labour rights, the ratification of these FTAs looks increasingly likely in the coming months.

However, the possibility of delaying these FTAs further as a result of the TAA linkage has created concern about Colombia, Korea, and Panama turning to other trade partners that they do have pacts with. For instance, Gordon Stoner, who testified on the behalf of various national wheat and barley associations, stated that more delays could cause Colombia to focus more on its relationships with existing FTA partners, such as South American trade group Mercosur and, as of this summer, Canada – while leaving the US behind.

Similar concerns were voiced at the Korea and Panama hearings. Hatch reminded colleagues that, Canada and Europe had both “moved ahead to craft their own agreements [with Panama] to benefit their workers.” Democratic Senator John Kerry noted that delaying the approval of the Korea FTA would also benefit Europe, at a detriment to the US.

ICTSD reporting; “Trade Votes Needed in U.S. Congress by August, Hatch Says,” BLOOMBERG, 26 May 2011; “Senate Democrats support White House on trade deals

delay,” THE HILL, 23 May 2011; “Republican senator presses Obama on trade deal delay,” REUTERS, 26 May 2011.

## OTHER NEWS

### Critics Slam Proposed EU Trade Preference Overhaul

A recent proposal to reform the EU’s Generalised System of Preference (GSP) was panned by civil society representatives and some MPs last week in Brussels. The controversial 10 May European Commission (EC) proposal would massively overhaul the GSP system, which aims at supporting developing countries’ exports by granting them unilateral tariff concessions.

During European Parliament hearings, which took place on 24 May, civil society and some parliamentarians criticised the EC for proposing the use of the World Bank classification to rank developing countries, which would use gross domestic product (GDP) per capita as a method of ranking. Doing so would lead resource-rich countries to be excluded from the new GSP scheme, despite high levels of poverty.

The EC justified the system by explaining that a high gross national income (GNI) per capita but low level of development is a symptom of inadequate income redistribution. Since that is a problem resulting from domestic economic policy, trade preferences cannot solve that issue.

The establishment of the EU GSP dates back to 1971, with the latest version being from 2008. The system covers three preference regimes: the standard GSP under which all 176 developing countries benefit from preferential access to the EU; the GSP+ that offers additional tariff reductions to support vulnerable developing countries in the implementation of various international conventions; and the Everything But Arms (EBA) initiative that provides quasi duty-free, quota-free access for all LDCs’ products to the European market.

The EC presented its reform proposal as “focusing on needs” – i.e. those developing

countries most in need of assistance would be able to receive preferential treatment. EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht praised the proposed system, stating that “[...]trade and development go hand in hand and tariff preferences are a small part of our wider agenda to help poorer economies scale up their presence in global markets.”

### **A mix of benefits and challenges**

The new plan limits the access of the EU’s GSP system to approximately 80 lower and lower-middle income countries. This proposal, therefore, excludes most Latin American countries, including Argentina and Brazil; most Caribbean islands; and Fiji in the Pacific. In Africa, the countries that would no longer have access to the GSP would be Botswana, Gabon, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, and South Africa.

However, countries such as China, India and Indonesia would not be excluded using this new criterion. The EC explained this by stating that not all developing countries have the same needs; therefore, the EC must take into account more advanced developing countries that are now more globally competitive and account for 40 percent of all preferential imports.

The EC also proposed that developing countries benefiting from an FTA providing equivalent market access to the EU be excluded from the GSP for two years after having signed the trade pact. This requirement would be necessary to rationalise the scheme. Additionally, the proposal would make the scheme open-ended, but subject to revision every five years.

The GSP+, a subset of the GSP that provides additional tariff concessions to vulnerable countries that abide by a set of 27 international conventions relating to human and labour rights, along with environmental and good governance standards, would also go through major transformations under this proposal. For instance, the EC also proposes to reverse the burden of proof for the implementation of the 27 international conventions: countries would now have to demonstrate that they are indeed taking measures to implement the principles embodied in the conventions. Meeting this new requirement

could, however, pose a challenge to countries that lack the necessary capacity.

