

# BRIDGES WEEKLY

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## WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WTO Members Prepare for  
"Final Countdown" as  
Ministerial Looms ..... 1

### SERVICES

Services Talks Advance as TISA  
Members Prepare to Exchange  
Offers ..... 5

### INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

New IP Treaties in Focus as  
WIPO Annual Assemblies Kick  
Off ..... 7

### DISPUTES

Disputes Roundup: Plain  
Packaging Row Reignites;  
COOL Compliance Panel  
Established ..... 9

### IN BRIEF

Obama Presses for "Fast Track"  
Renewal ..... 11

US Agency Announces  
Proposed Limits on Power Plant  
Emissions ..... 12

WTO Scales Back Trade Growth  
Forecasts ..... 12

### EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events ..... 14

Resources ..... 16

## WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

# WTO Members Prepare for "Final Countdown" as Ministerial Looms

With just ten weeks to go until the WTO's ministerial conference in Bali, Indonesia, members have spent the month of September feverishly working in an effort to prepare a final set of deliverables in time for the December gathering. While the renewed pace of work is "inspiring," WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo reported on Monday, members must continue to "expedite our negotiations and work more intensely" in the remaining months ahead.

### Azevêdo: main Geneva negotiations should be done by end-October

WTO members have been engaged in an intense series of consultations during the past three weeks since Azevêdo formally took office as Director-General on 1 September. The meetings to date have been at three levels, addressing all of the Bali topics: trade facilitation, agriculture, and issues related to developing and least developed countries.

The first tier of consultations have been the so-called "Room E/D meetings," named for the rooms at Centre William Rappard in Geneva where these are held, where Azevêdo has convened approximately 50 ambassadors – accompanied by at most one technical official each – representing a range of interests and coalitions.

The first cycle of the new Room E/D format featured ten sessions, which were then followed by a meeting of senior officials from capitals on 19 September. Members then met in the context of the Trade Negotiations Committee this past Monday. The next cycle of Room E/D consultations is now already underway, with another TNC scheduled for 30 September.

While the work over the past few weeks has been "focused, precise, and business-like," Azevêdo warned WTO members at Monday's TNC that there is still a long way to go in order to clinch a deal in time for the December conference.

"From the week of 14 October onwards, we will be in final countdown mode to the end of the month," he said. "A frank assessment of the progress that has been made will be required – as well as setting the course for the final stretch of our path towards Bali."

Members should be ready to conclude the main part of their Geneva negotiations by late October, he added. "By then, we should be able to see the [Bali] landing zones."



International Centre for Trade  
and Sustainable Development

Delegates speaking to Bridges generally welcomed the escalation in pace of the negotiations, while cautioning that many differences remain at both political and technical levels.

"Members are more focused now – more than before – on Bali," a developed country delegate said. "But the question is how much will we be able to do?"

"Even if an outcome comes, it will be one with calibrated ambition," another delegate noted, given the limited time between now and the ministerial. "There will be a lot of compromise."

### **Trade facilitation**

The meetings this month have addressed all parts of the trade facilitation mandate, Azevêdo reported on Monday.

However, concerns still remain over how to resolve differences in Section 2 of the text, a notoriously contentious area that deals with flexibilities for developing countries. These countries have long been wary of taking on potentially "onerous" commitments that could prove difficult and costly to put into effect. Some developed countries, however, have stressed that obligations need to be binding in order for a trade facilitation pact to yield any benefits.

"This is the bargaining area," one trade official said. "It's a chicken-and-egg question – do you commit to the funding first, or do you commit to binding rules first with the expectation of then getting assistance."

Sources say that customs cooperation – technically part of "Section 1" of the trade facilitation draft text – is also proving to be particularly difficult. This is a "make-or-break" issue, one developing country delegate commented. Other tough issues include consularisation, transit, pre-shipment inspections, and customs brokers, the delegate added.

"If these issues – and Section 2 – are settled, dropped, or we reach some sort of compromise, I think trade facilitation could be done for Bali," the source said. "Otherwise, it would be hard to have an agreement."

There is also no consensus yet on whether and when to have a trade facilitation "signalling conference," where members openly submit definitive proposals for finalising the text, another source said, referring to an idea floated during earlier meetings in July. (See Bridges Weekly, [25 July 2013](#))

### **Agriculture: "peace clause" gains traction**

The proposal from the G-33 coalition for providing increased flexibility to developing countries for building food security stockpiles and domestic food aid has been the subject of "intensive consultations" in recent weeks, Azevêdo reported.

