



Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective

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LEAD STORIES

Slow Progress in WTO Ag Talks as Easter Target Looms

Officials from a few WTO members are this week continuing to meet bilaterally to explore scope for possible trade-offs across negotiating areas in the troubled Doha Round trade negotiations. However, these discussions have so far failed to generate any sign of progress in the agriculture talks, as an Easter target date for revised draft texts fast approaches.

Senior officials and ambassadors from the US, China, India and Brazil were meeting for bilateral discussions, delegates said, in a bid to explore possible concessions on agriculture, manufactured goods and services. The US has underscored that it wants greater access to the fast-growing developing country markets, while Brazil in particular has warned that any demands for further tariff cuts would have to be matched by new concessions on US farm support.

Progress in the talks now “basically depends on the arrangement that can be reached between the big members” sighed one official. However, there was no indication that the bilateral talks had led to any movement.

The US was due to meet with India on Thursday, and to hold three days of talks with China from Tuesday onwards, delegates said.

Agriculture texts by Easter?

Agriculture negotiators warned that unless members show new signs of negotiating flexibility, it would be “very difficult” for the chair of the farm trade talks to produce a revised text by the WTO's Easter break, which this year begins on 22 April. “I wouldn't like to be in his shoes,” one official remarked.

WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy has urged chairs to produce new drafts for members to consider by this date. However, negotiators cautioned that it might be easier to generate revised drafts on other negotiating issues that are considered less “mature” than agriculture.

Several officials believe that “the next text in agriculture needs to be a final text,” one negotiator observed. As a result, delegates would have to discuss “what a new text actually means” - possibly in the 'room E' meeting of around three dozen countries from a cross-section of coalitions and regions that the chair of the negotiations, New Zealand Ambassador David Walker, has scheduled for Thursday.

Another negotiator suggested that the chair could also consider other options, such as a more discursive or annotated text spelling out where he considered options and constraints currently lie. This could perhaps be similar to the issue-specific 'reference papers' prepared in 2006 by the then-chair of the agriculture negotiations, New Zealand Ambassador Crawford Falconer, the source said.

Chair consults on proposed new safeguard, tariff simplification

Delegates reported that the chair convened a small group consultation on Tuesday with delegates from exporting countries on the proposed new 'special safeguard mechanism' that developing countries would be allowed to use to impose temporary additional duties in the event of a sudden surge in import volumes or drop in prices. Exporters reported on technical work they had been conducting on proposed disciplines for safeguard duties that would not exceed pre-Doha 'bound rates' – the WTO-approved ceilings that would ordinarily apply to tariffs.

Members of the G-33 group of import-sensitive developing countries that favour a simple and effective special safeguard mechanism indicated that there were currently no plans to meet with the chair in the immediate future. However, some negotiators warned that Walker might find it hard to develop new text on the controversial safeguard without new input from the group.

Walker also met with a small group of delegates to discuss proposed disciplines that would simplify more complex forms of tariffs, such as those expressed by weight or volume rather than as a percentage of the product's value. Technical work intended to explore the implications of proposed options had “not progressed far yet,” one official familiar with the discussions reported.

The chair was also believed to have scheduled a lunch meeting with senior negotiators from key countries, in order to discuss what should happen next in the negotiating process.

“No progress”

Several negotiators reported that there were no signs of progress in the room E meeting that Walker convened last Friday. Members “just repeated their positions”, said one official, while another indicated that the bilateral talks amongst major trading powers are still “where the 'action' is.”

Negotiators indicated that slow but steady progress was being achieved in the 'clarification process' originally initiated by China, India and Argentina. Although intended not to be a negotiating exercise, members have used this process to discuss legal and practical ambiguities in the text and clarify their understanding of what proposed new disciplines would mean.

One official suggested that in order to overcome the continuing deadlock, Lamy might eventually have to present a 'chair's text' outlining terms for a potential compromise. However, in the past this has been seen as a high-risk 'nuclear option' that could also risk triggering a complete breakdown in the talks: as such, it is likely to remain an option that the WTO chief will keep on hand until all other options have already been explored.

Walker has scheduled a meeting for Friday to report on the results of his consultations to the whole WTO membership.

ICTSD reporting.

Appellate Body Reverses Ruling, Hands Victory to China over US in Trade Remedy Case

In an unexpected reversal of an earlier ruling, the WTO Appellate Body handed China a major victory in its WTO case against US anti-dumping and countervailing duties imposed on several types of Chinese steel pipes, off-road tyres and woven sacks.