The EC has also proposed that restrictions on the access of raw materials be explicitly cited as an “unfair” trading practice that could lead to the suspension from the scheme.

### **Pakistani textiles could see a boost**

Another potential benefit of the reform proposal is that GSP+ status would now be both easier to access and more attractive for these countries: the criteria defining vulnerability has been relaxed and the so-called “graduation” of competitive products abolished. However, these changes, while a benefit to those developing countries that would now qualify for GSP+ status, could cause harm to some EU industries.

Under the new GSP, the import-share criterion for countries to qualify as “vulnerable,” and there be included in the GSP+, will be relaxed from one percent to two percent. According to Reuters, some European Commission members have found the change to the import-share criterion problematic. For instance, Pakistan and the Ukraine would now fall under the two percent threshold, which would allow some of their industries – such as textiles in Pakistan’s case – to benefit at the expense of European producers of the same product. The EU has been trying to obtain a WTO waiver for granting preferential access to Pakistan textiles since September of last year; the new GSP reform could be a way around that roadblock ([Bridges Weekly, 6 April 2011](#)).

With regards to the “graduation” of products, the current scheme holds that specific sectors or products can graduate out of the GSP or the GSP+. This would occur if that product group reaches a certain threshold of total EU imports over three consecutive years. The threshold under the old scheme is set at 15 percent of total EU imports and the textile graduation threshold is set at 12.5 percent.

The current GSP scheme will end in December 2011. The Commission has put forward a “roll-over” regulation, which would extend the present system through the end of 2013. The new GSP scheme is set to enter into force in 2014.



However, it must first be ratified after both the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, in accordance with the EU's ordinary legislative procedure.

ICTSD reporting; "New EU trade plan attracts broad internal criticism," REUTERS, 6 May 2011.

## IN BRIEF

### Russia, Ukraine to Scrap Wheat Export Restrictions

Moscow on Saturday announced that Russia would resume exporting wheat on 1 July, prompting a 4.6 percent fall in the global futures price for the commodity. In August 2010, Russia – the world's number three wheat producer – implemented an export ban on the commodity due to record low harvests resulting from severe drought.

Russian wheat exports for the 2009-2010 season were an estimated 18.5 million tonnes and Viktor Zubkov, Russia's deputy prime minister, said this year's exports could be as high as 15 million tonnes.

In addition to Russia's move, Ukraine announced it will lift wheat export quotas that were put into place a year ago and have had a significant impact on exports. However, the country is planning to implement a new regime of export duties up until 2012, meaning the positive impacts on wheat exports may be modest.

Wheat supplies are short and prices high this year due to unfavourable weather conditions in some of the main producers for the world market, including France and the US. But while Moscow's move will allow more wheat to enter the global market, the bulk of the exports will mainly consist of feed-grade wheat flowing to Asian importers, such as Indonesia, and Japan. Thus, supply of high-grade wheat used for pasta, bread, and other products destined for human consumption may not be significantly offset.

Food security experts say export restrictions contribute to price spikes and have argued for the

need to restrict these and other measures on key commodities in order to tackle related problems. In the context of the flagging Doha round of the WTO, a group of net food importing countries (NFIDCs) have made a proposal to ban export curbs that negatively affect NFIDCs and least-developed countries (see Bridges Weekly, [6 April 2011](#)).

According to the proposal, "export restrictions play a major role in fuelling soaring international food prices" and the food price increases "aggravate poverty levels and seriously threaten NFIDCs' food security." G20 agriculture ministers will address food security, including the role of export restrictions in this context, at a meeting from 22-23 June.

Overall, food prices remain at historical highs, despite an apparent levelling off and even some minor price decreases in May (see Bridges Weekly, [11 May 2011](#)). For wheat, prices are 75 percent higher than they were a year ago.