Notably, the idea of a "peace clause" – in other words, a due restraint mechanism that would prevent WTO members from launching disputes in a certain area – has continued to gain momentum. The proposed peace clause is one of a series of options that was presented in a "non-paper" earlier this month by a subset of the G-33. (See Bridges Weekly, [19 September 2013](#))

However, sources have said, there are still many open questions over how such a peace clause might work. For instance, whether it would be political or legally binding; what

timeframe would the clause be applicable for; what it would cover; and what would be a possible path to a long-term solution after Bali, among other issues.

"The devil is in the details," one delegate warned.

A proposal from the G-20 developing country coalition on export competition "remains sensitive," the Director-General reported, though members appear open to adopting some kind of outcome in Bali. Another proposal on the administration of tariff-rate quotas (TRQs) is facing difficulty over disagreements on its special and differential treatment (S&DT) provisions.

"This is a simple and straightforward proposal that most members tend to find well-calibrated and achievable," Azevêdo said. "I would hope that this could be done quickly so we can concentrate on the more complex agriculture issues."

### **Monitoring Mechanism advances; complications for "Cancún 28" proposals**

With regards to the development-related components of the proposed Bali package, discussions on the Monitoring Mechanism have reportedly advanced in recent weeks.

The so-called Monitoring Mechanism would review the functioning of provisions in WTO rules for S&DT treatment in favour of developing countries and potentially suggest improvements. However, sources say that questions remain over the mechanism's function – specifically, whether it will focus on reviewing the effectiveness of S&DT proposals, or instead on their implementation.

Other questions include the nature of the recommendations that the mechanism will be allowed to make to WTO bodies, and the mechanism's relationship with those same bodies.

Though the discussions on a Monitoring Mechanism appear to be progressing, sources say that the Cancún 28 proposals appear to no longer be on the table.

The Cancún 28 are a series of proposals on special and differential treatment that were agreed in principle – though not "harvested" – at the WTO's fifth ministerial conference in Cancún in 2003. Over the past several months, WTO members had been reviewing which of the proposals could be adopted as is, and which would require updating. However, sources say that the LDC Group and the African Group have now asked that the 28 proposals be considered for adoption together as a single package.

"It was a bit of a surprise," one developed country delegate remarked. "Our view is that, if something is meaningful, and commercially also valuable, then it should be doable to work on as many issues as possible."

Another delegate familiar with the African and LDC Group discussions explained that, upon review, the groups had decided to push for the Cancún 28 proposals to be adopted as a whole in order to ensure that those proposals with the most economic value are adopted.

Disagreements among members over which proposals to adopt, and which to revise or push back to after-Bali, prompted the LDC and African Group's positions.

"These were already compromises," the delegate explained, referring to the negotiations prior to the 2003 Cancún ministerial. "We don't want to cherry-pick and end up with something valueless."

While the Director-General has said that the issue "is not necessarily closed" as far as he is concerned, some delegates expressed scepticism that the Cancún 28 proposals will be on the table for Bali.

"It's not going to happen," one said. "We've dropped it in the Bali context."

#### **LDC issues: revised rules-of-origin proposal tabled**

Proposals from the LDC Group on cotton and on operationalizing the services waiver are still forthcoming, sources say. However, differences within the group on duty-free, quota-free market access currently remain unresolved, given the fear of some least developed countries of preference erosion.

The LDC Group has submitted a revised proposal on rules-of-origin, which was reportedly well-received by many members.

"These are now in the form of guidelines, rather than a draft decision," one delegate familiar with the proposal explained, adding that this helped make it more acceptable to members who had previously opposed it.

ICTSD reporting.

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## SERVICES

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# Services Talks Advance as TISA Members Prepare to Exchange Offers

Negotiations for a plurilateral agreement on services trade advanced in Geneva last week, sources confirmed to Bridges, with members making "substantial" progress on the deal's draft text. The group has also set November as the date when members will exchange initial market access offers, with the US and Japan already presenting theirs this month.

The group, known as the "Real Good Friends" of services, began discussions on a possible plurilateral services pact over a year ago, given that multilateral negotiations on the subject within the WTO have long been stalled. The planned deal is known as the "Trade in Services Agreement," or TISA.

