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GLOBAL ECONOMY

EU Commission: CETA to Face Votes in National Parliaments

The European Commission [proposed](#) on Tuesday that a planned trade deal with Canada be signed and provisionally applied, while also announcing that it would be submitting the pact for approval from all EU national parliaments, as well as the European Parliament and Council.

"Let me stress that this is a good agreement. The EU needs it, the EU wants it," said EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström at a Tuesday afternoon [press conference](#) in Strasbourg, France.

Outlining the series of benefits that the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) would bring, she stressed that the responsibility would now be on EU member states to promote it within their own constituencies.

"CETA will make trade between the EU and Canada easier. More trade means more growth, and more growth means more jobs," said Malmström, adding that the planned deal is modern in its approach to areas ranging from services to public procurement to investment protection.

Provisional implementation

The news marked a change in stance by the EU's executive arm, which previously said that the deal would not need to go to national parliaments, citing the [Treaty of Lisbon](#). (See Bridges Weekly, [14 April 2016](#) and [19 May 2016](#))

Specifically, if a deal's provisions fall exclusively under EU competences, it would only need to go to the Council and the European Parliament.

However, if it features provisions that address areas falling under the responsibility of EU member states, this qualifies the agreement as "mixed" – therefore meaning that individual member states would need to ratify the accord in their own legislatures as well. Examples where this could occur would be investment, or some regulatory matters.

Given that the issue of “mixity” has arisen repeatedly in EU trade policy process, Commission officials flagged [a pending ruling](#) by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) on whether a separate deal with Singapore also requires national parliament approval as having the potential to give much-needed legal clarity.

While the ruling will be specific to the deal with Singapore, officials say that it could help clear up long-standing differences between the Council and the Commission on how to interpret the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty which relate to trade deals. The EU's executive arm requested the ruling in October 2014.

While affirming that the Commission's own legal understanding is that the CETA falls exclusively under EU competence and is not a mixed deal, Malmström told reporters on Tuesday that the “difficulty of having consensus by member states in the foreseeable future” meant that the EU's executive branch needed to take a different approach.

Meanwhile, the Commission has suggested that the pact could be applied “provisionally” until the full ratification process is completed.

Provisional implementation could occur following approval by the European Parliament and Council, according to the EU's executive arm, thus allowing most of the deal's terms to apply pending the result of the national parliament votes.

“We expect that our proposal will allow us to move swiftly to allow it to be provisionally applied,” said Malmström to reporters in Strasbourg. “Anything else would bring delays to the benefits that EU citizens are awaiting.”

The deal is now going to the Council for signature, ahead of a planned ceremony with Canada this October.

Juncker: “Credibility of Europe's trade policy at stake”

The news of the Commission's decision comes at a trying time for the EU's trade policy, as it works to clinch another deal with the United States this year, while also navigating the potential implications for its trade agenda from the UK's vote to leave the EU. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 June 2016](#))

Meanwhile, the heated public debate over the merits of trade deals – including CETA – has already spilled over into discussions in some EU national legislatures.

For example, the Belgian regional parliament of Wallonia has said it would need to see guarantees on certain issues before approving CETA, while Bulgaria and Romania have raised separate concerns regarding visa-free travel with Canada that could make it difficult to give their sign-off to the trade deal. (See Bridges Weekly, [14 April 2016](#))

However, the deal has also drawn significant support from many quarters, with proponents citing the innovations across a range of subject areas. For example, on government procurement, Canada has agreed to allow tenders at all levels of government, i.e. federal, provincial, and local.

The agreement also features significant market access commitments on services, while facilitating the recognition of professional qualifications for jobs such as engineering and architecture. On intellectual property rights, the two sides were able to agree on protecting various “geographical indications,” which are used to denominate products with a specific geographical origin and which have qualities, reputation, or characteristics tied to that same location. Other provisions addressed issues such as protection of copyrights, and terms dealing with trade in pharmaceuticals, for example.

The accord also features chapters on trade and sustainable development, trade and environment, and trade and labour, with a view to better coordinating their policies in these areas. The two sides have hailed the overall deal as being "historic" for its progressive nature and have suggested that it could give a clear economic boost on both sides of the Atlantic.

The process of negotiating the EU-Canada pact already dates back several years, kicking off in 2009. The pact has attracted significant public scrutiny since the talks began, and even after negotiations were concluded in 2014.

Following the legal scrub of the pact, the two sides announced earlier this year that they had revised the investment protection parts of the deal to incorporate an EU proposal for an investment court system, while stressing the "right to regulate" in the public interest by domestic governments. (See Bridges Weekly, [3 March 2016](#))

Officials said at the time that the changes were designed to answer concerns by citizens and businesses on both sides of the Atlantic. However, the debate failed to die down, with concerns continuing to arise over how effective these reforms would be, among other aspects of the deal.

Meanwhile, speculation had grown in recent weeks as to how the Commission would propose treating the deal in the ratification stage, particularly in light of earlier statements by both the EU and Canada that they hoped to see the deal signed this year and implemented in 2017.

"I have looked at the legal arguments and I have listened to Heads of State or Government and to national Parliaments. Now it is time to deliver. The credibility of Europe's trade policy is at stake," said European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in a statement on Tuesday, explaining the move.

Other deals

The EU is involved in trade negotiations with countries across the globe, and has plans to reach deals, or at least political accords, on some of them this year.

Along with the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) it is negotiating with the US, the European Union also aims to announce a political deal with Japan by year's end, along with concluding talks for a Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) with 22 other WTO members.

Other talks are also on the horizon, including an update of its agreement with Mexico; an escalation in pace for its negotiations with Mercosur; and the expected launch of trade talks with Australia and New Zealand. (See Bridges Weekly, [15 October 2015](#))

However, Malmström warned during Tuesday's press conference that one fear is of CETA and TTIP being used to boost anti-globalisation feelings, which could pose a "big risk to European trade policy."

Canadian officials react

Across the Atlantic, political leaders in Canada suggested that the move by the Commission was expected, even desirable, in light of the current issues facing the 28-nation bloc on a range of fronts.

"With the situations going on right now [following the UK exit vote] and the perceptions around the EU, it's going to be very important for them to demonstrate an ability to move forward on deals that are going to be good for their citizens," said Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, according to CBC News.

The move by the European Commission was "anticipated," Canadian Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland added. "[It] will keep CETA on track," she said.

