



Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective

Volume 14 · Number 1, 13 January 2010

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Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at Ch. de Balxert 7, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (+41) 22-917-8492; fax: 917-8093. To subscribe to Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest or access back issues, visit <http://ictsd.net/news/bridgesweekly/>.

Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest is made possible through the generous support of the Government of the United Kingdom (DFID) and ICTSD's core donors including the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK) and NOVIB (NL). Bridges Weekly also benefits from support for the Bridges series of publications from donors including the Rockefeller Foundation and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

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LEAD STORIES

Preference Erosion List Marks 'New Era' in WTO Farm Talks

Alongside December's landmark deal on banana tariffs, a new proposal put forward in the WTO's farm talks offers a potential resolution of long-standing differences among exporters of tropical farm products.

African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) have long sought to maintain the preferential market access that they enjoy for their exports of 'tropical products' like bananas and sugar to consumers in the US and the EU. Meanwhile, Latin American producers, joined by some others, have argued that their exports of similar products deserve more favourable treatment.

The new proposal, which was submitted by the ACP, EU and Latin American countries on 15 December, lists the goods that the members of the group have agreed should benefit from gentler and slower tariff cuts under the proposed 'preference erosion' treatment, as well as which goods should be slated for faster and deeper liberalisation as 'tropical products'. The proposal would take effect under a WTO Doha Round agreement.

The proposal, which was laid out in a letter to the chair of the WTO agriculture negotiations, Ambassador David Walker of New Zealand, suggests new legal language for the relevant sections of the most recent version of the WTO's draft negotiating text on agriculture, which was issued in December 2008.

A delegate said that the development of the list of 'preference erosion' products marked the "start of a new era" in the relationship between Latin American exporters of tropical products, and the ACP countries - former colonies that have long

received preferential treatment for their farm goods in developed country markets.

Preference Erosion

The proposal comes on the heels of the December banana deal, officially known as the Geneva Agreement on Trade in Bananas (GATB). Bananas are of critical export interest to many ACP countries, and tensions over banana tariffs have long clouded discussions on tropical products and preference erosion.

Promises of development assistance provided through the adjustment measures in the GATB -- to the tune of €200 million for the ACP, and a gradual reduction of tariffs in the EU market -- have given ACP producers an incentive to come to an agreement on preference erosion with the EU and efficient Latin American exporters of tropical products.

Products such as flowers, sugar, fruits and their juices, arrowroot, peanut oil and tobacco appear on the list of products that the parties to the deal have agreed should receive preferential treatment in the EU and US. The tariffs for these goods would be cut in a manner similar to other developed country imports but would be phased in over a period of ten years rather than five.

Products that meet two criteria -- they are 'sensitive' and they accounted for more than ten percent of domestic consumption on a given tariff line between 2003 and 2005 -- would qualify for preference erosion treatment. Quotas for such products would be expanded in equal annual instalments over a period of seven years.

Trade sources told Bridges that this provision is meant to refer specifically to sugar; however, the language leaves open the possibility that other products, such as beef, could qualify as well. Specifically, if members use a complex methodology called 'partial designation' to select very specific products, then it is possible that those goods, which would not otherwise receive preference erosion treatment, might also qualify.

Countries such as Brazil, India, Australia and China did not voice objections to the proposal when it seemed that only sugar would be covered

by the sensitive product treatment, according to a delegate. However, those countries are expected to raise objections if additional products of export interest might also be affected by the new language.

Unlike previous versions of the draft text, the new language leaves specifies the US and EU as "preference granting country Members." This could pose a problem for ACP exporters, sources said, which would thus be left with preferential access to only the EU and US markets. The possibility that some products, such as sugar and beef, could be declared 'tropical' in non-EU and US markets would liberalize trade elsewhere and leave ACP producers with only two markets.

Given the sensitivity of the list of preference erosion products, sources close to the talks do not expect any major changes to it when the proposal is reviewed by the broader WTO membership.