The group's momentum and membership have both grown since the original talks began in early 2012, with 23 members now involved in the initiative – up from the original sixteen. Paraguay and Liechtenstein are the latest to have joined the RGF, which as a group represents over 70 percent of global trade in services.

### Core provisions of draft text "stabilised"

Members of the group made "good progress" on the draft TISA text last week, one source confirmed to Bridges, with another noting that the core provisions have now been relatively stabilised, despite some remaining sticking points. Members also held discussions last week on areas such as temporary entry, professional services, maritime, and financial services.

Sources say that the group has tried to keep the text as similar to the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) as possible, given the wish of later expanding the agreement to include other WTO members. However, the group is also looking to bring the services-related advances made in bilateral and regional deals into the TISA text in some way, given that there are currently over 100 preferential agreements with provisions on services.

Even while building on the GATS, one official stressed, "we're not creating any animal too dissimilar to the [WTO agreement]. We want it to be something that others can recognise and see the value of."

### Market access offers expected in November

Two initial market access offers have already been tabled this month, sources confirmed to Bridges, with the US submitting its offer a few weeks prior to last week's meeting, and Japan submitting its own shortly thereafter.

"There was a very positive reception to the US and Japanese offers," one source said, noting that the offer from Tokyo was of particularly high ambition. The US offer, while also "strong," did not include financial services or Mode 4, where services are provided by foreign nationals abroad, the source added.

Another official explained that the US offer appears to be a partial one. However, the timing of the US offer, the official added, "came a little bit as a surprise" to some

members, given the understanding among the group that they would first stabilise the TISA text before proceeding with an exchange of offers.

The rest of the group is expected to "do their best" to exchange their offers during the month of November. Members will then analyse the offers over the coming months, with plans to discuss them during a round in February.

The group is also set to meet during the week of 4 November to discuss the sectoral part of the text, now that the horizontal part has been stabilised. Market access offers will not be discussed at that meeting.

Though members are now at the stage of exchanging initial offers, multiple sources speaking to Bridges stressed that it is still far too early to predict when the negotiations might be completed, given that much work remains on resolving both market access issues and new and enhanced disciplines.

"We'll need a fair bit of work to close those off," one said.

### **China interest?**

China, which had previously been among the WTO members to question the systemic implications of plurilateral initiatives such as the TISA, has now expressed interest in joining the group, sources told Bridges.

According to the Financial Times, Chinese and US officials have met repeatedly over the past few weeks to discuss the possibility of Beijing taking part in the TISA talks. Washington officials, while interested, are reportedly concerned over whether bringing in a member with such strong interests as China could serve to lower the ambition of the current negotiations.

Whether or not Beijing will become part of the Real Good Friends will depend on if the whole group agrees, as new members to such trade initiatives are usually agreed by consensus.

"We still need to see how we deal with such requests, how it matches with the level of ambition [of the Real Good Friends]," one delegate familiar with the Chinese request said. "We're certainly interested, certainly talking to China to see what's driving them and how they're interested."

RGF members have stressed that the group is open to any who wish to participate, as long as they match the level of ambition of the current participants.

### **More information**

The 23 WTO members currently in the RGF group are Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the EU, Hong Kong, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, and the US.

ICTSD reporting; "China in push to join US-led \$4tn services trade talks," FINANCIAL TIMES, 23 September 2013.

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## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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# New IP Treaties in Focus as WIPO Annual Assemblies Kick Off

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) kicked off its annual high-level meetings – known as Assemblies – in Geneva on Monday, with delegates from the UN body's 186 member states set to spend the next week tackling the organisation's activities and budget for the upcoming years, including next steps for two proposed treaties.

This year's Assemblies comes just months after the organisation signed off on a landmark treaty aimed at facilitating access to copyright protected works by visually impaired persons. (See Bridges Weekly, [4 July 2013](#)) The "Marrakesh treaty," as it is informally known, was welcomed by most countries at this week's meetings as a momentous achievement in WIPO's recent history.

In his opening [remarks](#), WIPO Director General Francis Gurry urged members not to forget the shared desire from Marrakesh to ensure that the "constructive cooperation" which brought the treaty to a close would "find expression in the future normative agenda of WIPO."

In this regard, Gurry highlighted a few items that could qualify as "approaching maturity." The first potential treaty would provide protection for genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions, based on work that has been carried out for more than a decade by WIPO's Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC).