According to a [new report by Oxfam International](#), food prices will likely double over the next 20 years due to "rising food price inflation and oil price hikes fuelled by speculators, scrambles for land and water, and creeping climate change." The poorest people of the world, who spend more than 80 percent of their income, will be the hardest hit, Oxfam says. The development-focussed NGO says policy changes, such as limiting speculation on food commodities and scrapping support for biofuels made from food crops, will help combat the problem.

ICTSD reporting; "Wheat Falls on Russia's Plans to Remove Export Ban," WALL STREET JOURNAL, 31 May 2011; "Wheat Declines Most in a Week as Russia to End Grain-Export Ban," BLOOMBERG, 31 May 2011; "Analysis: Russian wheat to ease Asia's tight feed supply," REUTERS, 31 May 2011; "Ukraine removes grain export quotas," FINANCIAL TIMES, 25 May 2011; "Russia Lifting Grain-Export Ban May Fail to Alleviate Global Crop Shortage," BLOOMBERG, 30 May 2011; "Hunger crisis worsens, food system broken: Oxfam," REUTERS, 31 May 2011.

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## Peru Clinches Trade Deals with Panama, Costa Rica

Panama and Peru last week finalised a free trade agreement (FTA) that, once implemented, will slash tariffs on more than 90 percent of goods and services and help facilitate bilateral investment. Costa Rica then signed a similar deal with Peru the following day. Peru has been engaged in spirited negotiations with an array of Central American countries of late, with the Panama and Costa Rica deals being the first of these to come to fruition.

Under the first pact, signed on 25 May in Panama City, Panama will allow 93.1 percent of Peruvian goods to enter the country tariff-free. Likewise, Peru will provide tariff-free status to 99.2 percent of Panamanian goods. The cuts are expected to take place the next five years.

Peru's Foreign Trade and Tourism Minister, Eduardo Ferreyros, heralded the agreement as "very well negotiated" and noted that the trade between the nations – which amounted to US\$45 million in 2010 - will significantly increase under the accord.

Peruvian agricultural goods such as asparagus, mandarins, grapes, mangos, Cusco giant maize, and lime, among others, will benefit from the agreement, as will Panamanian chicken, processed beef, fruit and seafood.

In addition to goods, the FTA will cover services, investment, temporary entry of persons, intellectual property, and government procurement along with various other issues that improve integration between the two countries, according to a statement by Panama's ministry of commerce and industry.

"[Peru] has an economic and social vision very similar to the one of Panama," said Roberto Henriquez, Panama's trade minister. "It creates a great opportunity to unite our economies and productive sectors."

The two trade ministers acknowledged the role of the private sector in helping to push the deal forward and representatives from the shipping,

trade, industrial and agro-export sectors were present at the signing.

Costa Rica signed a similar bilateral deal with Peru the following day that will lower trade barriers by 80 percent within 5 years of the implementation date, with the remaining 20 percent set to be removed after 15 years.

Under the pact, signed on 26 May in San José, Costa Rican products such as chocolate, tea, milk-based beverages and powdered beverages will gain greater market access, as will Peruvian asparagus, grapes, corn, raisins, textiles, jewels, and precious metals. Sensitive products – including dairy, chicken, pork, rice, potatoes, and yellow corn – are excluded from the deal.

"Central America signifies an interesting market of opportunities for our exports, especially for small and medium sized enterprises," said Ferreyros. "These agreements will be a means to generate greater employment and options for consumers."

Both deals are expected to enter into force in January 2012.

ICTSD reporting; "Peru, Panama sign free trade agreement," ANDINA, 26 May 2011; "Perú y Panamá liberan comercio," EL COLOMBIANO, 26 May 2011; "Costa Rica y Panamá satisfechos por los TLC con Perú," PORTAFOLIO, 9 May 2011, "El Perú y Panamá firmaron TLC para impulsar comercio e inversion," EL COMERCIO, 25 May 2011.

