

# BRIDGES WEEKLY

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## WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

### WTO Ag Talks: Negotiators Close to Final Bali Deal

Trade officials are close to clinching a final deal on agriculture for the WTO's ninth ministerial conference in Bali, Indonesia, sources confirmed to Bridges this week. However, a few key issues remain to be resolved in the coming days and could still affect the final outcome for the December conference, they warned.

Intense talks through the weekend and in the first part of this week saw negotiators strive for a breakthrough ahead of a planned General Council meeting, which had originally been scheduled for today and has now been postponed until further notice.

Yesterday morning, at a "room W" meeting open to all delegations, negotiators largely indicated they could accept new agriculture draft texts as a basis for consensus at the ministerial, although some did indicate that they still had some reservations or wished to check on their position with their capitals. Some also emphasised that any final agreement would be conditional to progress on other issues beyond agriculture.

The revised texts include a draft "peace clause" on public food stockholding, likely to take the form of a ministerial decision, and a draft declaration that would exempt from WTO ceilings certain subsidies that cause only minimal trade distortion.

They also include what is likely to be another draft declaration on export subsidies and equivalent measures, and a draft "understanding" on tariff rate quota administration – aimed at simplifying import licensing procedures for firms that export farm goods.

#### Import procedures: unexpected controversy

Sources told Bridges that the talks on tariff rate quota administration had sparked heated discussion in recent days – even though officials had previously expected negotiations in this area to be among the more straightforward in the Bali package.

The G-20 developing country group had last year proposed that developed countries ease market access in cases where import quotas persistently remained unfilled: however, the US in particular had expressed concern that the draft text would exempt developing countries such as China from similar obligations. (See Bridges Weekly, [3 October 2012](#))



International Centre for Trade  
and Sustainable Development

Washington and Beijing have now largely overcome their differences on this subject, by creating a special list that would allow developed countries to opt out from providing enhanced market access under the new rules after the WTO's twelfth ministerial conference, set to be held in 2019. This new compromise text had raised fresh concerns in other developing countries, however. While the US is the only one currently seeking to be on this list, some G-20 members were reportedly worried that other developed countries, such as Japan, could follow suit.

"People can live with it if the US is there," said one source, who warned that developing countries may not feel comfortable with the compromise if other developed countries now choose to join them.

However, Japan told yesterday's meeting that – although it was not happy with the arrangement – it would join consensus on the draft text as long as countries could conclude an ambitious deal on trade facilitation. Other developed country members such as Canada, the EU, Norway and Switzerland also said they would not join the US in opting out of the post-2019 requirements.

### **Food stocks: "peace clause" to apply until 2017**

Negotiators are also close to reaching a deal that would see WTO members agree to refrain from bringing trade disputes on food stockholding schemes that could cause developing countries to exceed current ceilings on trade-distorting farm subsidies, in exchange for more information and transparency about how these programmes function.

India, supported by other developing countries in the G-33 coalition, has been adamant that WTO farm subsidy rules should be updated to account for price inflation since thresholds for measuring support were agreed some twenty years ago. New Delhi is keen to ensure it can purchase food at administered prices when implementing its recently-approved food security law, and that it will be able to do so without sparking legal challenges in Geneva. (See Bridges Weekly, [12 September 2013](#) and [17 October 2013](#), respectively)

Many developed countries have nonetheless expressed concern that countries should not be allowed to provide unlimited amounts of trade-distorting farm subsidies to build public food stockpiles – with some developing countries also worried that the proposal could undermine their own farmers' livelihoods and food security if proper safeguards are not included.

At yesterday's meeting, Pakistan, Thailand, Ecuador, and Uruguay expressed fears that the duration and product coverage outlined in the draft text were too expansive. India warned against upsetting the "delicate balance" reflected in the text as currently drafted, while Bolivia and Cuba spoke in support.

According to the latest draft text, the new agreement would remain in force until the global trade body's eleventh ministerial conference in 2017: governments would then "decide on next steps" on the basis of a report from the General Council, and the outcome of a work programme on this issue aimed at making recommendations for a permanent solution.

The previous draft text, issued two weeks ago, had contained two discrete options – either a permanent solution or an end date, which was not defined.

Trade sources also told Bridges that negotiators in Geneva had scrambled to resuscitate an outline deal on food stocks that seemed to have been placed in jeopardy following a letter from Indian commerce minister Anand Sharma to his US counterpart Michael Froman.