ICTSD reporting; "Canada gets clarity on how Europe will ratify trade deal," CBC NEWS, 5 July 2016.

WASHINGTON

Draft US Democratic Party Platform Notes Mixed Feelings on TPP

Lawmakers from the US Democratic Party wish to see trade deals that feature stronger environmental and labour protections, while having mixed feelings on the merits of the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, according to a draft version of the party's platform released on 1 July.

The 39-page [document](#), while still subject to change, is meant to give some initial indications of where the party will position itself across a range of issues during the last leg of the general election process.

The final version is expected following an 8-9 July meeting in Orlando, Florida, after which it will be adopted at the Democratic National Convention, scheduled for 25-28 July in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

That gathering is also expected to confirm Hillary Rodham Clinton as the party's nominee for president, with the former Secretary of State set to face real estate magnate Donald Trump, the presumptive nominee of the Republican Party, in the November general election.

Trade: Promises versus results

Much of the document places an emphasis on ways to address the range of problems facing the American middle class, such as income inequality, stagnant wages, high education and childcare costs, and the potential negative ramifications that can result from trade deals.

"What makes America great is our unerring belief that we can make it better. We can and we will build a more just economy, a more equal society, and a more perfect union – because we are stronger together," the text says.

The draft document claims that trade has delivered mixed results for the American people, failing "to live up to its promise." Crediting the problem to trade abuses by other economies, along with outsourcing of jobs, the document also lambasts many of the trade agreements inked by Washington in recent years.

"Over the past three decades, America has signed too many trade deals that have not lived up to the hype," says the draft document.

Among the areas that need strengthening in future accords are labour and environmental standards, the text says – arguing that these must also be enforceable if they are to carry real weight. Trade deals should also foster innovation and access to medicines, push back on illegal state aid abroad, and enshrine the right to regulate in the public interest.

Notably, the document does not take a firm stance on the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, referring instead to a "diversity of views in the party" over whether the 12-country accord lives up to the party principles outlined in the draft document.

As a candidate, Clinton has said that she opposes the TPP in its current form, referring to a series of areas where it does not live up to her requirements, even if she did support it when she was formerly Secretary of State under the Obama Administration.

The Republican presidential candidate has, for his part, openly pledged to withdraw the US from the TPP should he win office this autumn. Trump's stance has proven controversial, given that many members of his own party have previously indicated their interest in the TPP, particularly last year during the debate to renew Trade Promotion Authority legislation. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 June 2016](#) and [2 July 2015](#))

Despite mixed feelings within the Democratic Party on the TPP, the document reiterates that there is a shared view that any such deal must have strong labour and environmental protections, along with not hindering access to essential medicines – in line with the overall approach to trade policy stated in the document.

The text also calls for improved enforcement of trade rules, including on alleged currency manipulation by major US trading partners, with a particular focus on China.

US election politics in both parties have often raised the spectre of Beijing as a competitor who they claim may not necessarily play by the same rules, an allegation which has been repeatedly countered by Chinese officials, among others. The dynamic has long rankled many policy watchers who note that Sino-US cooperation is essential on the international stage, and has already led to major advances in areas such as global climate governance.

Climate change, energy

The draft document also includes a section on climate, energy, and the environment, warning that climate change is a "defining challenge of our time" and giving examples of recent weather events across the country that could be attributed to it.

The text pledges to continue President Barack Obama's attempts at forging new climate change regulation domestically and leading on the issue internationally, including with the implementation of the Paris Agreement reached last December at the annual UN climate talks.

Among the objectives that the party may push is in cutting greenhouse gas emissions by over 80 percent of 2005 levels by mid-century, while also transitioning the country entirely to clean energy sources by that time.

These targets were announced just days after North American leaders, including outgoing US President Barack Obama, announced a joint climate and energy strategy which includes the goal of generating half of power in the US, Canada, and Mexico from clean sources by 2025. (See related story, this edition)

The move, while welcomed by climate observers, has also sparked questions over whether Obama's successor will aim to boost his climate legacy, or may instead undo it. The Democratic Party platform stresses that steps in this area would aim to build on what Obama has achieved during his eight years in office.

"Democrats reject the notion that we have to choose between protecting our planet and creating good-paying jobs. We can and we will do both," the draft platform says.

Among the other climate and energy areas where Democrats would like to see progress include investments in "green and resilient infrastructure" and upgrading the country's electricity grid; taking steps toward improved fuel efficiency for automobiles, trucks, and shipping; defending the "Clean Power Plan" enacted under Obama; and cutting down oil and gas-related methane emissions.

Global leadership

The need for strong, “principled” American leadership on the global stage is also raised in the document, with the Democratic Party warning of the alleged risks to US diplomatic objectives should Donald Trump win office in November – particularly given his repeated statements in favour of more “isolationist” policies.

“Democrats believe that America must lead in the world to grow our economy, protect our interests, and make our country safer and more prosperous,” says the text, warning against “outsourcing” this leadership role to others.

The document then goes on to outline both region-specific priorities, along with overarching policy areas that have cross-regional impacts, such as refugees, global health, development assistance, and anti-corruption.

“We believe that we need to coordinate our economic actions with other countries to address economic insecurity, specifically youth un- and underemployment, gender inequality, digital transformation, and the transition towards green jobs,” the draft platform says.

The text concludes by warning against alleged attempts by Trump to undermine the current system of international institutions, calling instead for these to be updated and reformed. Abandoning them entirely, the document says, would be a “reckless” approach, particularly given that “decades of stability and economic growth” which they have fostered.

ICTSD reporting.

NORTH AMERICA

North American Leaders Sign Off on Climate, Energy Plan

Leaders from Canada, the US, and Mexico have signed off on a joint partnership on climate and clean energy issues, including the goal to provide half of North America's power from "clean" sources by 2025.

The 29 June meeting was held in Ottawa, Canada, and marked the last such summit for US President Barack Obama, while being the first for Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto has been attending these summits since taking office in 2012.

Other topics on the docket included bilateral meetings between Obama and Trudeau on issues such as softwood lumber trade, along with discussions on the ramifications of the UK's vote in late June to leave the European Union. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 June 2016](#))

The US election process also featured prominently in remarks to reporters after the meet, with leaders touting the benefits of free, fair trade and warning against politicians who may try to diminish its value and instead support anti-globalisation, isolationist messages under the guise of populism.