The IGC was created in 2000 to respond to concerns by biodiversity-rich countries and indigenous communities about the misappropriation of their genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. The committee has spent much of the last year dealing with each of these three areas in separate thematic sessions, after countries agreed at the 2012 Assemblies to extend the IGC's mandate in this area. (See Bridges Weekly, [10 October 2012](#))

"It is of the utmost importance to bring this work to a satisfactory conclusion," Gurry urged, adding that the process so far has been both long and difficult.

In their statements, developing countries expressed their desire to see the IGC's mandate "improved and extended" and asked that a diplomatic conference – the highest level of negotiations at WIPO – be convened within the next two years.

Developed countries have been less enthusiastic about a possible treaty in this area. The US, for instance, warned this week that considerations on a diplomatic conference are premature, given that IGC members are far from reaching an agreement on the most fundamental aspects of the texts under discussion. The EU, for its part, stressed that any international instrument in this area should be "non-binding and flexible."

The second proposed treaty would see to the creation of more simplified and accessible procedures for obtaining protection for industrial designs. While several countries have welcomed the idea of a diplomatic conference for adopting this proposed treaty, a number of developing countries have argued that the pact must include a provision that specifically addresses technical assistance and capacity building.

In its intervention earlier this week, India recommended that WIPO include technology transfer as "part of its norm-setting agenda."

"While states are mandated to protect intellectual property, transfer of technology at the industrial level is largely ungoverned," India explained. "It is therefore desirable to have a norm-setting regime on technology transfer which will provide some structure and enable better governance of technology transfer between parties."

In addition to future norm-setting activities, the approval of the organisation's annual budget is an outstanding issue that delegates will need to resolve in the coming days. Discussions will focus on procedures for establishing new WIPO external offices, as well as on the definition of "development expenditure," which determines how much of the organisation's budget is directed towards development activities.

### **Innovation in focus at new WIPO Forum**

Finally, a WIPO Forum with "Game-Changing Innovators" was held for the first time during this year's Assemblies, in the context of the organisation's efforts aiming at raising awareness about the importance of innovation. During the forum, four world-renowned innovators from different fields shared their experiences with country delegations.

In response to the forum, developing country members of the Development Agenda Group stressed that while such parallel events were important, "they should not affect the substantive discussions among member states unless there is a decision on this subject."

A number of NGOs have expressed concerns that the forum did not "feature the significant issues of users (e.g. patients, consumers, visually impaired, students), particularly the challenges of access that prevail in the developing world."

For their part, developed countries welcomed the event as a "first step towards a more comprehensive approach to industry within the WIPO framework."

ICTSD reporting.



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## DISPUTES

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# Disputes Roundup: Plain Packaging Row Reignites; COOL Compliance Panel Established

The row over Australia's controversial plain packaging legislation for tobacco products has reignited over the past week, with Indonesia becoming the measure's latest challenger. Honduras' own WTO dispute on the subject reached the panel stage yesterday. Separately, a panel has now been established to evaluate whether the US' amended country-of-origin labelling (COOL) law is in compliance with the global trade arbiter's recommendations.

### **Jakarta challenges Canberra tobacco measure**

Australia's Plain Packaging Act is now facing its fifth WTO challenge, after Indonesia formally filed a request for consultations last Friday.

The Australian legislation at issue requires that tobacco products be sold in a standardised, single-colour, logo-free package, with health warnings covering a significant portion. The law was introduced in 2011, though tobacco companies were given until December 2012 to make the necessary changes in their production.

Canberra officials have repeatedly defended the controversial legislation as being "anti-cancer, not anti-trade," though the measure's challengers have raised concerns that the law could harm their local industries and potentially violate international trade rules.

Under WTO rules, Indonesia and Australia must now conduct consultations for at least 60 days to see if they could come up with a mutually agreeable solution; if none is found, Jakarta can then request that a WTO panel review the case.

According to International Trade Centre (ITC) [statistics](#), Indonesia ranks sixth among manufactured-tobacco exporting countries, and accounts for 2.8 percent of the world's total cigarette exports. Jakarta has already defended its clove cigarettes industry in the past at the global trade arbiter, with the WTO granting it a victory in an unrelated dispute against the US. (See Bridges Weekly, [5 September 2013](#))

Ukraine, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba ([DS434](#), [DS435](#), [DS441](#), and [DS458](#) respectively), have already filed similar WTO complaints against Australia, alleging that the measure at issue appears to be inconsistent with Canberra's obligations with regards to intellectual property rights and technical barriers to trade. The second panel request of the Dominican Republic is pending, and Cuba's request is still at the consultations stage.