Despite losing almost all of its claims in the original dispute panel ruling, which was released in October 2010, China appealed. The decision has paid off, with the WTO's appeals court overturning key points setting important precedents for trade remedies imposed on so-called "non-market economies" like China. The Appellate Body ruling thus has implications not only for the US, but also for the EU and other trading powers, by placing new constraints on their freedom to impose punitive duties on Chinese exports.

In the appeals ruling, which was released last Friday, WTO appellate judges determined that "in the four sets of anti-dumping and countervailing duty investigations, the US acted inconsistently" with WTO rules. They found that the US could not simultaneously impose both countervailing duties, or duties imposed to remedy the use of subsidies by the violating country, and anti-dumping duties, or duties that punish the practice of selling goods in foreign markets below cost, also known as "dumping," without having assessed whether the extra duties amount to "double remedies."

The case marks a victory for Beijing after a string of losses before the world trade body, and will bolster China's attempts to fend off anti-dumping and countervailing duties imposed on its exports by its trading partners, several of which accuse China of engaging in state-subsidised manufacturing and "dumping."

China's rapid industrial growth has seen it emerge as the world's largest producer of manufactured goods. Last year, it displaced Germany as the

world's largest exporter with \$1.6 trillion in exports and a trade surplus of \$184.5 billion.

Double Remedies

Generally, a country conducts investigations against suspect imports under either its domestic anti-dumping or countervailing duty laws, not both. However, such dual investigations occur when the investigating country determines that the imported product is benefiting from subsidies and being dumped at the same time. If the subsidies are unrelated to the dumping, then the complaining country can impose a separate remedy for both, according to the Appellate Body. The problem arises when the subsidies are part of the cause for the dumping. An example would be a case in which a subsidy goes to the producer of a good, allowing them to export the product at a lower price. In that case, imposing dual remedies could be seen as "double counting," according to Simon Lester of Worldtradelaw.net.

China argued that applying "double remedies" for essentially one violation meant the US was violating WTO rules. The initial panel backed the US practice but was reversed by the Appellate Body, which said that the use of the 'non-market economy' methodology for calculating such remedies "without having assessed whether double remedies arose from such concurrent duties" meant the US had run afoul of its obligations under WTO subsidy law. In other words, the US should have looked at both of its investigations and determined whether the subsidies resulted in dumping so as to ensure that they were not seeking to impose two remedies on a single action.

China welcomed the Appellate Body's ruling in a statement released by the Ministry of Commerce on Saturday, saying the WTO has "conclusively established that the US acts unlawfully in the methods by which it calculates and imposes countervailing duties on imports from China."

US Trade Representative Ron Kirk, said he was "deeply troubled" by the ruling and that the Appellate Body was "overreaching." He also noted that his office was "reviewing the findings closely in order to understand fully their implications" – implications that will require the

US to reform its method of calculating punitive duties against “non-market economies.”

WTO rules allow for treating goods from non-market economies (NME) differently for the purpose of calculating anti-dumping duties. The US therefore uses a surrogate country to determine what constitutes a ‘normal’ market price for the goods in question, on the grounds that Chinese prices are distorted by government involvement in the market.

China argued that imposing countervailing duties on top of anti-dumping duties using the NME method necessarily results in the imposition of two penalties, “once through the calculation of the dumping margin, and once as a result of the imposition of the countervailing duties.” The Appellate Body agreed, saying that NME anti-dumping investigations had to take into account the extent to which subsidies might be offset twice by the imposition of both anti-dumping and countervailing duties. Such double duties violate the “appropriate amounts” of punitive duties allowed under Article 19.3 of the WTO agreement on subsidies and countervailing measures because it potentially results in levels of duties than higher than those countenanced by that agreement.

Not all the findings of the panel were reversed, leaving some parts of the US case intact. For instance, the Appellate Body agreed with the panel that certain Chinese banks that gave loans to exporters were “state bodies,” meaning their loans were a form of subsidy to the loan recipient.

On the other hand, the Appellate Body reversed the panel’s determination that state-owned enterprises, companies in which the state is the majority shareholder, are “state bodies” simply by virtue of that majority government ownership control. Instead, the Appellate Body defined “state body” as one that is vested or entrusted with the authority to perform a government function. Nevertheless, any company that borrows money from Chinese state-owned banks may be considered subsidised under the Appellate Body’s ruling, according to analysis by Worldtradelaw.net.