Clean power, methane targets

The North American Climate, Clean Energy, and Environment Partnership Action Plan [announced last week](#) includes various ongoing or planned steps – some via regulation or legislation, others via international negotiating processes – aimed at boosting the use of cleaner energy sources and cutting emissions from various pollutants.

Along with drawing 50 percent of the region's power from cleaner energy sources by 2025, the three leaders have also said that they will work to advance the use of cross-border transmission lines, including for renewable electricity sources, citing various planned or existing projects in this area.

Both the US and Canada have also announced their goal to source all of the federal government's power from clean sources by 2025. Other energy-related steps confirmed last week are plans to harmonise energy efficiency standards for appliances and equipment, along with working to improve the reliability of electricity across all three countries and phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies by 2025. For the latter, they said they would advocate for the same approach by fellow members of the G-20 coalition of major advanced and emerging economies.

In addition, Mexico has now joined the US and Canada in their plans to slash methane emissions from oil and gas by 40 to 45 percent by 2025. Their efforts in this area also include various steps aimed at information sharing, together with strategies to cut methane from certain sectors. They will also take steps at the national level to tackle "black carbon" – known also as soot – in agriculture, industry, and heavy-duty vehicles, citing the related public health impacts. (See Bridges Weekly, [17 March 2016](#))

At the broader international level, all three leaders have confirmed that they hope to ratify the Paris Agreement on climate change this year, while advocating that others do the same.

They have pledged to take steps in working together on both climate mitigation and adaptation as they implement their national contributions to the deal.

Furthermore, they said that they would work to help developing countries in this area, while pledging their backing to the Paris accord's language on carbon markets and transparency.

Leaders have also reiterated their support for an amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer that would entail a "phase-down" in hydrofluorocarbons, an extremely potent greenhouse gas with a warming potential over 10,000 times that of carbon dioxide. (See Bridges Weekly, [14 April 2016](#))

Parties to the Montreal Protocol are due to meet later this month in Vienna, Austria, for a meeting aimed at advancing these negotiations, in the hopes of setting the stage for clinching a deal by the 28th Meeting of the Parties this coming October in Kigali, Rwanda.

TPP, NAFTA questions

The US presidential election process loomed over the summit, particularly in light of Republican candidate Donald Trump having recently pledged to press Mexico and Canada for a renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) – or instead leave it altogether. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 June 2016](#))

NAFTA entered into force over two decades ago, in January 1994. In the years since, how much the deal has helped or hindered the competitiveness of certain industries has been a hotly debated subject in both trade and political circles.

Trump has also said that he would withdraw the US from the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, which includes Canada and Mexico as well. That deal has been signed by all participating countries and is now in the ratification stage. (See Bridges Weekly, [11 February 2016](#))

[Speaking to reporters](#) on the way to the Ottawa meeting, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest answered questions on Trump's NAFTA plan by suggesting that the TPP is, in actuality, already a "renegotiation" of the original NAFTA deal.

"That's exactly what the TPP does, is it includes obviously countries in the Asia-Pacific as well, but it includes Canada and Mexico. And it raises standards related to the environment and to labour conditions in all of the countries that have signed the agreement. It also makes those higher standards enforceable in a way that they weren't in NAFTA," said Earnest.

Brexit parallels?

During last week's meeting, the North American leaders also faced questions over developments seen across the Atlantic, namely the 23 June referendum that saw UK citizens vote by a slim majority to leave the European Union. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 June 2016](#))

The debate within the UK leading up to the vote focused heavily on issues relating to immigration, and the result was credited partly to growing scepticism of globalisation among the country's citizens.

However, following the result, politicians backing the "Leave" campaign have struggled to form a consistent view on how to move forward, including on trade. EU leaders, meanwhile, have said that should the UK wish to keep its access to the bloc's single market, it will need to sign on to all four of its freedoms – including freedom of movement.

"Now, with respect to Brexit, I think it's important to point out that those who argued about leaving the European Union are the same folks who the very next day are insisting, don't

worry, we're still going to have access to the single market," said Obama to reporters in Ottawa last week.

The US president cautioned against creating "easy analogies" with last week's "Brexit" vote and the trade context in the US, Canada, and Mexico, including with regards to the TPP. The sentiment was echoed by both Peña Nieto and Trudeau.

Furthermore, he said, while there is a "legitimate gripe about globalisation," the issue is more about the actual policy prescription to address it.

"My pushback on both the left and right when it comes to protectionism or anti-trade arguments is you are right to be concerned about the trends, but what you're prescribing will not work," he said.

US-Canada softwood lumber talks

The 29 June meeting also gave Obama and Trudeau the chance to discuss the ongoing negotiations for a new Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA), after the previous version expired last October. (See Bridges Weekly, [15 October 2015](#))

Back in March, the two leaders had given their negotiators a window of 100 days to sort out the key features that would help define a new SLA. Top trade officials from both sides reported in June that while their talks had shown some movement, "significant differences" remain between them. (See Bridges Weekly, [23 June 2016](#))

Following their discussions, Obama and Trudeau released [a joint statement](#) outlining in further detail the "key features" and "common goals" that would feature in a new softwood lumber deal.

"A new softwood lumber agreement will need to reflect the realities of Canadian timber management policies and the US domestic market," they said, calling for an equitable outcome that ensured both predictability and the ability to respond to market dynamics.

The planned agreement would need to limit Canadian exports to a certain threshold, specifically a to-be-confirmed level of US market share, with the possibility of excluding regions or companies; support regional policies that would tackle the source of bilateral "trade frictions; and include the necessary institutional provisions for putting a future deal into practice.

The deal would also need to address the issue of trade remedies, along with including enforcement tools and ways to ensure transparency.

The two leaders have now directed their ministers to keep "an intensive pace of engagement" in order to clinch a deal this autumn, particularly given the impending end to the October "standstill" which is currently preventing the US from potentially seeking new trade remedies on imported Canadian lumber.

ICTSD reporting.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ministers Aim for Swift Implementation of Paris Climate Deal

An informal gathering of 35 ministers in Berlin, Germany, at the start of this week focused on promoting an “ambitious and swift implementation” of the new Paris Agreement on climate change, according to a closing [press release](#).

Participants, representing all regions from around the world, reportedly agreed and discussed how concrete policies can quickly be put in place to implement the new universal climate pact, struck at the end of last year in the French capital city.