A delegate told Bridges that negotiators wanted to put a "ring fence" around the preference erosion compromise, even if it left some members disappointed, so that momentum could be built for a conclusion to the WTO's Doha Round trade talks, already in their eighth year.

But one key player -- the United States -- has yet formally to endorse the new proposal. And according to one delegate, "nothing would move without the US."

Tropical Products

The treatment and selection of tropical products in the proposal has irritated some members, such as India and Pakistan, due to the significant divergence from the December 2008 WTO agriculture modalities.

According to the proposal, tropical products would be selected from lists in the agriculture modalities. A minimum of 65 percent of the products on the lists would be selected and products that were already at a zero bound tariff would count towards reaching this minimum figure. Over a period of five years, the goods with tariffs at or below 20 percent would see their duties cut to zero. Tariffs on other goods would be slated for an 80 percent cut.

The proposal has been blasted by some as 'diluted liberalisation' – a watered-down result after years of hard-fought negotiations, largely among developing countries. The new paragraphs would remove a clause in the previous text that gave tropical product treatment precedence over sensitive products: if a good was declared tropical it could not then be designated as sensitive.

Exporters fear that if members individually pick and choose tropical products, they could simply select tariff lines that receive a minimal amount of trade, and thus avoid opening their markets much at all. On this note, an official from a country with export interests declared that the "tropical list is no longer preserved" since it would be left "with products where there is no trade."

A delegate also took issue with the absence of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) from the proposal. NTBs have frequently been criticised for preventing developing country products from reaching their intended markets overseas.

Trade officials reflecting on the significance of the proposal told Bridges that the compromises are "a way forward" even if they leave some unhappy, since the proposal "represents a balance for both parts." Another official, questioning the process used in reaching the compromise, said that the proposal presented a plurilateral agreement that needed "to be multilateralised."

ICTSD reporting.

OTHER NEWS

US-China Disputes Round-Up

Washington and Beijing's sometimes-fractious trade relationship saw several new developments over the winter holidays. One dispute ended as China pulled back from its 'famous brands' subsidies; another came to a close after a WTO Appellate Body upheld a ruling on piracy; a third – a complaint over China's export restrictions on raw materials – picked up speed with the establishment of a panel of judges to hear the case; and a fourth, a Chinese complaint over

Washington's new tyre tariffs, loomed on the horizon.

'Famous brands' fight ends

The week before Christmas saw the end of a year-old spat over the support that China provides for domestic companies that ship their goods overseas. The office of the US Trade Representative reported on 18 December that Washington and Beijing had signed an agreement to resolve the dispute, which the US, joined by Mexico, had filed 12 months earlier.

In that complaint, Washington and Mexico City accused Beijing of violating world trade rules by offering export subsidies for companies that participated in the government's 'Famous Export Brand' and 'China World Top Brand' programmes. Through those initiatives, Beijing offered up state aid to producers of goods ranging from textiles and apparel to chemicals, medicines and food products.

Much of the government support was made contingent on export activity, and it was on this point that Washington raised its principal objection.

"Export subsidies are illegal under WTO rules," the USTR said in a statement.

Under the deal struck last month, China agreed to either "eliminate the measures of concern" or remove any export contingencies, the USTR statement said.

Appellate Body upholds piracy ruling

Drawing the curtain on another Sino-American dispute, the WTO Appellate Body – the organisation's highest court – upheld an earlier panel ruling that largely supported several US complaints about China's treatment of copyrighted goods.

Beijing requires copyrighted publications and audiovisual products – things like books, journals, video games, music, DVDs – to be distributed within China by only a handful of state-approved or state-run actors. US producers of music, films and the like have complained that these

restrictions have hamstrung their efforts to tap into the world's fastest-growing major market.

The US filed suit against Beijing's restrictions in April 2007. More than two years later, a WTO dispute settlement panel concluded that the measures violated the commitments China had made when it joined the WTO in 2001. The panel also found that the policies were at odds with the WTO's 'national treatment' requirements, which forbid countries from privileging domestic goods and services over imported ones. The measure is spelled out in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

China appealed that decision in September, but the Appellate Body largely upheld the earlier ruling.