ICTSD reporting: “Trade body rules in Beijing’s favor,” THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 12

March 2011; “WTO reverses ruling on US steel duties, backing China,” BLOOMBERG, 11 March 2011; “WTO rules in China’s favor in US trade dispute,” LATIMES.COM, 11 March 2011; “The Appellate Body and Double Remedies,” WORLDTRADELAW.NET, 11 March 2011; “China welcomes WTO ruling on Sino-US business dispute,” XINHAUNET.COM, 12 March 2011.

OTHER NEWS

WTO Govt Procurement Revision “Within Reach” by May: Chair

A deal to liberalise access to billions of dollars worth of public procurement contracts among some forty-one WTO members is “within reach” and could be concluded as early as May, the chair of the WTO committee on government procurement said last week.

“While there is no doubt that important gaps remain to be bridged... a great deal has been achieved and I am firmly of the view that a successful conclusion to the negotiations is in sight,” Nicholas Niggli, a senior Swiss trade diplomat, told delegates after a week of talks last Thursday.

“The vast majority of the technical work is largely completed,” Niggli told Bridges about ongoing negotiations to revise the Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), a plurilateral WTO accord that has since 1996 opened up access to several types of public tenders to companies from all participating countries. He said that the talks now “clearly needed” ministerial involvement to resolve remaining political differences, adding that discussions at the political level have already begun to address the issue.

In Niggli’s view, the talks to update the agreement are linked to the other major component of the committee’s work – negotiating the accession of new countries to the plurilateral accord. “Bringing the GPA into the 21st century,” he believes, would encourage more countries to seek to join the accord – in turn bringing substantial market access gains.

Neither of the two tracks of the committee's work is linked to the WTO's long-running Doha Round of global trade talks. But like the struggling multilateral negotiations, the government procurement talks have also been bogged down, albeit to a lesser extent, by disagreements among powerful countries.

In the talks on revising the GPA, the EU, the US, and Japan have been dissatisfied with each others' proposals for the coverage of their future commitments on liberalised public procurement. While the US and Japan are believed to be broadly satisfied with each other's offers, the EU is seeking more from both of them. In addition, the US would like more concessions from the EU. At the end of last week's talks, Niggli asked them "to go back to their capitals with a willingness to look again at their own as well as each other's offers," bearing in mind the benefits they stand to enjoy from the conclusion of an agreement.

While one of the components of talks on revising the GPA, a revised text for the agreement, has been largely complete since governments provisionally agreed on a revised GPA text in December 2006, parties to the accord still need to agree on programmes for the committee's future work. The treatment of small and medium enterprises has been pointed to by some as a potential area for such work. However, this has been contested by countries with clauses in their GPA commitments allowing them to favour local small and medium enterprises, who feel that any changes to their commitments would deserve tradeoffs in return. Other potential areas for further work are technical specifications and safety clauses in the context of GPA coverage, how changes in national legislation should be announced publicly, and sustainable procurement. Niggli expressed confidence to Bridges that acceptable solutions could be reached on all of the issues.

The modernisation of the GPA in part reflects technological changes since the accord was negotiated in 1994, during the Uruguay Round talks. At the time, virtually no country used online advertising to solicit and receive tenders for public projects. Today, most do. The revised text reflects this: minimum notice periods are shortened, for

example, to reflect the greater speed with which suppliers can submit proposals. Other changes pertain to flexibility, particularly special and differential treatment, in an attempt to make participation in the GPA more attractive to developing countries. (The 41 WTO members bound by the GPA are for the most part developed countries.)

Armenia set to join, China talks proceed

Joining the GPA requires governments to give up the ability to direct certain types of public purchases to domestic firms - traditionally a much-used lever for promoting particular economic sectors (and one that has been vulnerable to cronyism and abuse at taxpayers' expense). In return, their companies receive access to the types of public tenders covered by the GPA in all countries that are party to it. The stakes are substantial: government agencies' procurement of goods and services tends to account for 10 to 20 percent of national GDP.

Not all types of public procurement are covered by the GPA: signatories spell out which types of public purchases of goods and services would be open to competition from other GPA signatories, and spell out spending thresholds below which liberalisation obligations would not apply. Sub-central entities like state and provincial governments are often (but not always) subject to disciplines under the GPA, but tend to have greater latitude to source locally than central governments.