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## WTO IN BRIEF

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### Ukraine, Moldova Environment Spat Hits WTO

After unsuccessful attempts to settle a dispute regarding discriminatory "environmental charges" in bilateral negotiations, Ukraine has asked the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to establish a panel to examine it. Following standard practice, Moldova blocked the creation of the panel at a 24 May meeting of the DSB. However,

when Ukraine's next request is tabled, a panel will be established automatically.

In its request (WT/DS421/4), Ukraine indicated that Moldova is charging a discriminatory charge on imported goods that contaminate the environment through their use. The fee, which is charged at the border and is in addition to any duties or taxes, ranges from 0.5 to 5 percent of the declared value of the good. According to Ukraine, the list of imported goods subject to this charge is rather extensive and is not charged on like domestic products.

In addition, Moldova requires importers to pay an environment fee for recycling plastic bottles and tetra pack packaging - with the exception of dairy packaging - while domestic producers are exempt from such fees. Ukraine indicted that these measures violate the principle of national treatment under GATT.

Ukraine argues that these environmental charges have had a negative effect on the position of Ukrainian beer and juice producers in the Moldovan marketplace. Official Ukrainian figures showed a significant decline in sales. From January to November 2010, Ukrainian beer exports to Moldova fell from US\$9.2 million to US\$6.2 million - a 32.6 percent decrease. Meanwhile juice exports fell from US\$3.8 million to \$2.5 million - a 34.8 percent decline.

"The fees have been in effect since 2008, but we had just joined the WTO in 2008, for that we were not persistent in our demands," Galina Korenkova, general director of beer lobbying group Ukrpivo, told the newspaper Kommersant. "We are not against the charge itself, it goes to the right targets, but we insist that it should be paid by both foreign and domestic producers."

Vladimir Granagin, head of the Export Department Vitmark-Ukraine proposed another solution, "abolition of environmental charges will increase sales as the price of our products will be equal with local ones, surpassing them in quality."

In a press release, the Moldovan Ministry of the Economy stated that they have initiated the abolition of the environmental charges on imports. In addition, the newspaper

Komsomolskaya Pravda reports that the Moldovan government programme for the stabilisation and revitalisation of the country includes goals such as "non-discrimination in the payment of environmental taxes on packaging on plastic and tetra pack packaged imports."

Trade partners of Moldova, particularly Ukraine, Russia, and the EU, are insisting that the charges be abolished. The Moldovan press release acknowledged that the charges are creating an obstacle for dialogue with the European Commission on a free trade deal as well as provoking retaliation from many major trading partners of the CIS region against Moldovan fruits, vegetables, and alcoholic beverages.

"If Moldova maintains an environmental tax at the same levels, external partners such as Ukraine, Russia, and the EU could take retaliatory measures that directly affect the country's economy," said Octavian Calmac, Moldova's Deputy Minister of Economy and Trade.

This article was adapted from a story in ICTSD's Russian-language trade and sustainable development news stream БЛОГ публикации «Мосты».

ICTSD Reporting; "Ukraine solves an environmental problem," KOMMERSANT-UKRAINE, 25 January 2011; "Moldova cancels environmental tax on imports of goods with plastic packaging," KOMSOMSOLSKAYA PRAVDA, 20 March 2011.

## EVENTS & RESOURCES

### Events

#### Coming Soon

2-3 June, Hong Kong, China. ADBI-PECC CONFERENCE ON ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS AND FACILITATING REGIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN SERVICES. The project, aims to clarify the necessary factors for competitiveness in services. This, in turn, will enable regional businesses and



governments to build appropriate strategies to develop and internationalise their services industries. Other subjects on the agenda include proposals for meeting key services-related policy challenges that regional and multilateral trading systems are likely to meeting in the coming years, along with the development of an agenda for regional services integration that responds to the changing environment and needs of the region. The conference is jointly run by the Asian Development Bank Institute along with the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Further information can be found [here](#).