The Motion Picture Association of America predictably hailed the Appellate Body's ruling as "a landmark victory," saying that the decisions marked "a major step forward in levelling the playing field for America's creative industries seeking to do business in China."

But Beijing can claim victory on one aspect of the judgement: the Appellate Body ruling did not explicitly find fault with China's invocation of the 'public morals' argument in defending its IP restrictions. (Article XX(a) of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade allows WTO members to deviate from their normal trade obligations if doing so is "necessary to protect public morals.")

To the contrary, the Appellate Body concluded that China may rely on a public morals defence to justify the violation of the terms of its accession, as long as the country can demonstrate a "clearly discernable, objective link to the regulation of trade in the goods at issue."

In this dispute, the Appellate Body concluded that China had failed to prove that its trade restrictions were 'necessary' to protect public morals. Nevertheless, the ruling has established the 'public morals' argument as a legitimate defence.

Raw materials panel established

Just as the 'famous brands' and IP suits came to a close, a raw materials case between the US and China heated up, and a potential dispute on tyre tariffs loomed on the horizon.

On 21 December, the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body established a panel that will consider a complaint against China's export duties and quotas on certain raw materials. Washington and Brussels filed the suit jointly over the summer, claiming that Beijing illegally restricts exports of several raw materials that are critical to manufacturers in the US and the EU. Mexico has joined the US and the EU in the complaint, while several other countries have become third parties to the dispute.

The WTO does not generally regulate the use of export taxes, which can act as indirect subsidies to domestic industries. But when China became a WTO member in December 2001, it promised to eliminate "all taxes and charges applied to exports" on all but 84 of its goods. The products targeted in the WTO challenge are not included in that list of exceptions, but China has countered that the export restrictions are necessary on environmental grounds, as the country does not want to over-exploit its natural resources. The panel established on 21 December will now consider the case.

And another dispute looms. At the next meeting of the Dispute Settlement Body, scheduled for 19 January, China is expected to request that a panel be established to hear its complaint against tariffs that the White House slapped onto imports of Chinese tyres earlier this year.

The US blocked the request at the DSB's last meeting, on 21 December, but WTO rules do not allow it to do so again.

ICTSD reporting; "Beijing preserves limits on movies," THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 23 December 2009.

Trade Facilitation Draft Text Holds Promise for Developing Countries

Import duties and non-tariff barriers to trade – import bans, labelling requirements, and the like – are much less of an obstacle to the flow of international commerce than they were a generation ago. Today, a different problem has come into focus, especially among developing nations: the numerous regulatory and logistical challenges to bringing goods to market overseas.

Last month, in a short press release from the WTO secretariat, the organisation announced that its Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation – the committee charged with hammering out regulations to facilitate the movement of goods across national borders – had agreed upon a ‘draft consolidated text’ to guide the group’s negotiations in 2010. The announcement drew little attention in the press, but it marks an important step for the talks, which, if concluded, could bring significant gains to the economies of the developing world.

Broadly speaking, the trade facilitation committee has been tasked with slicing through the red tape that causes the movement of goods to slow at international borders. In WTO terms, the group has been mandated to “review and as appropriate, clarify and improve” relevant sections of three articles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (1994): Article V (facilitating transit and trade), Article VII (limiting border fees and formalities), and Article X (making trade regulations transparent).

Updating and streamlining government regulations on these fronts could significantly boost exports from the developing world. According to [the World Bank’s ‘Doing Business’ rankings](#), it takes an average of more than seven weeks for exporters in Venezuela, Zimbabwe and the Central African Republic to ship their goods overseas. The same process takes just five days in Denmark and Singapore. Meanwhile, producers in many developing countries often have to pay US\$ 2,000 or more in fees for each 20-foot container they export. The price is generally much lower in most rich nations, with some exceptions.