Last week's meetings saw Armenia poised to become the first former Soviet bloc country to become a party to the GPA. Although the country's accession process had been mostly concluded last year, a few procedural steps were necessary before Armenia could formally deposit its instrument of accession to the agreement. Niggli praised Armenian officials for their conduct during the accession process, calling it a model for cooperation with other WTO members.

As the world's most lucrative market not currently part of the WTO's government procurement agreement, China's participation in the agreement has been much sought after by parties to the GPA. As part of its terms of joining the WTO in

2001, China promised to accede to the GPA as soon as possible, but with no specific timetable for doing so. Beijing duly started negotiations on acceding to the GPA, but despite consistent work, there are still no clear indications about when these talks might conclude.

Thus far, many countries have been unsatisfied with China's offers of liberalized government procurement. Nevertheless, Niggli praised China for its participation last week, noting that Beijing had "re-affirmed its commitment to submit a 'robust' second revised coverage offer, incorporating coverage of sub-central government entities," well in advance of the year's end. He expressed satisfaction with the way China's negotiating process was proceeding, with good faith cooperation on all sides.

Mirroring the process for joining the WTO, acceding to the GPA requires consensus among GPA parties on the terms of accession offered by the would-be party.

Asked whether rising economic nationalism, seen from 'buy domestic' clauses in the US and China stimulus packages to EU member states making industrial aid contingent on relocating jobs back home, posed a threat to 'non-national' GPA expansion, Niggli stressed that opening up public procurement markets could be a powerful boost to government efficiency and good governance more generally. In addition, he suggested, the increased competition would help boost the competitiveness of domestic companies. Armenia, he said, had decided to sign on to the GPA as part of an effort to improve governance and competitiveness.

After the financial and economic crisis of 2008-09, Niggli said, public money is scarce. "If you don't make your government efficient, if you don't get the best value for taxpayers' money, how are you going to get things done?" he asked, suggesting that the GPA could help governments maximise returns on their investments. "Your state has to deliver services and goods efficiently, and if there is no competition, you're not going to get good value for money."

The next government procurement committee is scheduled for 23-27 May.

ICTSD reporting.

Easter Revised Text Likely as Fisheries Subsidies Talks Trudge Forward

A revised draft agreement text for prospective WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies appears likely to be issued in time for a late-April deadline, following a week of discussions in the Doha Round Negotiating Group on Rules. However, with the persistence of differences on issues such as fuel subsidies, it is unclear whether the text will be free of brackets.

Trinidad and Tobago Ambassador Dennis Francis, who chairs the group, opened the 7-14 March session by reporting that four contact groups – on high seas fisheries, artisanal/small-scale fisheries, income support, and fuel subsidies – as well as the 'friends of the chair' serving as his focal points on key issues had met over the weekend prior to the discussions. He called on interested delegations to meet with the groups over the week as plurilateral discussions delved into new submissions by Malaysia and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, and explored issues such as high seas fisheries, reciprocal and shared access to exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and fisheries management.

Fuel Subsidies

The question of whether and how countries will be able to subsidise fuel for fishing fleets remains the most contentious issue in the talks. Sources say it is the only issue to consistently receive high level attention over the past week. Because fuel subsidies can be delivered through a number of complex channels, establishing the true extent of funding can be extremely difficult.

Last month, in an attempt to unravel the complexity of the issue, Francis took the unusual measure of asking delegates to complete a questionnaire asking delegates to identify their fuel subsidies (see Bridges Trade BioRes, [21 February 2011](#)). Countries reportedly responded to the questionnaire but with varying levels of detail –

some were more forthcoming than others. Sources close to the discussions said that enough information was gleaned through the process that there was dissension within the group discussing the issue last week. Participating delegations are reportedly keeping their cards close to their chests, and were struggling to make a decision on how much information should be made available outside the group – even to other negotiators.

A particularly difficult aspect holding back the talks on fuel subsidies to the fisheries sector is the issue of “specificity.” In most cases a subsidy must be “specific” to a particular industry in order to fall under the WTO’s legal definition of a subsidy. Thus – with the exception of export subsidies – a subsidy that is generally available to other sectors in society is not generally considered actionable under the subsidies code. Because many countries, such as the United States, provide fuel subsidies in the form of tax rebates that are available to industries other than fisheries, they are not considered actionable.