The letter – [reported](#) by Reuters in New Delhi, seemingly before a copy had reached Washington – cautioned that the proposed outline deal “falls well short of our requirements and would place onerous conditions which would restrict its use significantly.”

#### **Revised text: cautious optimism**

Nonetheless, negotiators familiar with the talks in this area told Bridges they were cautiously optimistic that a deal could be reached on the basis of a revised text, barring any last-minute surprises.

Draft texts circulated on Monday and Tuesday had removed an earlier reference proposing a limit on the number of traditional staple food crops that would be covered by the deal.

They also included new language on “anti-circumvention” and safeguards aimed at avoiding trade distortion.

This now specifies that developing countries relying on the new peace clause agreement ought to ensure that stocks procured under these programmes “do not distort trade.”

Sources familiar with the talks in this area told Bridges that an earlier proposal to exempt these farm subsidies from rules under the WTO’s agreement on subsidies and countervailing measures had ultimately not been included.

Another clause would commit countries to refrain from increasing trade-distorting support in other areas to take advantage of the special treatment being granted to food stockholding programmes.

#### **New “general services” schemes to be recognised**

There were minimal changes to a separate text which clarifies that a number of support programmes should be included in the WTO’s “green box” – intended to cover farm subsidy measures that are exempt from any ceiling on the grounds that they cause no more than minimal trade distortion.

Developing countries had pressed for recognition of these programmes, arguing that the current rules mostly reflected the types of programmes that developed countries use. However, the proposal had not generated much controversy among WTO members.

The new language would cover general services programmes related to land reform and rural livelihood security, such as land rehabilitation; soil conservation and resource management; drought management and flood control; rural employment; issuance of property titles; and farmer settlement programmes.

#### **Export subsidies and similar measures**

The G-20 developing country group had also proposed that ministers agree to cut ceilings on export subsidies and other measures with equivalent effects, as a step towards the goal of eliminating these payments. At the WTO’s Hong Kong ministerial conference in 2005, governments had agreed that all such subsidies would have ended this year.

The latest drafts would commit WTO members to “ensure, to the maximum extent possible,” that progress is maintained towards the elimination of all forms of export subsidies and other measures with equivalent effects. It would similarly commit members to keep these measures “significantly below” current commitments.

A new annex also spells out in detail “elements for enhanced transparency” that would form the basis of a WTO secretariat questionnaire for members. This would be used to inform an annual discussion in the Committee on Agriculture.

However, sources said that Argentina, which has consistently argued in favour of an ambitious outcome in this negotiating area, remains concerned that the draft text tabled to date is still too weak.

### **General Council meeting postponed**

Trade sources told Bridges that a move to postpone today's General Council meeting was not a sign of any unexpected hiccup in the process. Instead, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevedo had decided to focus negotiators' efforts on achieving progress in parallel talks on trade facilitation.

Some sources have suggested that the General Council meeting – which was meant to be a final deadline for concluding the Geneva-based ministerial preparations – could now be rescheduled for sometime this weekend or early next week.

“The Director-General clearly feels he can pull this all together,” one source said, who admitted there were “a few wrinkles that still need to be ironed out.”

“There's a very fragile equilibrium, and the delegates are conscious of that,” another negotiator said.

However, several sources told Bridges that the bulk of the negotiations on agriculture had now largely been completed, barring any unexpected surprises at the ministerial.

Meetings on trade facilitation are likely to resume in the coming days, having been in a “holding pattern” for most of this week, a negotiator said. Sources familiar with those negotiations note that various difficulties still remain, particularly involving Section 2, which deals with implementation flexibilities for developing countries.

Some elements of Section 1, such as transit, also remain open and require significant work, one source said. While there have been some reductions in brackets in that section, which deals with the commitments that WTO members will take on to ease customs procedures and expedite trade flows, one source attributed these to “proponents reducing their ambition, rather than achieving compromise.”

“It certainly got people a bit concerned as to where things are tracking,” the source commented, while adding that last week's agreement on customs cooperation did remove a major roadblock.

ICTSD reporting; “India warns US over food stockpiling as WTO deal goes down to wire,” REUTERS, 13 November 2013.