“Following the success of Paris, we are now entering the implementation phase. Governments across the globe are undertaking measures to combat climate change,” said German environment minister Barbara Hendricks on the occasion. “We can learn a great deal from each other and in doing so lend even greater momentum to international climate action.”

The so-called Petersberg Dialogue has been hosted annually by the German government since 2010 in a bid to advance climate change negotiations following a breakdown of talks the year prior.

This year's two-day programme focused on key tasks post-Paris, including long term strategies for climate resilient development and aligning finance flows, as well as expectations for the next annual UN climate meet due to be held in Marrakech, Morocco, in November.

The German government also unveiled a new [partnership](#) aimed at helping developing countries implement the Paris Agreement. The initiative will support developing countries in specifying and implementing their national climate action plans, known as “nationally determined contributions” (NDCs), which form the basis of the new deal.

The partnership will organise tailor-made advice, drawing on know-how and work from other organisations and platforms, and aim towards ensuring coherence among donors within different countries in implementing climate policies.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Saudi Arabian energy minister Khalid al-Falih additionally announced their intention in Petersberg to ratify Paris by year's end, joining a host of other countries that have also signalled plans to do so, including the world's top two emitters China and the US.

As of last month, 19 countries had deposited instruments of ratification, although these represent just 0.18 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. Some 178 states have signed the deal. The agreement will come into force 30 days after 55 parties representing 55 percent of greenhouse gas emissions have signed and ratified.

While climate ambition appeared buoyant in Berlin, campaigners expressed disappointment last week that a separate gathering of G-20 [energy ministers](#) in Beijing, China, failed to set a deadline for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, despite reaffirming commitments to continue moving in this direction. G-7 leaders meeting in May in Ise-Shima, Japan agreed to eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies by 2025, a goal that was also supported during a separate meeting of North American leaders in Ottawa last week. (See BioRes, [2 June 2016](#))

At the latter event, leaders from Canada, Mexico, and the US said that they would be pushing for such a goal to be adopted by fellow G-20 members. (For more, see related story, this edition)

Whither Britain?

The Petersberg gathering was also the first time climate officials have met since UK citizens voted on 23 June to leave the European Union. Although the subject was not formally discussed, the future direction of the UK's climate and energy policies are among the many issues related to the "Brexit vote" attracting global attention, as are the potential implications for the EU in this area.

The EU has submitted a collective NDC to the Paris Agreement, aiming to reduce emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, although discussions for dividing this among the current 28 member states are ongoing.

Should the UK leave the bloc altogether, it would likely need to submit its own NDC, and unpack its contribution to the second phase of the "Kyoto Protocol" that in theory will govern international climate efforts through to the end of the decade.

Some stakeholders have [said](#) that Brexit could adversely impact both the UK's and the EU's leadership in global climate policy, as well as threaten clean energy investment in the continent, while others disagree on the extent.

"We made a clear commitment to acting on climate change. That will continue," UK Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Amber Rudd [told](#) a business and climate summit last week.

"So while I think the UK's role in dealing with a warming planet may have been made a bit harder by the decision [on 23 June], our commitment to dealing with it has not gone away," she continued.

Despite division prevailing over Britain's political scene, the government nonetheless moved to approve the country's fifth "carbon budget," which aims to reduce emissions by 57 percent by 2032 from 1990 levels.

Provisional figures for 2015 indicate that the UK has reduced emissions by 38 percent below 1990 levels, according to a statutory Committee on Climate Change (CCC), which has also [warned](#) that the island nation will need to put in place new policies in order to meet the 2032 carbon budget.

The UK's National Grid on Tuesday announced that the country was likely to miss its target of producing 15 percent of total energy from renewables as part of its contribution to the EU's 2020 targets for clean energy.

Eventual "Brexit" talks would also need to determine the future of the UK's participation in the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). (See Bridges Weekly, [30 June 2016](#))

Some [commentators](#) have suggested that uncertainty around outcomes in this area could create a downward pressure on ETS allowance prices and also subvert the carbon price signal for covered UK entities.

The UK will also need to define its engagement with the EU on energy policy, given that the country is physically connected to European gas and electricity markets. Norway, for example, is not an EU member and accounted for 57 percent of UK gas imports, but with pipelines from the Netherlands supplying 15 percent of this.

EU-China linkages

Separately, the EU signalled last week that it would be stepping up cooperation with China on emissions trading, supported by a new €10 million (US\$11 million) collaboration project on the subject.

Announced by EU Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete during a visit to China, the initiative will start in 2017 to coincide with the launch of China's national carbon market, and run for three years.

"With more than a decade of experience with the EU emissions trading system, the EU is well placed to support China," Cañete [said](#). "Cooperation between the two largest emissions trading systems in the world will send a strong signal to other countries as they prepare to implement their Paris commitments."

The project will build on existing bilateral cooperation and establish regular dialogue to developments in emissions trading. The EU is currently home to the world's largest carbon market but is expected to be surpassed in this respect once China's programme is launched.

Business voices and experts have suggested that an expansion of carbon pricing around the world could help alleviate competitiveness concerns, due to economic activities being subjected to significantly different mitigation measures, and associated "carbon leakage" fears where production moves to less stringent climate jurisdictions.

The EU-China announcement came just after the European Commission released a broader [strategy document](#) on 22 June outlining the bloc's relationship with the Asian giant for the coming five years, including around trade and investment. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 June 2016](#))

ICTSD reporting; "Saudi Arabia, Germany to ratify UN climate deal in 2016," CLIMATE HOME, 5 July 2016; "G20 nations fail to agree timeline for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies," BUSINESS GREEN, 4 July 2016; "Climate change: UK backs world-leading climate target," BBC NEWS, 30 June 2016; "Renewable energy: UK expected to miss 2020 targets," BBC NEWS, 5 July 2016.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

WIPO Patent Committee Agrees Future Work Programme

The World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) continued its discussion last week on a broad range of issues in international patent law, along with agreeing on the course of future work.

Previous efforts to reach consensus on this work programme had struggled to bear fruit. Even with the agreement reached last week, "the Committee agreed that its work for the next session be confined to fact-finding and not lead to harmonisation at this stage."

The SCP, which met for its 24th session from 27-30 June, is WIPO's dedicated forum for discussing issues relating to patent law. The committee's agenda included several subjects of interest to member states, including exceptions and limitations to patent rights; quality of patents, including opposition systems; patents and health; confidentiality of communications between clients and their patent advisors; and the transfer of technology.