A number of delegations, led by Mexico, are pushing for an elimination of the specificity requirements on any prohibition that would apply to fuel, to ensure any text does not create a bias in favour of developed countries. Such an exception, however, would have implications at the WTO going well beyond fisheries subsidies.

Malaysia looks for leniency to improve food safety standards

Malaysia’s 16 February submission proposes that the list of exempted fisheries subsidies be extended to include support for upgrading vessels to meet food safety standards (e.g., special toilets and shower facilities, wash basins, partitioning for fish holds, fibreglass coating for sorting deck, etc.). It said that fisheries exports from developing countries have been subject to strict health standards, and that the cost of meeting these standards can be prohibitive, ranging from US\$23,000 to 36,000 per boat.

Pakistan, India, Kenya (on behalf of ACP countries) and Tonga (on behalf of Pacific Island countries) said their fisheries exports have also been affected by such measures. They expressed general support for the Malaysian proposal,

although they expressed a preference for making the exemption part of special and differential treatment for developing countries. Indonesia, South Africa and Turkey also expressed support, and suggested that the whole value chain up to the handling and processing of fish in port should also be exempted. Also expressing general support were Brazil, Korea, El Salvador (on behalf of the small vulnerable economies), China, Colombia, Norway and the EU. Australia, the US, New Zealand, Peru and Chile said that they oppose measures that would increase overcapacity and overfishing.

ACP proposes exemptions for minimal fishing countries

Mauritius introduced the 1 March ACP proposal by saying that these countries have a minimal share of world fisheries production and are not to blame for the current depleted state of fish stocks. It said any fisheries subsidies agreement must provide a balanced, fair and equitable outcome that takes into account the economic importance of the sector to the ACP and the need for adequate policy space for these countries to develop the sector.

Under the proposal, developing countries whose percentage share of global marine wild capture is not more than 0.60 percent would be exempt from the disciplines on fishing boat construction and operating costs (an annex lists 27 ACP non-LDC WTO members in this category). Tonga (on behalf of the Pacific island countries), Ecuador, Turkey, and Pakistan expressed support for the proposal.

The US said a country’s percentage share of global marine capture may not indicate the impact of its fishing practices on a specific fish stock in a particular region, and asked if there would be a mechanism for graduating a country from the list. New Zealand said the world share of ACP in fisheries may be low now but could go up in the future. Japan said that a 0.6 percent share is still a high proportion of the fish catch. Peru said it could not agree with the creation of a new category of developing countries.

Exemptions for developing countries are one of the more difficult issues in the talks, with S&DT

provisions for artisanal and small-scale fisheries generating much debate. Countries, such as Peru and Ecuador, have been looking to have artisanal or small-scale fisheries included under exceptions made for subsistence fishing. Discussions last week reportedly focussed on the question of whether such an exception would also be extended to developed countries. Some countries, notably Canada, are reportedly pushing for a different approach altogether, which would instead allow for the provision of any subsidies up to a certain percentage of the total value of the landed catch.

ICTSD reporting.

IN BRIEF

China Reclaims Former Perch as World's Biggest Manufacturer

China last year became the world's largest manufacturer, ending the US's run of over a century and returning to the rung that the Asian giant has occupied for much of the past five hundred years.

According to research from IHS Global Insight first reported on by the Financial Times, the value of China's manufacturing output in 2010 was \$1.995 trillion, or 19.8 percent of the worldwide total. It edged out the US, which accounted for 19.4 percent, worth about \$1.952 trillion.

The symbolic shift is underpinned by dramatic changes over the past decade in the global distribution of factory output. In 2000, the countries still thought of as the industrialised world -- western Europe, North America, and Japan -- accounted for 72 percent of goods production, not too much less than the 80 percent figure for 1990, according to the British newspaper's beyondbrics blog. Last year, they were responsible for little more than half. In 2000, Brazil, Russia, India, and China -- the so-called BRICs -- produced 11 percent of the world's manufactures. Last year, their share was nearly 27 percent. This figure was dominated by China: Brazil's share was 3.1 percent, sixth overall, with

Russia and India at 2.2 percent each, tied for tenth between the UK and Canada.

Based on the same IHS Global Insight data, Agence France Presse reports that between 2008 and 2010, China's manufacturing sector grew at an annual rate of 20.2 percent, compared to 1.8 percent for the US and 4.25 percent for Japan.

China leads in manufacturing output, but not in productivity. Workers in the US manufacturing sector generated over eight times more value per person than their counterparts in Chinese factories.