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## WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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# ITA Expansion Talks Make Final Bali Push; GPA Ratification Set for 2014

Talks to finalise a list of products to add to the WTO's Information Technology Agreement (ITA) have now been extended through the end of this week, in the hopes of giving participants more time to clinch a deal ahead of next month's ministerial conference in Bali, Indonesia. Separately, sources confirm that the process to bring the revised WTO Government Procurement Agreement into force – while making some headway in recent weeks – will not be completed ahead of the December gathering.

### **"Final" ITA expansion round extended through week's end**

The Information Technology Agreement is a plurilateral pact under the aegis of the WTO, and fully eliminates tariffs on a list of information and communication technology (ICT) products. Though the agreement's commitments bind only those members that have signed onto it – a list that numbers 50 – its benefits are extended to the full WTO membership.

The original ITA was concluded in 1996, and entered into force the following year. The process to update the agreement's coverage began in mid-2012, when a group of ITA participants presented a concept paper calling for an expansion of the pact's product list and membership in an effort to reflect the changes in trade over the last two decades – such as the development of new technologies, or the fact that some of the original ITA products are now obsolete.

There are now 25 of the ITA's 50 signatories negotiating the expansion. Getting the remaining ITA participants to sign onto the final list will likely be a process for after the ministerial, sources say.

The latest round of ITA expansion negotiations – which is meant to be the final one – was slated to end yesterday. However, sources involved in the negotiations confirmed that additional time is now needed in order to resolve outstanding differences with China – the world's largest top exporter of ICT goods – over its list of product "sensitivities."

The ITA expansion talks had been suspended in July due to an earlier standoff with Beijing on the subject, resuming in late October. (See Bridges Weekly, [31 October 2013](#)) At the time, the length of the list of products that Beijing wanted excluded from the pact's coverage was deemed untenable by some members, such as the US.

According to a [blog post](#) by Information Technology Industry Council CEO John Neuffer, the list that Beijing released during this week's negotiations still marks approximately 140 product lines – out of the 250 being considered for the expansion – as "sensitive," with Beijing asking that over 60 products be removed entirely from consideration and that the others have long tariff phase-out times.

Despite these difficulties, the past several days of discussions have yielded some progress in other areas, one delegate involved in the talks confirmed.

"There have been some shifts in position, and difficult decisions, made by some," the delegate said, adding that the group negotiating the expansion is still hoping to "make it across the line" for Bali.

**Revised GPA: Entry into force expected in early 2014**

Sources say that the revised Government Procurement Agreement, or GPA – an outcome of the WTO's last ministerial conference in Geneva in 2011 – is now likely to enter into force during the first quarter of 2014. Members of the Government Procurement Committee, which is tasked with administering the agreement, had previously hoped to bring the new version of the pact into force in time for the Bali conference.

The agreement – also a WTO plurilateral – commits members to certain core disciplines regarding transparency, competition, and good governance, covering the procurement of goods, services, and capital infrastructure by public authorities.

To date, the committee has received instruments of ratification from Canada, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Chinese Taipei. While the EU, US, Korea, and Hong Kong are also expected to ratify the pact in time for Bali, that number will still fall just short of the two-thirds "critical" mass needed to bring the deal into force.

Even though GPA members will not be able to announce the deal's ratification in time for the ministerial conference, sources have confirmed that a ministerial-level meeting of the Government Procurement Committee will indeed take place in Bali. At that time, any new accessions to the plurilateral pact will be announced, and participants will also provide an update on ratification procedures and plans for the committee's future work.

With regards to accessions, sources say that New Zealand – and potentially Montenegro – might be ready to join the GPA's 15 participants in Bali. However, China – with its vast government procurement market – has not yet tabled the revised GPA offer that it had promised for the end of this year; when such an offer will come is not yet clear.

ICTSD reporting.

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## PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS

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# US-EU Trade Talks “Back on Track,” Officials Say

Negotiators for the planned US-EU trade agreement concluded their second round of talks last week in Brussels, with officials from both sides reporting “good and steady progress.” With the discussions reportedly back on their original timetable after a brief delay in October, both parties are now aiming to make enough headway in the talks to hold a political review in early 2014.

“I am glad to see that we are now fully back on track with the EU-US trade talks,” said EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht on Friday, with his US counterpart, Michael Froman, similarly [noting](#) that the discussions were both “successful and productive.”

This week's discussions focused primarily on regulations and investment, as well as services, energy, and raw materials. Due to scheduling difficulties, some meetings have also been occurring over videoconference, touching on issues such as intellectual property rights, small and medium enterprises, and competition policy. Future videoconferences are expected to tackle issues such as tariffs, labour, and environment.