"With the advancement of collection of legal information under some of the above five agenda items, the SCP previous sessions witnessed an increasing difficulty in the identification of priorities – among a long list of options – for the future work of the SCP, making even more relevant the role of delegates in finding out solutions that allows the SCP to continue its work," said Marco M. Aleman, Secretary of the committee, in e-mailed comments to Bridges. "This session showed this key role of delegates."

Exceptions and limitations

Last week, Brazil expanded upon previous proposals for a study on exceptions and limitations to patent rights, including analysis of which of those implemented by members have proven most effective in addressing developing and least developed country needs.

This proposal was supported by many member states, including Iran, Pakistan, India, the African Group, and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC). However, other members such as China and the EU instead called for sharing sessions where member states could present national case studies involving exceptions and limitations.

The US said that there was already substantial information available from earlier studies, and questioned how the effectiveness of exceptions and limitations would be defined in any WIPO secretariat analysis. The US added that such an analysis would be outside the SCP's mandate, among other reasons, given the varied needs and goals of member states.

Patent quality

Discussion on the topic of quality of patents, including opposition systems, was divided into two main subjects: work sharing, which refers to programmes wherein national patent offices agree to share details of their work in examining patent applications with other offices examining similar applications, and patentability requirements.

Along with presentations by the secretariat and the Mexican delegation on examples of work sharing, many member states shared their own experiences and voiced their support for such programmes, with contributions from Japan, the US, Argentina, Romania, the EU, South Korea, Ireland, the Group of Central European and Baltic States (CEBS), and Australia.

The US and Australia also shared details of recently implemented programmes to improve patent quality management in their national patent offices.

However, support for work sharing was not unanimous, as India argued that patent quality is not measured by processing efficiency, but rather by the standards of patentability. In addition, Iran suggested that work sharing would in practice lead to the harmonisation of patentability requirements, which many member states do not support.

To facilitate future work, many members called for clarifying how different national patent offices define patent quality. Canada suggested this could be done through a questionnaire it had proposed previously with the UK, which received support from Australia and Japan.

On the subject of patentability requirements, Spain presented its proposal for a study on the assessment of the inventive step criteria, which is widely regarded as the most difficult requirement to evaluate. While this proposal received widespread support, Brazil asked for further explanation of the need for such a study, given the discussion on inventive step at the 22nd SCP session, and for clarification of the topics which the study would address.

Patents and health

The topic of patents and health was a contentious one, with some member states including Brazil, Pakistan, Iran, and India supporting a proposal made by the African Group to the 16th session of the SCP. This proposal called for a work programme “to enhance the capacities of member states, and particularly developing countries and least developed countries (LDCs), to adapt their patent regimes to make full use of the flexibilities available in the international patent system to promote public policy priorities related to public health.”

The African Group also presented an updated version of the proposal, which outlined the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance and the recent global outbreaks of Ebola and Zika as justifications for re-evaluating the patent system's impact on access to medicine. This proposal received support from Brazil, South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria, and India, although many countries reserved their opinion until they could examine it in more detail.

The Group B developed countries, the US, Japan, and the EU emphasised the importance of the patent system to incentivise the research and development of new medicines, and said that many other factors limit access to medicine besides intellectual property rights.

Transfer of technology

Many countries also emphasised the importance of sufficient disclosure of the invention in patent applications in order to ensure the transfer of technology, which is one of the underlying principles of the patent system. The African Group proposed a study on the effect of the sufficiency of disclosure requirement and the use of flexibilities in the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) on technology transfer, which received support from some member states.

Many countries, including Group B, CEBS, the US, and the EU argued that such a study would be a duplication of related work done by the WIPO Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP). However, the African Group said that the CDIP takes a different approach to the topic, and thus there is no duplication.

Revision of 1979 Model Law

Also on the agenda was the continued discussion of a proposal by GRULAC for a revision of the 1979 WIPO Model Law for Developing Countries on Inventions. This project, which was supported by Iran, Paraguay, Indonesia, Brazil, India, China, the Asia-Pacific Group, and South Africa, would modernise the Model Law so it can provide legislative and policy

assistance to developing countries and LDCs, and serve as “the basis for consideration of member states when updating or reviewing their patent legislations.”

Many supporters suggested such a revision was long overdue, as the Model Law has not been updated to reflect developments in patent law, including the TRIPS Agreement's entry into force. South Africa said that the work should be development-oriented, demand-driven, and take into account the needs of developing countries.

Nevertheless, the topic was controversial, with Group B, CEBS, the EU, and the US among those opposing the revision and its continued SCP discussion. There were concerns that keeping the GRULAC proposal on the agenda, even in its current heading of “other issues,” would upset the delicate balance of the five main topics which were so carefully negotiated.

They also suggested that the revision of the Model Law is not necessary, since WIPO already provides technical assistance to member states looking to update or revise their patent legislation, and that this assistance has the advantage of being much more individualised. It was also suggested by some developed countries that the proposal would lead to harmonisation of national patent laws, and that if the Model Law revision advances, it would be appropriate to also reopen debate on the need for further harmonisation of all other areas of substantive patent law, which has been on hold at the SCP since 2006.

Members ultimately agreed to continue talks at the next session on the GRULAC proposal.

Future work

Despite differing views on several topics, the SCP was able to agree on a future work programme, in contrast to its 23rd session. This programme includes a number of the studies proposed by member states last week and in earlier sessions, and was hailed by many member states as a well-balanced agenda.

On the topic of exceptions and limitations, members agreed that the secretariat would prepare a compilation of information submitted by SCP members and observers on their practical experiences in implementing exceptions and limitations, particularly relating to development issues. Members will also conduct a sharing session on case studies in this area.

The work on the issue of quality of patents will include a questionnaire to be circulated prior to the SCP's next session, for member states to explain how they understand quality as well as their experiences with work sharing programmes. The secretariat was also instructed to update and publish information on opposition systems, and a sharing session on topics relating to the assessment of inventive step was accepted.

Regarding the area of patents and health, a sharing session will be held on the use of health-related patent flexibilities, and a study will be prepared on the constraints faced by developing countries and LDCs in making full use of patent flexibilities and their impacts on access to medicines. Discussion will also continue on the feasibility of disclosing International Non-proprietary Names (INN) in patent applications.