6-9 June, Bali, Indonesia. TRANSFORMING TERTIARY EDUCATION FOR INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS. This course hosted by the World Bank focuses on how the knowledge economy is constantly changing, and while competition steadily escalates, skills and technological knowledge quickly depreciate. Therefore, the programme will examine how tertiary education both constitutes an important means to build competitive advantages and acts as a driving force for sustainable economic and social development. More details are available on the [website](#).

6-10 June, Geneva, Switzerland. THIRD SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. As countries struggle to place their economies onto sustained growth and development paths in the post-global economic crisis period, trade unquestionably remains an important instrument for economic recovery, growth and development. The 2011 session of UNCTAD's Trade and Development Commission will address the following themes: how to assess the evolution of the international trading system; how to enhance the system's contribution to development and economic recovery; and how to integrate developing countries into global supply chains, such as by adding value to these countries' exports. More information is available via the [UNCTAD website](#).

## WTO events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted [here](#).

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.

1 June: Dispute Settlement Body

6 June: Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation

7-8 June: Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights

## Other Upcoming Events

9-10 June, Washington, US. INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON CARIBBEAN INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT. The International Forum on Caribbean Investment and Development (IFCID) will be a comprehensive conference on business and economic development in the Caribbean. This conference will provide participants with a critical mix of business networking and policy dialog. To access more details please visit their [website](#).

22 June, Washington, US. RUSSIA'S BID TO JOIN THE WTO: IS 2011 THE YEAR? Russia's 17-year bid to join the WTO has picked up speed, with some observers predicting that Russia could join the global trade body later this year. Several issues remain to be concluded in the negotiations, as well as work on the formal WTO documents needed for accession. To benefit from all of Russia's accession commitments, and to be capable of using the dispute settlement mechanism to enforce these same commitments, the US will have to extend permanent normal trade relations with Russia. Doing so would end the decades-long application of the Jackson-Vanik provisions of the Trade Act of 1974, which only permit conditional trade relations. This debate will likely raise a number of issues in the US-Russia relationship, ranging from commercial ones to broader issues of national interest. Further information is available [here](#).

23 June, Geneva, Switzerland. GREEN TRANSITION AND POVERTY

ALLEVIATION IN LDCs: TAKING STOCK OF LDC-IV. This CUTS-FES joint event at the UNCTAD Public Symposium will be a breakout session aiming to discuss issues related to implementing the LDC-IV outcomes in a manner that promotes development-orientated transition to green economy in LDCs, while also addressing poverty-related issues. More details can be accessed [here](#).

27 July, Washington, US. DOHA. This forum is hosted by the Washington International Trade Association, and will focus on why the Doha Round is still at a crossroads, despite having undergone ten years of negotiations. With revised negotiating texts working their way to the surface amid new concerns that negotiating gaps are unbridgeable, trade experts representing a cross-section of interests will offer an analysis of the Round's economic value, along with a frank assessment of the ongoing trade talks. Information for this event is available on the [website](#).

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2011. By the Asian Development Bank (ADB), May 2011. This paper is the third annual Sustainability Report completed by the ADB. It provides information about their continued work on promoting environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth, and on reducing the world's corporate footprint. The report can be accessed [here](#).

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## Resources

AGRICULTURE IN DEVELOPMENT OF SELECT AFRICAN COUNTRIES: LINKAGES WITH TRADE, PRODUCTIVITY, LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY. By CUTS International, 2011. The research focus of this paper is on the positive inter-linkages between trade and agricultural development in five project countries in Africa. The projects have attempted to develop government capacity in these countries, in order for these governments to focus on the importance and promotion of the agriculture sector. The report provides recommendations tailored to the unique circumstances of each project country. The paper is available [here](#).

WTO ANNUAL REPORT 2011. By the World Trade Organisation, 2011. This report provides a brief summary of the organisation and a detailed review of its activities in 2010. It also includes a personal message from Director-General Pascal Lamy, who reflects on the events of 2010 and the challenges that lie ahead. The report is available on the WTO [website](#).