Upcoming rounds, officials said, are likely to feature text-based discussions – underscoring the interest on both sides to move the talks forward quickly. Since the talks were first announced, officials from both sides have said that they want to achieve an ambitious agreement while following a rapid timetable.

The first round was held in Washington in July, just a month after the negotiations were launched, and dealt primarily with how the talks should be structured, as well as isolating any potential areas of convergence. (See Bridges Weekly, [18 July 2013](#)) This second round – held in Brussels – had originally been scheduled for 7-11 October, before the partial US government shutdown forced them to be rescheduled. A third round of talks is already planned for the week of 16 December in Washington.

### De Gucht: Keep “eye on the prize”

The pact has been touted as having major potential for creating new jobs and driving growth on both sides of the Atlantic, particularly given the continued struggles each party has faced in getting back on their feet following the financial crisis.

Just this week, the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [cut](#) its previous global growth forecasts for next year, due partly to the “lagging and uneven recovery” in the eurozone and to how close the US came to breaching its debt ceiling in October, along with the slowdown being seen in some emerging economies.

A European Commission study has suggested that the deal, once completed, could add €119 billion and €95 billion annually to the EU and US economies, respectively, with much of these gains coming from removing non-tariff barriers – particularly in the areas of regulations and standards. The US and EU already have the world's largest trade relationship, with bilateral trade in goods and services hitting €2 billion daily, according to 2012 estimates.

“Let's keep our eye on the prize: more jobs for people in Europe, more growth for the European economy,” De Gucht said on Friday.

## **Regulations, investment**

Consumer protection advocates on both sides of the Atlantic have questioned what the pact's focus on regulations and standards – the trickiest part of the negotiations, and arguably where some of the big financial gains will come from – will mean for food and product safety.

Officials tried to assuage those concerns after this week's meetings, with US chief negotiator Dan Mullaney telling reporters on Friday that nothing in the pact will “undermine the high standards of public health and safety, environmental protection, and consumer protection that citizens on both sides of the Atlantic expect and enjoy.”

Regulatory topics that were discussed during last week's meetings included regulatory coherence, and a so-called “TBT-plus” chapter – which would include elements on technical barriers to trade that go beyond those in the related WTO agreement. Sectors where both sides wish to reach regulatory compatibility include, among others, automobiles, pharmaceuticals, information and communication technologies, and medical devices.

The US-EU pact is also set to include investment-related provisions, with both sides now reviewing their respective approaches to the subject. “There was a good degree of agreement on getting an ambitious deal while confirming the Parties' regulatory freedom to legislate in the public interest,” the European Commission confirmed in a press release.

## **Financial services?**

Officials are also expected to hold discussions on financial services in the weeks ahead – a surprising development for some trade observers, given that the topic is a thorny one for Washington.

While the US has said that the topic is best addressed in other contexts, such as the G-20, the EU has strongly pushed for including the issue in the trans-Atlantic pact. De Gucht said in an October speech that cooperating on this issue is essential for ensuring the financial resilience of both trading partners. (See Bridges Weekly, [17 October 2013](#))

Meetings to deal specifically with financial services regulation will occur before the third negotiating round, with officials set to meet in Brussels on 27 November to discuss the subject.

“The EU side has made clear that they want to have conversations in this area, and we are engaging in those conversations,” Mullaney told reporters last week.

The US and EU together account for 70 percent of world trade in financial services.

Both sides have also begun comparing their respective approaches on cross-border services, telecommunications, and e-commerce, officials said last week, and have begun outlining their respective market access interests in certain services sectors.

ICTSD reporting; “US, EU upbeat after trade talks,” EUROPEAN VOICE, 15 November 2013; “U.S. Appears More Open to Finance Discussions in Trade Talks With Europe,” THE NEW YORK TIMES, 15 November 2013.



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## DISPUTES

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# Mexico Files Compliance Challenge to Revised US Tuna Labelling Policy

The long-standing fight between Mexico and the US over Washington's dolphin-safe labelling programme is set to go another round at the WTO, after Mexico City formally filed a request for the establishment of a "compliance panel" with the global trade arbiter last Friday. The move makes good on Mexico's promise last July to challenge the US on whether it had indeed brought the scheme in line with its international trade obligations.