On the topic of confidentiality of communications between clients and their patent advisors, which was also a source of debate last week, the secretariat was instructed to prepare a compilation of court cases involving aspects of client-patent advisor privilege, “including limitations or difficulties encountered.”

Regarding the transfer of technology, a sharing session will be held so members can discuss the relationship with patent systems. Experts will be invited to present examples and cases, with the aim of “deepening the understanding of the impact of sufficiency of disclosure on transfer of technology.” The secretariat will also update WIPO's webpage on the topic.

ICTSD reporting.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

LDC Group Outlines "Collective View" on Post-Nairobi WTO Work

The WTO's Least Developed Country (LDC) Group has put forward a joint document reflecting their agreed views on how the global trade body should take its work forward in the wake of last December's Tenth Ministerial Conference (MC10) in Nairobi, Kenya.

The communication was circulated late last month by Benin, on the group's behalf, and builds on discussions held at a retreat in Montreux, Switzerland, earlier this year.

"Effective implementation of the [Nairobi decisions](#) is needed," said Eloi Laourou, who is the LDC Group Coordinator and Benin's Ambassador to the WTO, in presenting the document.

The communication calls for the implementation of all WTO ministerial decisions related to LDCs in the area of agriculture, particularly cotton; duty free, quota-free market access; preferential rules of origin; and the services waiver. It also calls for action on remaining areas of the Doha Round negotiating agenda.

"The next steps will consist in organising ourselves within the group and discussing desirable outcomes on each issues with delegations," said a LDC trade delegate.

"The current communication needs further deliberations and new approaches to the discussion will be needed," said a developed country delegate.

"Many of the LDC issues currently at stake are bilateral in nature, and there is need to refocus the development discussions on multilateral issues," explained another developed country official.

Agriculture

An outcome to WTO talks on food stockholding programmes should also address the needs of LDCs which may want to use these schemes in the future, the group said. WTO members have agreed to find a "permanent solution" to problems some developing countries say they face under the organisation's current farm subsidy rules, when buying food for these programmes at prices set by the government.

The group also urged other countries to implement the Nairobi decision on cotton, and to negotiate an outcome on subsidies in this area by the time of the upcoming ministerial conference in 2017.

A separate communication from the C-4 cotton producing countries – Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali – was circulated at the end of June, and stated that the group "deplores the lack of any significant progress on domestic support."

The LDC submission also argues that farm subsidy reform should be a priority for ongoing trade talks.

"As commodity prices continue to decline from 2011 record levels, it is important and urgent to address the impact of trade distortions resulting from these domestic support policies," says the paper.

The LDC submission comes hard on the heels of two other negotiating documents that were tabled by groups of developing countries in mid-June, both of which spell out questions that negotiators could use to frame talks in this area in the weeks and months ahead. (See Bridges Weekly, [23 June 2016](#)).

The chair of the WTO agriculture negotiations, New Zealand ambassador Vangelis Vitalis, is due to hold another round of informal talks with members during the week of 18 July.

Services waiver

Another topic discussed in the communication was the implementation of the LDC services waiver – a decision agreed at the 2011 Geneva ministerial conference allowing WTO members to grant preferential treatment to services and service suppliers from LDCs.

The group said that the current 23 notifications received by fellow WTO members to date are “important contributions” toward implementing the waiver. Furthermore, the group urged others which have not yet submitted their notifications to do so “as soon as possible” during this year.

The notifications consist of an indication by preference-granting members of which sectors and modes where they could provide preferences and support on technical cooperation.

According to the document, a key step will be to put these notified preferences into effect, along with addressing certain issues in order to effectively harness these preferences’ benefits. To this end, the group indicates plans to start discussions on the subject in the WTO’s Council for Trade in Services, though does not specify a date.

The communication also encourages fellow WTO members to take steps toward creating awareness of the preferences in their own countries and in least developed countries, so that LDC suppliers are familiar with their potential. The paper also says that “supply-side support” should be provided to help in using the waiver.

Rules of origin

The decision on preferential rules of origin for LDCs was one of the important development-related outcomes from the WTO’s Nairobi ministerial last December. (See Bridges Daily Update, [19 December 2015](#))

The LDC Group’s communication builds on the deliberations that took place in the recent meetings of the Committee on Rules of Origin, reiterating the importance of having updated information on the present status of notification on preferential rules of origin and knowing how preference-granting members intend to implement their commitments. (See Bridges Africa, [29 April 2016](#))

DFQF

The document also calls for an effective implementation of all ministerial decisions taken in favour of LDCs on duty-free, quota-free market access. In this regard, the LDC Group is currently finalising terms of reference to commission a study by the WTO Secretariat aimed at examining in detail various DFQF market access regimes currently in place.

The decision can be traced back to the 2005 Hong Kong WTO Ministerial Conference, when developed countries and developing country members “declaring themselves in a position to do so” agreed to implement DFQF market access for products originating from LDCs. (See Bridges Daily Update, [19 December 2005](#))

For WTO members who may face problems in meeting this objective, the text allows for granting DFQF access for 97 percent of LDC products, while working to reach full compliance.

The years since have seen WTO members struggle to clinch a concrete outcome in this area. One of these hurdles comes from within the LDC Group itself, as some members have concerns over the possibility of “preference erosion” given that many of these countries benefit from non-reciprocal preferences granted primarily by developed countries. Applying DFQF to all LDCs, some fear, could result in certain countries losing the competitive advantages provided by such preferences.

Special and differential treatment

Another area raised in the document is that of special and differential treatment (S&DT), specifically on how to strengthen those types of provisions in the WTO rulebook.

“The LDCs are in the process of revisiting the proposals submitted for negotiation at MC10, at the Nairobi Ministerial Conference,” reads the communication, which adds that the group will work with partners to reach “concrete decisions” based on LDC-specific proposals.

While referring to the necessity to ensure a legally binding outcome for select S&DT proposals, the LDC Group explicitly established a linkage with the momentum triggered by the adoption of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development last year to reach a transformed world where economic, social, and environmental pillars of sustainable development are integrated.

“The definition of the notion of development is also problematic in this discussion as it differs among partners,” said one LDC delegate.

In an effort to revive the discussions around S&DT in the run-up to last December's ministerial conference, the G-90 coalition tabled last July a set of 25 S&DT proposals for consideration. The G-90 brings together the African Group, the LDC Group, and the Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) Group.