A panel has been established in the disputes initiated by Ukraine and Honduras, with the latter advancing to the panel stage this past Wednesday. Sources say that Australia, with the support of New Zealand, attempted to reject the second Honduran panel request this week, arguing that there had been a "considerable lapse of time" – over ten months – since Tegucigalpa's first request. However, most members disagreed with the Australian position, allowing the panel to be established.

Under WTO rules, a respondent may reject a first panel request; however, a panel must automatically be established upon second request, unless all members agree otherwise.

### **COOL compliance panel established**

The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) also agreed this week to establish a compliance panel in the country of origin labelling (COOL) disputes, following the second requests of Canada and Mexico ([DS384](#) and [DS386](#), respectively). The first requests were blocked by the US last month. (See Bridges Weekly, [5 September 2013](#))

The compliance panel will determine whether the amended COOL measure is in line with Washington's WTO obligations, following the Appellate Body's 2012 ruling that found the original measure to be in violation of international trade rules. Canada and Mexico have complained that the changes the US introduced in order to comply with the ruling are actually more trade-restrictive and discriminatory than the original policy.

In a separate development earlier this month, a US domestic court denied the request of a coalition of meat and livestock organisations for a preliminary injunction against enforcing the amended COOL rule. One of the plaintiffs, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, has already promised to appeal the court's decision.

"The cost of COOL to Canadian producers and industry is unacceptable and we will continue until a viable remedy is reached," the group [said](#).

### **Panel established in Colombia-Panama textiles case**

A panel is also set to hear Panama's complaint against Colombia regarding Bogota's tariff and customs measures on imports of certain textiles, apparel, and footwear ([DS461](#)).

The compound tariff at issue, which entered into force in March for a one-year period, consists of both an ad valorem levy – expressed as a percentage of the customs value of the goods – and a specific levy, expressed in units of currency per unit of measurement. The two are applied simultaneously.

Panama City argues that this compound tariff exceeds the Bogotá's bound levels in its tariff schedule for such products, and that it is not applied to imports originating from countries with which the latter has free trade agreements in force.

This is the third dispute between the two countries regarding the latter's customs measures on similar categories of products. The first dispute ([DS348](#)) dates back to 2006, and was settled through a mutually agreed solution. The second ([DS366](#)) advanced to the panel stage, with the panel report adopted in 2009.

Following Wednesday's DSB meeting, sources told Bridges that Panama had suggested that Colombia impose a cap on its applied duties, in order to guarantee that they do not exceed those provided in its tariff schedule.

ICTSD reporting.

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## IN BRIEF

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# Obama Presses for “Fast Track” Renewal

US President Barack Obama publicly called last week for Congress to renew “trade promotion authority,” as Washington works to finalise the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) talks in the months ahead and ramps up its negotiations for a separate deal with the EU.

“We’re going to need trade promotion authority through Congress,” Obama [said](#) at a meeting of the President’s Export Council in Washington last Thursday. “And this is an area where, so far at least, [Senate Minority Leader] Mitch McConnell says he’s for it, and that’s good. And so we may be able to get some good bipartisan support to get that done.”

Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), otherwise known as “fast track” expired in 2007, and last applied to the US’ bilateral pacts with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama, which were signed that year and ratified in 2011. The legislation allows the executive branch to submit trade deals to Congress for straight up-or-down votes without any amendments.

Though Obama did not actively pursue “fast track” during his first term, momentum has now been building toward renewing the legislation, given the Administration’s shared goal with fellow TPP members to clinch a trade deal by year’s end. The US is also in the early stages of negotiating a pact with the EU, which officials hope to complete by late 2014.

However, a new fast track bill is still being negotiated by the top members of the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means committees, according to Politico, and has yet to be tabled for consideration.

Suggestions by some Democrats that “fast track” be linked to trade adjustment assistance – a provision that helps workers displaced by trade – has also been traditionally unpopular with Republicans, which pundits say could pose further stumbling blocks for passing TPA this year.

ICTSD reporting; “Path to Obama trade authority faces possible detour,” POLITICO, 6 September 2013; “President Obama speaks out on Trade Promotion Authority,” POLITICO, 19 September 2013.