The WTO Appellate Body had ruled last year that the US' original dolphin-safe labelling scheme violated core trade rules and discriminated unfairly against Mexican tuna products, confirming an earlier dispute panel ruling. The US subsequently revised the scheme in July, ahead of a WTO-established compliance deadline. (See Bridges Weekly, [16 May 2012](#) and [18 July 2013](#), respectively)

The changes that Washington made were developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and require captains and other approved observers to certify that "no dolphins were killed or seriously injured during fishing operations occurring outside the Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean."

Previously, this requirement did not apply to tuna caught outside this region. US officials said at the time that the reforms, along with meeting WTO requirements of "even-handedness," would also strengthen the "dolphin-safe" labelling scheme.

In the compliance panel request, dated 15 November, Mexico cites a series of areas where it alleges that the US has either failed to comply with the adverse WTO ruling or is otherwise in violation of trade rules. For instance, the amended US measure allegedly continues to treat tuna products from Mexico "less favourably" than those from the US and those from other countries. The Latin American country also argues that, under the rule, tuna products from other countries are actually accorded an advantage over their Mexican equivalents.

The case is one of three where Washington has been challenged on the implementation of its consumer protection policies. In all three cases – which, along with the tuna dispute, also included an Indonesian challenge to a ban on clove cigarette imports, and complaints from both Canada and Mexico on US country-of-origin labels for meat products – the US lost at both the panel and Appellate Body stages.

In both of the other disputes, Washington is also facing compliance challenges from the respective complainants. (See Bridges Weekly, [5 September 2013](#))

### Next steps

The panel request is slated to be discussed at next Monday's meeting of the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body. If established, the compliance panel would be formed by the same set of experts that reviewed the original case. Should the panel find that the US did indeed fail to implement the ruling, countermeasures may then be authorised.

The full compliance panel request (WT/DS381/20) can be found at <https://docs.wto.org>.

ICTSD reporting.

## IN BRIEF

## TPP Chief Negotiators' Meeting Kicks Off as December Deadline Hastens

Chief negotiators from the 12 Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) countries are gathering in Salt Lake City this week, for a meeting that many trade observers expect to be a potential indicator of whether their countries' ministers will be able to announce a completed deal in Singapore next month.

TPP officials have repeatedly said throughout the year that they wish to conclude their negotiations by the end of December, despite growing questions over whether the various remaining gaps could be closed in time. (See Bridges Weekly, [10 October 2013](#))

In an effort to meet this goal, negotiators have been holding a series of so-called "intersessional" meetings over the past month dealing with specific topics, namely rules of origin, government procurement, state-owned enterprises, and investment, according to the Office of the US Trade Representative.

Many areas, however, reportedly remain tricky, including the question over whether Japan will be willing to concede to demands from some of its TPP partners – particularly the US – to eliminate tariffs on sensitive agricultural products.

Tokyo is trying to keep tariffs on five categories of products – rice, barley and wheat, sugar crops, dairy products, and beef and pork – and some have hinted that Japan could add more products to this list, given domestic concerns over the TPP's impact on farmers.

The negotiating process has lately come under an added level of scrutiny after anti-secrecy organisation Wikileaks released a full version of the TPP's intellectual property chapter last week.

While the text – a nearly 100-page document that includes proposals from different member countries – may not reflect the exact state of play of the negotiations, given the various meetings that have been held since its August 2013 date, it has sparked an international debate on pharmaceutical protections in the pact, as well as the implications for copyright infringement policy.

With the talks racing toward a potential conclusion at the end of the year, the possibility of Taiwan and South Korea possibly seeking entry into the process has also been raised, with both countries reportedly conducting studies and other internal processes to see if their participation would indeed be beneficial to their economies. The Philippines and Thailand have also been rumoured as potential contenders.

If any or all of these do choose to seek a seat at the negotiating table, whether they are indeed invited to join will depend on the approval of current TPP members – which, along with the US and Japan, also include Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.

ICTSD reporting; "U.S. wants all tariffs lifted under TPP; Japan maintains stance on 'sacred' items," ASAHI SHINBUN, 17 November 2013; "Korea Sharply Divided Over Its Involvement in TPP," BUSINESSKOREA, 18 November 2013; "Joining TPP will boost Taiwanese firms: Brookings," TAIPEI TIMES, 6 November 2013.