"In other words, the US manufacturing sector is producing roughly the same amount of output in 2010 with 11.5 million workers as opposed to its Chinese counterpart with around 100 million workers," IHS said, according to AFP.

WTO statistics suggest that China was the world's largest exporter of manufactured goods in 2010, followed by the US and Germany. (Figures for both manufacturing output and trade volumes have been affected by major swings in currency values.)

Economic historians cited by the Financial Times suggest that China accounted for 30 percent of world manufacturing in 1830. It was surpassed as the world's biggest manufacturer by the UK during the latter's industrial revolution in the mid-19th century. The US overtook the UK in 1895, and did not relinquish its perch until last year.

ICTSD reporting; "China noses ahead as top goods producer," FINANCIAL TIMES, 14 March 2011; "China tops US in manufacturing: study," AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 14 March 2011.

WTO IN BRIEF

Norway Joins Canada in WTO Dispute over EU Seal Import Ban

Norway has announced that it will join Canada in its request for the establishment of a WTO

dispute settlement panel over the EU's ban on seal product imports. The 15 March statement by the Nordic sealing nation was not unexpected, as it has historically allied itself with Ottawa over the controversial issue.

Canada's request was launched last February following a May 2009 vote by the European Parliament to impose an import ban on seal products (see Bridges Weekly Trade Digest, [18 February 2011](#)). Norway, which does not belong to the EU, says the move is necessary to rectify what it calls a breach of WTO rules.

"We consider the EU ban on trade in seal products to be in conflict with WTO rules, and would like a WTO dispute settlement panel to make an independent assessment," said Jonas Gahr Støre, Norway's Foreign Minister.

Canada welcomed Norway's decision to partner with it in the WTO dispute.

"We are encouraged by Norway's decision to join Canada in requesting the establishment of a dispute settlement panel by the WTO," Canadian Fisheries Minister Gail Shea said. "Canada welcomes Norway's support for our position that the European Union's ban on seal products is groundless."

The EU ban on seal products is based on the grounds that seal harvesting practices from commercial operations – like those in Canada – are "inherently cruel" and "inhumane." However, Canada strongly rejects the rationale, arguing that seal harvesting in Canada is done humanely and that its sealing practices are "safe, sustainable, and economically legitimate." Furthermore, Canada points to the thousands families in coastal communities whose livelihoods depend upon the sealing industry.

"The [Canadian] government will continue to defend Canadian sealers and their right to pursue an honest livelihood," Shea said in a recent press briefing, adding that Canada has every intension of seeing the WTO process through to a conclusion – a process that normally takes a year.

Oslo echoed Ottawa's position, arguing that case involves more than the commercial value of the

industry. "For the Norwegian authorities, this issue involves important principles, such as our right to sustainably harvest our living marine resources and to sell products derived from hunting and fishing," Norwegian Fisheries Minister Lisbeth Berg-Hansen said in a statement.

ICTSD reporting; "Minister Shea Welcomes Norway's Challenge of the European Union's Seal Ban at the World Trade Organization," MARKET WIRE, 15 March, 2011; "Norway Fights on Against Sealing Ban," THE FOREIGNER, 16 March, 2011; "Norway Joins Canada to Fight EU Seal Ban," THE MONTREAL GAZETTE, 16 March, 2011.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming soon

17 March, London. CHINA IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS: COMPREHENSIVE AND SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT AT HOME AND WIN-WIN COOPERATION WITH THE WORLD. Hosted by Chatham House, Chinese Ambassador Liu Xiaoming will discuss the review of the 12th Five-Year Plan and the efforts to formulate a blueprint for economic and social development when China convenes its annual parliamentary sessions in early March. He will talk about the importance of this plan, the steps China will take in the next five years and the potential impact on China and the rest of the world. For further information, please refer to the [website](#).

18 March, Geneva. SHORT COURSES ON KEY INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES – GOVERNANCE, DEVELOPMENT AND LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. Held by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), this is one in a series of short courses on key international economic issues to be held in 2011 for delegates and other staff who follow matters pertaining to UNCTAD or the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva. The aim is to give permanent missions an opportunity to follow a shorter, more focused version of the regional three-week course on key

issues on the international economic agenda. For more information, please consult the [website](#).