Proponents of the trade facilitation talks say that new global trade rules to regulate government policies at the border would make developing countries more attractive to investors and could go a long way toward helping poorer nations play a more active role in the global economy. But certain critical pieces of the puzzle – in-country transportation, warehousing infrastructure, etc. – are beyond the jurisdiction of the WTO.

“The trade facilitation negotiations cover a relatively narrow, but still significant, link in the chain – the actions that governments take to control and administer the way in which goods move across their national borders,” Richard Eglin, director of the WTO’s Trade Policies Review Division, [wrote in a report for the World Economic Forum in 2008](#).

Given the obvious economic benefits to trade facilitation, engaging in talks on the issue may seem like a no-brainer for any trading nation – but the issue has encountered its share of controversy since it was initially tabled at the WTO’s first ministerial meeting, held in Singapore in 1996. From the outset, several developing countries fought the prospect of dedicated negotiations on trade facilitation. A new agreement on the matter could impose heavy administrative burdens on poorer countries, they argued, and additional legal obligations would make them more vulnerable to trade disputes.

But those concerns were ultimately assuaged and official talks commenced during the summer of 2004. But developing countries managed to secure three major concessions: any new regulations would be accompanied by generous technical and financial support; the WTO would help them participate fully in the talks; and they would not have to take on any new commitments until they had been provided with the assistance they needed to help them do so.

‘The home stretch’

The ‘draft consolidated text’ (WTO document TN/TF/W/165) that was released in December reflects all of the proposals that delegations have put forward to date. This means that actually reading through the document’s 52 heavily bracketed pages is a challenge, but all of the

elements of a final agreement are contained within it. Now, it only remains for negotiators to bring those elements into focus.

WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy – who fought hard for the trade facilitation talks to be included in the Doha Round agenda when he was the European Trade Commissioner – warmly welcomed the news of the new draft. “This provides us, for the first time, with a clear picture of what the new [trade facilitation] agreement will contain,” Lamy told a meeting of the full WTO membership last month. “Much still remains to be done in the next months...but we are clearly now on the home stretch.”

When the trade facilitation negotiations pick back up during the second week of February, negotiators will have their work cut out for them. While many of the bracketed sections “can probably be resolved pretty easily,” according to a WTO official, some issues could be more difficult to crack. The negotiations on Special and Differential Treatment for developing and least developed countries will also need particular attention so to ensure that this area of the talks does not “lag behind,” the official added.

But overall, progress thus far has been good. Indeed, trade facilitation is widely seen as “the golden boy” of the Doha Round negotiations, the official said, as the seemingly win-win negotiations have moved steadily over the past few years, even as other areas of the Doha talks have stalled.

ICTSD reporting.

IN BRIEF

Incoming EU Trade Commissioner ‘Confident’ in Doha Outcome

The European Union’s trade commissioner-designate told Members of the European Parliament yesterday that he is “quite confident” that a Doha Round trade deal can be struck this year or next, and that concluding the round is a top priority.

The remarks came during a three-hour question-and-answer session in Brussels that marked the first morning of confirmation hearings for the 26 incoming European commissioners.

Outlining his goals for EU trade policy, Karel De Gucht, the former Belgium minister of foreign affairs, said that strengthening the multilateral trading system is at the top of his list.

“Let us not forget: compared with other international organisations, the WTO is the most advanced model of global governance that exists and we must continue to invest political capital in it,” said De Gucht in his opening remarks.

Yet De Gucht rejected the notion of changing the mandate for the WTO’s current round of negotiations, which were launched in 2001.

Revising the WTO agenda would “cost time and make things more difficult,” he said, when asked by one parliamentarian if the mandate for the talks should be updated to address global challenges like climate change and the financial crisis.

De Gucht added that WTO members have agreed on “90 percent of the topics under negotiation,” and blamed the United States, China and India for the most recent major setback in the talks. Nonetheless, he expressed confidence that a Doha deal could be struck.

"I don't know if it will be in 2010 or 2011, but I am quite confident."