Although these proposals were revised further ahead of the December conference, many of them failed to gain consensus among the membership, with the topic ultimately remaining unresolved by the conclusion of the Nairobi meeting. (See Bridges Daily Update, [19 December 2015](#))

The contentious issue of “differentiation” between developing country groups proved to be one of the major stumbling blocks in this area. Some members suggested that proposed S&DT flexibilities should only apply to LDCs, while others maintained that these should be available for all developing countries. (See Bridges Negotiation Briefing, [10 December 2015](#))

Some experts have recently reflected that entitlement to specific S&DT flexibilities should not be defined in terms of beneficiary countries, but rather in terms of the specific situations in which such S&DT could be used.

An African delegate mentioned that discussions around the Monitoring Mechanism on S&DT remain divisive.

Fisheries subsidies

With regard to disciplines on fisheries subsidies, the group have put the negotiating priority towards disciplining subsidies for any vessel engaged in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing (IUU) and for operating expenses granted to a fishing vessel or activity affecting overfished stocks.

Fisheries subsidy disciplines received significant attention in the lead up to last December's Nairobi ministerial, including proposals to establish disciplines on subsidies to vessels engaged in IUU fishing and state aid that affected overfished stocks. However, these efforts ultimately failed to achieve consensus and were not included in the final package of outcomes. (See Bridges Daily Update, [19 December 2015](#))

The communication emphasises, in particular, the need for special and differential treatment whereby LDCs could maintain subsidies that do not contribute to overfishing or depletion of fish stocks; and the provision of technical assistance and capacity building to address the institutional and financial constraints faced by many LDCs.

According to the communication, LDCs will soon make a separate submission on the "rules" negotiations, which is the forum within the WTO where talks on fisheries subsidies are held.

Sources say that a 29 June informal meeting of the rules negotiating group showed an interest among various members to clinch a multilateral deal on such subsidies, with some suggesting this could be reached by the 2017 ministerial. However, they differed significantly on how they might proceed toward this goal.

New issues

The LDC Group document also raises the topic of so-called "new issues," which some WTO members have suggested should be explored for possible multilateral or plurilateral outcomes. (See Bridges Weekly, [28 April 2016](#))

Regarding these "new issues," the LDC group indicated that consultations on these subjects should be done for "exploratory purposes." The paper encourages the development of a "consultation schedule" in order to ensure that discussions in these area do not get in the way of addressing the remaining issues of the Doha Round.

ICTSD reporting.

DIGITAL ECONOMY

MIKTA Countries Encourage WTO E-Commerce Discussions

How to advance WTO discussions on e-commerce was in the spotlight in Geneva this week, as the permanent missions of Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, and Australia (MIKTA) held a workshop on the subject on Tuesday at the organisation's headquarters, with the support of the International Trade Centre (ITC).

The MIKTA group was [set up](#) nearly three years ago during a ministerial-level meeting in Seoul, with the group outlining a series of [shared objectives](#) where, they argued, they could make a contribution in "protecting public goods and strengthening global governance."

The objective of last week's workshop in Geneva was two-fold, said Korean Ambassador to the WTO Choi Kyonglim during his opening remarks. One was to raise the visibility of the MIKTA group both within the WTO and in the trade context in general, while the other was to build awareness on digital trade and e-commerce.

The Korean ambassador also noted that WTO members at the last meeting of the General Council had been highly receptive to the idea of the workshop. The General Council is the organisation's highest decision-making body outside of the ministerial conference, and is next scheduled to meet from 27-28 July.

Azevêdo: Internet access key, but other barriers remain

Speaking to attendees, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo [congratulated](#) MIKTA countries for the initiative, given that e-commerce "provides... huge opportunities for growth, development, and job creation."

Azevêdo told the audience that internet penetration increased from 6.5 percent to 43 percent at the global level between 2000 and 2015. Furthermore, in 2013 global business-to-consumer (B2C) e-trade was estimated at US\$1.2 trillion, while business-to-business (B2B) e-trade exceeded US\$15 trillion.

The WTO chief called upon the international community to ensure that these opportunities are made available to all, particularly given that four billion people across various developing countries remain offline. Moreover, 850 million out of the one billion people living in least developed countries (LDCs) are not internet users.

Azevêdo also called for participants to work beyond just ensuring that people have internet access. "Being connected is essential — but we can't just assume that people will automatically benefit from greater opportunities once they are online. It is a necessary condition, but it is not sufficient," he explained.

For example, some regions that have access still struggle to engage in e-commerce, with Africa and the Middle-East accounting for less than two percent of the global e-commerce market.

The Director-General added that barriers remain in areas such as low levels of consumer trust, along with noting room for improvement in related laws and regulations, among others.

Cutting costs, boosting engagement

Some recurrent concerns were raised during the different interventions from public sector representatives acting in their personal capacity, private sector speakers, and experts from non-governmental and international organisations.

Among those concerns was the need to reduce the costs of digital infrastructure, as well as those for logistics and customs. Other issues raised included the lack of compliance with legal and fiscal requirements on foreign e-market, along with the need for coherence, or at least recognition, of other countries' laws dealing with consumer protection online.

Streamlining cross border transit of low value goods trade – an area of growth enabled by online platforms – was also a topic of discussion. Raising and harmonising “de minimis” limits, below which shipments would not be subject to tariffs, and resolving related and differing approaches taxation among countries were areas identified for potential gains. Such developments could also seek to shift the current item-by-item approach for such charges on small shipments – which are very burdensome for smaller companies – to consolidated systems that could reduce transaction costs for small shippers.

Data privacy, MSMEs

One of the sessions was dedicated to data flows, privacy, and consumer protection – a hot-button topic in this field, particularly given the proliferation of new trade deals and the efforts to adopt a new US-EU Data Privacy Shield following the invalidation of the Safe Harbour Framework.

During that session, participants discussed the need to find the right balance between data protection and data flows at the national level, as well as to improve global compatibility so as not to hinder trade.

Participants also reviewed how progress on these areas would facilitate the engagement of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in e-commerce, given that such companies cannot afford high compliance costs and uncertainty, unlike larger businesses. This will contribute to boost consumers' trust in buying from MSMEs in the digital environment, and not to rely only on bigger, well-known suppliers.

WTO options?

Attendees also discussed additional ways in which the WTO may be able to further support e-commerce in the future.