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## US Agency Announces Proposed Limits on Power Plant Emissions

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released on Friday its proposal to cap the level of carbon emissions from new power plants. The draft regulations are a follow-up to the Obama Administration's climate action plan, which outlined a series of executive actions aimed at combatting climate change. (See Bridges Weekly, [27 June 2013](#))

Under the proposed regulations, any new power plant that runs on coal can only emit 1100 pounds of carbon dioxide per megawatt-hour – a fraction of what current plants emit. The most efficient plants release an estimated 1700 to 1900 pounds per megawatt-hour, in comparison. Large natural gas-fired plants, meanwhile, would be limited to 1000 pounds per megawatt-hour, and smaller plants to 1100.

The US has a "moral obligation to the next generation" to protect the environment, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy [said](#) in announcing the rules. The limits are a "necessary step to address a public health challenge."

Coal companies, however, are reportedly considering possible legal challenges against the US government agency, claiming it is illegal for the EPA to require the use of a new technology not yet proven to be commercially viable. These companies also argue that the modifications they will need to make to implement the rules could be prohibitively costly.

Environmental groups, for their part, say that the new proposal is a step in the right direction, and have urged the Obama Administration to impose additional protections.

ICTSD reporting; "Analysis: U.S. industry sees carbon-capture as legal chink in EPA rules," REUTERS, 20 September 2013; "Challenges Await Plan to Reduce Emissions," THE NEW YORK TIMES, 20 September 2013.

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## WTO Scales Back Trade Growth Forecasts

World trade growth in 2013 and 2014 is likely to be slower than previously forecast, the WTO announced last week. However, the global trade body says, conditions for improved trade are gradually falling into place.

The new estimates set 2013 growth at 2.5 percent, down from the 3.3 percent forecast in April. (See Bridges Weekly, [18 April 2013](#)) Next year, growth is now expected to hit 4.5 percent, rather than the original 5 percent. The revisions are due to fears of a slowdown in some emerging economies, weaker import demand from developing countries than expected, and the effects of the prolonged eurozone crisis.

WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo also cited trade restrictions specifically as among the reasons for the revised figures, while adding that trade growth could see significant

boosts if WTO members succeed in concluding a deal at the organisation's upcoming ministerial conference in Bali, Indonesia this December.

"Much hard work remains in the coming weeks if we are to deliver a successful outcome at the ministerial conference in Bali," the Director-General said, while praising members' commitment to the talks. "The past two years of sluggish trade growth reinforce the need to make progress in the multilateral negotiation," he added. (For more on the Bali preparations, see the lead story in this week's issue.)

Notably, the new data did show promising signs of resurgence in advanced economies, such as Europe, the US, and Japan, along with emerging economies such as China, though India is still facing a strong contraction. Such improvements could bode well for growth in the upcoming quarters, WTO economists said.

ICTSD reporting.

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## EVENTS & RESOURCES

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# Events

### Coming soon

30 September, London, UK. THE US ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION'S 2013 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY OUTLOOK. This event, hosted by Chatham House, will focus on projections of world energy demand by region and primary energy source through 2040, electricity generation by energy source, and energy-related carbon dioxide emissions. The speaker – Adam Sieminski, Administrator of the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) – will discuss the agency's view on long-term petroleum and other liquid fuel supplies, prospects for global gas markets, energy demand growth among developing nations, and key uncertainties that may alter long-term projections. More information is available at the event [website](#).

1 October, Geneva, Switzerland. CLIMATE RELATED STANDARDS AND GREEN ECONOMY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA AND EAST AFRICA. This event, co-organised by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) and the Swedish Standards Institute during the WTO Public Forum, aims to raise awareness about the obstacles and opportunities for developing countries that wish to adopt and use international standards, and how these could positively or negatively impact the global trade market. In particular, this session aims to explore how international standards can improve export opportunities rather than hinder them, as well as the evolution of climate-related standards and the WTO's role in these issues. For more information please visit ICTSD's [website](#).

2 October, Geneva, Switzerland. PROMOTING INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT IN LDCs: AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK. This event, co-organised by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) and the IDEAS Centre during the WTO Public Forum, will focus on how new trends affect the dynamics of innovation in least developed countries (LDCs); what policy framework could help foster technology that would enhance trade and investment; and how current intellectual property regimes in LDCs can be improved to boost these countries' capacity to innovate. For more innovation, please visit ICTSD's [website](#).