‘No’ to carbon border taxes

De Gucht took a dim view on carbon border taxes, which have been championed in some corners of Europe. These unilateral measures – tariffs imposed on imports from a country that has not comparably offset the greenhouse gas associated a given good’s production – are fiercely opposed by developing countries, which warn that they run counter to multilateral trade rules.

China and India bristled during the Copenhagen climate conference last month, when an American negotiator suggested that carbon border taxes would help level the economic playing field for firms based in countries that adopt ambitious

emission targets. French president Nicolas Sarkozy is also a firm supporter of the measures.

However, De Gucht said carbon border taxes should be avoided because they risked triggering a “trade war.” He said that governments need to adopt an approach “that fits with market laws,” seeming to imply that he does not think that carbon border taxes would comply with WTO rules.

If confirmed, De Gucht will succeed Catherine Ashton as the EU’s top trade official. Ashton left the trade commissioner post last month, after she was nominated to become the European Union’s first ‘High Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy’, a post created under the freshly ratified Lisbon Treaty.

The parliamentary hearings are set to wrap up on 19 January, and a vote is expected on 26 January 26. The EU Parliament must accept or reject the entire suite of designated commissioners; they cannot refuse individual nominations.

ICTSD reporting.

US Senate Makes Progress in Filling Key Trade Posts

The US Senate confirmed one key trade official and took steps toward filling two other critical trade posts over the winter holidays.

Miriam Sapiro was confirmed to the post of Deputy US Trade Representative, in which she will be responsible for trade negotiations with Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. Sapiro will also supervise the USTR’s Office of WTO and Multilateral Affairs and oversee its work on intellectual property, services, and investment. Nominated by President Obama in April, Sapiro was confirmed by the Senate in a vote on Christmas Eve and sworn in on 11 January.

"Miriam Sapiro brings years of valuable expertise and experience and will be a stellar addition to the USTR leadership team," said USTR Ron Kirk in a statement.

Two other appointees are still awaiting their final confirmation. Michael Punke, who has been nominated to serve as US ambassador to the WTO, and Islam Siddiqui, who is to become Washington’s top agriculture negotiator, both won the unanimous approval of the Senate Finance Committee in a vote on 23 December. The two men must still be confirmed by the full Senate before they can take up their posts. A date for such a vote has not yet been set.

Kirk said last month that his office is “look[ing] forward to the timely confirmation” of the two appointees.

If confirmed, Punke would replace Peter Allgeier, who served as the US ambassador to the WTO from 2001 until late last summer. David Shark, Deputy Chief of the US Mission in Geneva, has served as the acting ambassador since Allgeier stepped down.

The recent Senate votes have been a long time coming. Nearly 12 months after President Barack Obama took office, two out of five of the top political posts in the office of the US Trade Representative remain empty; a third slot, Sapiro’s, was only filled this week.

The slow pace of the confirmations has left many WTO officials grumbling about a lack of US presence in the negotiations at the global trade body’s headquarters in Geneva. It is a sign, some say, that Obama has been giving his trade agenda short shrift amid vigorous domestic debates on healthcare reform, climate change, and economic recovery.

ICTSD reporting.

Chile Joins the OECD

In a signing ceremony on Monday, Chile became the first South American country to win membership into the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the exclusive club of industrialised nations.

The ceremony in Santiago followed more than two and a half years of intensive negotiations,

government reforms and economic and policy reviews. The country's membership will be finalised once the Chilean parliament ratifies the OECD's convention.

All countries seeking membership in the Paris-based group must meet the organisation's strict admissions requirements on a range of topics, so as to ensure coherence between the newcomer's policies and those of the organisation's current members.

To that end, Chile implemented numerous reforms over the course of the negotiations, including lifting restrictions to the exchange of banking information; making it possible for companies to be prosecuted for bribery; and increasing the independence of the country's largest state-owned enterprise, Codleco, a copper mining firm.