The organisation has had a work programme on the subject since 1998, with discussions taking place under the Council for Trade in Services, Council for Trade in Goods, the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Council, and the Committee on Trade and Development. These then report to the General Council.

Although progress on the e-commerce work programme has been slow, the issue received some new impetus recently in the TRIPS Council agenda this past June, for the first time since 2003. Meanwhile, negotiators [meeting informally](#) under the Services Council's “Special Session” this week reportedly saw interest in holding more talks on the services dimension of the issue. (See Bridges Weekly, [16 June 2016](#))

At the workshop, participants suggested enhancing transparency and non-discrimination in this area; harmonising e-commerce practices and procedures; fostering consumer protection; and ensuring enforcement through the WTO dispute settlement mechanism to enhance predictability.

Other areas raised included efforts to provide better measurements on e-trade; apply the trade policy review mechanism to the digital economy; enhance trade facilitation around e-commerce; update the [Telecommunications Services Reference Paper](#) to guarantee more competition; revisiting market access commitments on financial and logistics services; and determining whether there is need to negotiate rules on data flows and localisation.

Some participants suggested that there was no need to “reinvent the wheel” in terms of creating new rules, suggesting that there was nothing in the WTO agreements which ruled out their applicability to e-commerce. Some cited as examples past trade disputes with an online component, such as an online gambling case between the US and Antigua and Barbuda ([DS285](#)) and a US-China row over alleged Chinese restrictions on trade in audio-visual products ([DS363](#)).

However, there was broad agreement that there remained a need to adapt the trade infrastructure to streamline e-commerce and ensure that the e-commerce agenda lived up to its potential for development and inclusion.

ICTSD reporting.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming Soon

11 July, London, UK. GLOBAL TRADE 2016: GOVERNANCE, GROWTH, AND THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE. This Chatham House conference will examine the current system of trade governance, examining possible policy approaches which could support increased trade flows, particularly in a context where e-commerce and services are playing a greater role. An agenda, speakers' list, and other meeting details are available at the organisation's [website](#).

11-15 July, Rome, Italy. FAO COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES: THIRTY-SECOND SESSION. This committee is one of the subsidiary bodies of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), with regular meetings to examine issues relating to fisheries and agriculture, including as it pertains to the UN agency's own work. A provisional agenda and other information can be found [here](#).

12 July, Tokyo, Japan. INVESTMENT IN AN ERA OF MEGA-REGIONALS. This policy dialogue is being organised by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), in partnership with the World Economic Forum (WEF), the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), and the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry (RIETI). Participants are set to discuss recent developments and trends in the field of international investment, including how these affect the legal frameworks for both trade and investment. Additional details on specific topics under review, as well as a full list of speakers, can be found [here](#).

13 July, Tokyo, Japan. E15 TOKYO LAUNCH EVENT. This meeting is being convened jointly by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum, and will feature a launch of a series of policy option papers and a related synthesis report for helping ensure improved governance of the global trade and investment system. The paper was prepared under the E15 Initiative, implemented by both organisations. Event partners include the Japan External Trade Organization and the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry. Additional information is available at the E15 Initiative [website](#).

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted [here](#). Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, and are open to WTO members and accredited observers only.

13 + 15 July: Trade Policy Review Body – Tunisia

19 + 21 July: Trade Policy Review Body – China

22 July: Dispute Settlement Body

27-28 July: General Council

Other Upcoming Events

17-22 July, Nairobi, Kenya. FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD). This high-level event will place a particular focus on the role which UNCTAD can play in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Expected participants include government officials, private sector and civil society representatives, academics, and media. Among the various meetings scheduled in tandem with the conference is the World Investment Forum and Civil Society Forum. More information is available at the UNCTAD [website](#).

1 August, Beijing, China. ICTSD WORKSHOP ON G-20 TRADE AND INVESTMENT OUTCOMES. This event is being organised with the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, with discussions addressing the outcomes from the G-20 Trade and Investment Working Group and Trade Ministers' Meeting. The objective is to then provide feedback that can be transmitted to G-20 leaders for when they meeting in Hangzhou, China, in September. Additional details are available [here](#).

20 September, Geneva, Switzerland. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT FROM THE CRISIS? This event is being organised by the Graduate Institute, featuring Paul Krugman as its guest speaker. Krugman is a Distinguished Professor of Economics at City University of New York, and is slated to discuss how the global economy has evolved in the years since the global financial and economic crisis. To learn more and to register, click [here](#).

27-29 September, Geneva, Switzerland. WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2016: INCLUSIVE TRADE. This year's edition of the WTO's annual outreach event will focus on better integrating a broader range of actors into the global trading system, particularly for women and small and medium-sized enterprises. Registration is now open, with additional details to be provided as the event draws nearer. More information can be found [here](#).

28-30 September, Geneva, Switzerland. TRADE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FORUM 2016. This annual gathering is organised by the International Trade Centre (ITC), with this year's edition having as its theme "Sustainable Value Chains: Open Data Makes a Difference." The discussions will aim to support the ongoing efforts for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). More details, including a provisional programme, can be found [here](#).

Resources

USING TRADE POLICY TO ACHIEVE THE BENEFITS OF LOW EMISSION DEVELOPMENT. By Sonja Hawkins for the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) (June 2016). This brief explores the trade and climate change nexus, reviewing the opportunities available for crafting frameworks that can help tackle climate change and contribute to low-emission development. The paper is part of a series on low-emissions development. The brief can be downloaded [here](#).

IIA MAPPING PROJECT. Published by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (July 2016). This project is undertaken jointly between UNCTAD and several universities to examine the content including across a range of international investment agreements (IIAs), reviewing common elements and aiming to provide a better understanding of how these deals are drafted. The mapping tool is being updated periodically with new information, and is accessible at the following [website](#).

OECD-FAO AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK 2016-2025: SPECIAL FOCUS ON SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA. Published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (June 2016). This annual publication sets out a series of predictions for agricultural, fish, and biofuels markets, with this year's edition highlighting specifically the developments expected for sub-Saharan Africa. The outlook can be downloaded [here](#).

BROOKINGS EXPERTS DISCUSS BREXIT. Published by the Brookings Institution (June 2016). This video features several experts from the Washington-based institution on the recent vote by UK citizens to leave the European Union. Topics raised include the possible implications for the US and developing economies, as well as Russia's reaction and other related topics. The video can be accessed [here](#).

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