3 October, Geneva, Switzerland. EXPLORING THE TRADE AND INNOVATION NEXUS. This event, co-organised by the Evian Group@IMD and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) during the WTO Public Forum, will focus on whether the current WTO agreements adequately address innovation as an overarching public policy objective of both national governments and the private sector, and what additional actions could be incorporated into future WTO provisions to support global and national innovation efforts. For more information, including a list of event speakers, click [here](#).

3-4 October, Geneva, Switzerland. UNCTAD-GEI WORKSHOP ON REGULATING CAPITAL FLOW. This event, sponsored by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and Boston University's Global Governance Initiative will bring together policy-makers, negotiators, and experts to examine the efficacy of the current regime for governing global capital flows. Participants will assess the rationale for capital account regulations and best practices for their use, and discuss the global economic governance structures needed for facilitating the proper regulation of cross-border finance. The two-day workshop will feature experts from various trading, financial, and economic research organisations. For more information, please click [here](#).

## 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.

27 September: Committee on Customs Valuation

1-3 October: WTO Public Forum

## Other Upcoming Events

16 October, Des Moines, US. THE GLOBAL HARVEST INITIATIVE 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GAP REPORT RELEASE AND LUNCHEON. This event, hosted by the Global Harvest Initiative (GHI) will focus on a new analysis of productivity along agricultural value chains needed to sustainably meet the demands of the growing and changing world population. The event, which will feature expert speakers from various agricultural sectors, will be streamed live online for those unable to join in person. For more information on the release and live stream, please visit the Global Harvest Initiative [website](#).

17 October, London, UK. CHINA-EU RELATIONS: MOVING BEYOND TRADE. This event, hosted by Chatham House, will focus on the China-EU trading relationship, particularly in the context of the new leadership now in place in Beijing. Panellists will evaluate where this bilateral relationship currently stands, and the prospects for deepening political and strategic cooperation in the areas of economy, trade, and the environment in the coming years. For more information, please visit the Chatham House [website](#).

14 November, Mexico City, Mexico. GCI MEXICO: BOOSTING NORTH AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS. The Global Cities Initiative's (GCI) second annual global forum will bring together private, public, and philanthropic sector leaders from Central Mexico to discuss efforts at boosting North American trade, productivity, and competitiveness. The forum will also feature political and industry leaders from Mexico, Canada, and the US, who will address business and policy linkages and ways to advance their global trading relationships. For more information visit the GCI [website](#).

10-12 July 2014, Bern, Switzerland. THE FOURTH BIENNIAL GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW (SIEL). This event, hosted by the University of Bern's World Trade Institute (WTI) will focus on the theme: "Regulatory Challenges in International Economic Law: Convergence or Divergence?" The committee members are currently seeking proposals for paper presentations, posters, and conference panels that address this issue along with the overarching topic of international economic law. The call for papers, along with more information about the event, is available [here](#).

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## Resources

UKRAINE'S CHOICE: EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT OR EURASIAN UNION? By Anders Åslund for the Peterson Institute for International Economics (September 2013). In this policy brief, the author analyses the current controversy over Ukraine's plan to sign an Association Agreement with the EU this November, in the context of Kiev's and Brussels' relationships with Moscow. Åslund argues that Europe, Ukraine, and Russia all share the blame for creating the current impasse, suggesting that Ukraine should improve its macroeconomic policies to reduce its vulnerability and also comply with all EU demands, and that Russia should acknowledge that it is not in its national interest to force countries to join its Customs Union, which does not offer Ukraine any significant benefits. The full paper is available [online](#).

AGRICULTURAL POLICY MONITORING AND EVALUATION 2013. Published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (September 2013). This report covers agricultural policy developments in OECD member countries and a range of emerging economies which are key players on agro-food markets: Brazil, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Russia, South Africa and Ukraine. This report provides both up-to-date estimates of support to agriculture in the OECD area and individual chapters on agricultural policy developments in OECD countries and selected emerging economies. The full report is available [online](#).

TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT REVIEW 2013. Published by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (September 2013). This analysis features contributions from over 60 international experts, who analyse the challenges and the most suitable strategic approaches for dealing holistically with the inter-related problems of hunger and poverty, rural livelihoods, social and gender inequity, poor health and nutrition, and climate change and environmental sustainability. The full report is available [online](#).



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