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## EU, Japan Aim to Speed Up Trade Talks

EU and Japanese officials are hoping to speed up negotiations for a bilateral trade pact, officials said this week, ahead of a key April deadline for reviewing the talks' progress.

The EU and Japan have held three rounds of trade talks since the negotiations formally kicked off in March, with the latest of these being held last month in Brussels. (See Bridges Weekly, [31 October 2013](#))

Under the terms of the European Commission's negotiating mandate, the EU could bring the talks to a halt in April 2014 if it deems that Japan has not made the necessary progress in railways, urban transport roadmaps, and dismantling non-tariff barriers. The latter are meant to be removed in parallel to reductions in tariffs on the EU side.

"While we expressed satisfaction with the advances made so far, we also recognised that there is still a considerable way to go and time is pressing," [said](#) European Council President Herman Van Rompuy following this week's EU-Japan summit in Tokyo. Ministers and commissioners have therefore been instructed to assure that "substantive progress" is reached in time for the EU review next April.

Speaking to Reuters on Tuesday, EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht confirmed that, while some progress has been made in the talks on non-tariff measures and railways, there is still "much to be done."

ICTSD reporting; "Japan not ready yet to pass non-tariff barrier test: EU trade chief," REUTERS, 19 November 2013; "Japan, EU to agree to step up efforts for early FTA deal," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 16 November 2013; "Top EU official has faith in Japan's trade liberalization," NIKKEI, 16 November 2013; "Japan, EU still united on trade talks," THE JAPAN Times, 18 November 2013.

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## Prospects Dim for 2013 "Fast Track" Renewal

US officials are becoming increasingly pessimistic over whether they will be able to renew Trade Promotion Authority – a key piece of legislation for authorising trade pacts – before the end of the year, even as trade negotiators race to conclude the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership talks in the weeks ahead.

Trade Promotion Authority, also known as "fast track," allows the US executive branch to submit negotiated trade deals to Congress for straight up-or-down votes, without amendments. The provision is essential for trade negotiators, as it assures US trading partners that finalised deals will not be unraveled by lawmakers during the ratification process.

Opposition has been building among some US legislators over the past month over whether the provision – which expired in 2007 – should indeed be renewed, with many citing concern that they are not sufficiently involved in the process of crafting international trade deals. (See Bridges Weekly, [14 November 2013](#))

Though the leaders of the two congressional panels on trade – the Senate Finance Committee and House Ways and Means Committee – have said that they are close to introducing “fast track” legislation to their respective chambers, one of the House’s top Democrats confirmed this week that there might not be time to renew “fast track” before year’s end, given the few legislative days left in 2013.

“I don’t realistically see TPA moving,” Steny Hoyer – the second-highest ranking Democrat in the House, who serves as the Minority Whip – told Reuters on Tuesday.

The White House has lately criticised Congress for being slow to advance the legislation, with US President Barack Obama telling a Wall Street Journal conference this week that “we haven’t seen the kind of take-up from the other side that we’d like to see so far.”

Such authority, he added, is key for negotiating “the best trade deals possible,” in an apparent reference to the TPP and the separate negotiations Washington is holding with Brussels for the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

ICTSD reporting; “Transcript of Obama Remarks at WSJ CEO Council Meeting,” WALL STREET JOURNAL, 19 November 2013; “Clock runs out for U.S. trade promotion bill this year: lawmaker,” REUTERS, 19 November 2013.

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EVENTS & RESOURCES

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## Events

### Coming soon

25-27 November, New York, US. FIFTH MEETING OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SDGS. The fifth session of the UN General Assembly's Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals is expected to discuss sustained and inclusive economic growth, macroeconomic policy questions (including, but not limited to, international trade), and energy, among other topics. More information is available on the UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform's [website](#).

25-29 November, Geneva, Switzerland. EAST AFRICA-SOUTH ASIA INTERREGIONAL FORUM ON TRADE FACILITATION. This forum, hosted by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), is the closing event of a UN Development Account project focused on strengthening the capacity of African and Asian countries so that they can effectively participate in negotiating trade facilitation arrangements. The forum itself will focus on sharing best practices in this field; evaluating different regional approaches to trade facilitation; and prioritising and sequencing of trade facilitation. Other key issues, such as Aid for Trade and technical assistance, will also be discussed. More information is available [here](#).