18 March, London. NEW CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPMENT – URBANISATION. The Overseas Development Institute is hosting David Satterthwaite, Senior Fellow of the Human Settlements Programme at the International Institute for Environment and Development, and Doug Saunders, European Bureau Chief for Canada's Globe and Mail, to discuss if moving to a city is a catalyst for increased wealth and opportunity, or if it simply traps people into a life of poverty and insecurity. Unless there is more understanding on this difference, ending poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals be nearly impossible. More information can be found [here](#).

23 – 25 March, Geneva. MULTI-YEAR EXPERT MEETING ON COMMODITIES AND DEVELOPMENT. UNCTAD is hosting the third session this year to assess the current situation and outlook in commodity markets. Policy actions will be reviewed and identified to mitigate the impact of highly volatile prices and incomes on commodity-dependent countries, and to facilitate value addition and great participation in commodity value chains by commodity-producing countries. Additionally, they will identify innovative approaches to resolving commodity-related problems based on effective multi-stakeholder partnerships. More information can be found on the [website](#).

WTO events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/meets_public/meets_e.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.

17 March: Negotiating Group on Rules – Regional Trade Agreements

17 March: Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration

18 March: Council for Trade in Services – Special Session

21 March: Council for Trade in Goods

22 March: Committee on Trade and Development – Special Session

23 March: Working Party on Domestic Regulation

Other upcoming events

25 March 2011, Geneva. TRADESIFT TRADE POLICY TRAINING COURSE. TradeSift is an innovative and powerful software tool designed to deliver highly cost effective trade policy analysis. It aids trade policy decision-making using readily available trade data, without recourse to complex and expensive economic modelling. The one-day Geneva course will comprise a demonstration of the capacities of TradeSift to aid the economic analysis of all aspects of trade policy analysis including RTA, unilateral and multilateral liberalisation and export market analysis using trade statistics from international and national sources at 6 digit level of disaggregation and beyond. This will be followed by 3 hours of hands-on training in the use of the software. The course will introduce TradeSift software and demonstrate its use in delivering rapid and reliable empirical analysis of trade policy choices at low cost in human resources, money and data. Further details about the software can be found [here](#).

Resources

INNOVATING FOR CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGY AND WINNING THE FUTURE. By Daniel Gagnier. International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2011. In his 2011 State of the Union Address, Barack Obama challenged Americans to “win the future” with innovation, including clean energy technology. Clean energy investments rose to record levels in 2010. Global investment in low-carbon technology reached \$243 billion in 2010, according to new research from Bloomberg New

Energy Finance. Judging by projections, world energy demand in light of demographic forecasts over the next 25 years will radically change the way in which we view our energy and fuel choices, with innovation and research forcing adaptation as jurisdictions seek security of supply, reliability of sources and competitive advantage for their economies. This paper is available for download [here](#).

TRADE INTEGRATION AS A WAY FORWARD FOR THE ARAB WORLD: A REGIONAL AGENDA. By Jean-Pierre Chauffour. World Bank, 1 February 2011. The current political turmoil for more open and participative societies in many Arab countries coupled with the emergence of new growth poles around the world could create the conditions for a big push toward greater regional and global trade integration of the Arab world. Further integrating Arab countries among themselves and opening up the region to the rest of the world are two complementary avenues to improve market access, promote behind-the-border regulatory reforms, facilitate cooperation on regional public goods, foster the emergence of an "Arab factory" through regional supply chains and productions networks, and eventually create the conditions for more and better paid jobs for the growing Arab workforce. An ambitious trade agenda regarding the Pan-Arab Free Trade Area would consist of (1) completing the free movement of goods within the Pan-Arab Free Trade Area, notably through the elimination of unnecessary non-tariff barriers; (2) implementing a regional initiative to liberalize services trade, including identifying a number of pilot service sectors for early regional liberalization; and (3) strengthening the rules and discipline applicable to regional trade and other policies of common interest. This paper is available for download [here](#).

DETERMINANTS OF BANK CREDIT IN EMERGING MARKET ECONOMIES. By Kai Guo and Vahram Stepanyan. International Monetary Fund, 1 March 2011. By examining changes in bank credit across a wide range of emerging market economies during the last decade, this rich time-series and cross-section information draws broader lessons compared to many existing researches that focus on a specific set of emerging market economies or on shorter

time periods. The results show that domestic and foreign funding contribute positively and symmetrically to credit growth. They also indicate that stronger economic growth leads to higher credit growth, and high inflation, while increasing nominal credit, is detrimental to real credit growth. This paper is available for purchase [here](#).