26 November, London, UK (and online). BOOK LAUNCH: THE ROLE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. This event, hosted by the Overseas Development Institute, will serve as the UK launch of the book *Catch Up: Developing Countries in the World Economy*, by Dr. Deepak Nayyar. The book addresses the role of developing countries in the global economy, analysing their evolution from a long-term historical perspective. The author describes the ongoing "catch up" that some of these economies are facing, and notes that growth has often not been transformed into meaningful development. However, the book also finds signs of a shift in the balance of power, and highlights which factors can help sustain this rise. More information is available [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.

25 November: Dispute Settlement Body

26 November: Council for Trade in Goods

27 + 29 November: Trade Policy Review Body - The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

### Other Upcoming Events

3-5 December, Bali, Indonesia. BALI TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT SYMPOSIUM. This event, hosted by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), will

be held in conjunction with the WTO's Ninth Ministerial Conference. The event aims to encourage innovative thinking and analysis on issues related to trade and sustainable development, in order for stakeholders to translate them into inputs for future negotiations. The event will bring together academics, policy researchers and analysts, representatives from inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, businesses or the private sector, and parliamentarians. Additional updates on the event will be posted regularly on the ICTSD [website](#).

3-6 December, Bali, Indonesia. NINTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE. The WTO's biennial ministerial conference is slated to be held in Bali, with the goal of advancing a set of deliverables from the broader Doha Round negotiations. More information on the event is available on the WTO [website](#); future updates on the conference schedule will be posted there in the coming weeks.

11 December, Washington, US. GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. This event, sponsored by the Washington International Trade Association, will bring together private sector, government, and NGO experts to explore how the public and private sectors can best work together to improve supply chain performance, with the goals of creating jobs and growth and ensuring that supply chains are socially responsible and advance public policy objectives. For more information, or to register, please click [here](#).

3-21 March 2014, Washington, US. TRAINING SEMINAR: INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT. This training seminar, hosted by the International Law Institute, covers the institutional, legal, financial, and procedural issues involved in the procurement of goods and services by public entities and discusses reform programmes to improve transparency, efficiency, and accountability. The seminar is designed for government officials, academics, legal, and other private sector professionals. More information on the event is available [here](#). A full schedule of seminars planned for 2014 can be found at the ILI [website](#).

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## Resources

AGRICULTURAL EXPORT RESTRICTIONS AND THE WTO: WHAT OPTIONS DO POLICY-MAKERS HAVE FOR PROMOTING FOOD SECURITY? By Giovanni Anania for the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) (November 2013). This paper examines the likely trade, food security, and development implications of various options for disciplining agricultural export restrictions. The author notes the debate on the subject, given that some have blamed such restrictions for worsening food price volatility, while others note the potential these may have for helping safeguard domestic food security. To learn more, or to download the issue paper, please click [here](#).

THE 2015 POST. Published by the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) (November 2013). In the second edition of this UN-NGLS e-Magazine, the authors provide an overview of recent events and discussions aimed at contributing to the post-2015 development agenda, with a particular focus on the follow-up activities to the Rio+20 outcomes. In-depth articles focus on topics such as the transformative role that the Social and Solidarity Economy can play in this development agenda. The e-magazine is available in full [here](#).

OUTLOOK ON THE GLOBAL AGENDA 2014. Published by the World Economic Forum (November 2013). This publication aims to provide a "top-of-mind" perspective from the Global Agenda Councils on the upcoming challenges in the 12-18 months ahead. Topics addressed include regional challenges, top trends, networked thinking, and emerging issues. For more information, or to access the report, click [here](#).

WHAT'S NEXT: ESSAYS ON GEOPOLITICS THAT MATTER, VOLUME 2. By Ian Bremmer and Wu Xinbo for the World Economic Forum (November 2013). This book features a series of essays on the latest trends and changes in geopolitics. Some of the topics addressed include US-China ties, the China-Russia dynamic, and "unconventional" energy in North America and the potential implications on global energy markets. The publication is available [here](#) in full.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA, CHINA AND INDIA 2014: BEYOND THE MIDDLE INCOME TRAP. Published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (November 2013). This annual publication contains a five-year economic outlook for Southeast Asia, China, and India. This year's edition is aimed at informing the discussions on the challenges of the middle-income trap, and potential policies that can be used to avoid it, while also promoting further economic and social integration in the region. The document was prepared in partnership with the ASEAN Secretariat. To access the publication, please click [here](#).

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