The Chilean economy has registered an annual growth rate of more than 5 percent each year for the past two decades. Moreover, the country has weathered the recent financial crisis well, according to the OECD, thanks to its "prudent tax policies," which helped generate the revenue necessary to fund government stimulus measures.

Membership in the nearly 50-year-old OECD will allow Chile to participate in the group's policy discussions and be included in the many economic and statistical analyses for which the organisation is known. Perhaps more important, membership in the prestigious economic group is widely considered a significant mark of prestige.

Mexico is the only other Latin American nation in the OECD, which now, with the addition of Chile, counts 31 countries as members. Slovakia, which joined in 2000, was the most recent country to join before Chile signed up.

The OECD has officially invited four other countries – Estonia, Israel, Russia and Slovenia – to begin membership negotiations. All but Russia are expected to join the organisation this year. Preliminary talks are also underway with Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa.

ICTSD reporting.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming up this week

20-21 January, Geneva, Switzerland. REDEFINING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA: INSPIRING GREATER ENGAGEMENT IN BIODIVERSITY ISSUES. This seminar will provide a collaborative platform to discuss the need to redefine sustainability and will emphasise the contribution of businesses and consumers to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 Biodiversity Target. Through the viewpoint of the fashion and luxury industries, participants will gain a unique insight into the role that governments, businesses, and consumers can play in supporting biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources. The 1.5 day programme will include interactive panel discussions and in-depth case studies which will address issues such as redefining sustainability, educating and engaging consumers in biodiversity issues, luxury brands as sustainable role models, among others. The seminar is co-hosted by the UN Conference on Trade and Development and the Hong Kong charity Green2greener as part of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity. There is no cost for participation but pre-registration is required. For further information, please visit <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/meeting.asp?intItemID=2068&lang=1&m=18800> or contact Eduardo Escobedo at +41 22 917 5607 or by email eduardo.escobedo@unctad.org.

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at http://www.wto.org/meets_public/meets_e.pdf. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, and are open to WTO Members and accredited observers only.

19 January: Dispute Settlement Body

22 January: Trade Policy Review Body

Other upcoming events

25 January, Paris, France. 2ND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM ON LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN. This event will be organised by the OECD's Development Centre, the Inter-American Development Bank and the French Ministry of Economy, Industry and Employment. For more information, please email Dev.Americas@oecd.org

27-31 January, Davos, Switzerland. WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ANNUAL MEETING. In response to new priorities, the organising theme for the 40th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in 2010 is a call to action, "Improve the State of the World: Rethink, Redesign and Rebuild." Driving the rethink at the 40th Annual Meeting will be the Network of Global Agenda Councils comprised of over 1,000 experts active in over 70 Councils created to advance solutions to the most critical challenges facing the world. For more information, please see <http://www.weforum.org/en/events/AnnualMeeting2010/index.htm>

5-7 February, New Delhi, India. DELHI SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT (DSDS 2010): BEYOND COPENHAGEN: NEW PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. This global forum will be one of the first major gatherings of leaders from various regions of the world after the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties in December 2009. DSDS 2010 will focus on the formulation and delineation of strategies to move the sustainable development agenda forward. Major themes include accelerating socio-economic development as a key to adaptation, role of technology, building institutions for effective climate governance, and financing opportunities post Copenhagen. For more information, contact the Summit Secretariat: tel: +91-11-2468-2100; fax: +91-11-2468-2144; email: dsds@teri.res.in; internet: <http://dsds.teriin.org/2010/index.php>

18-19 February, Paris, France. 9TH OECD GLOBAL FORUM ON COMPETITION. This meeting will focus on state aids and subsidies and collusion and corruption in public procurement. Participants will also discuss a peer review of competition law and policy in Brazil. The GFC provides an opportunity for policy dialogue between OECD member countries and non-members. The discussion benefits from the input of the Competition Committee, whose work has already generated substantial results in many countries, such as the voluntary adoption of 'best practices', substantial analytical convergence, the establishment of strong networks of enforcement authorities, and enhanced co-operation in international merger reviews, cartel investigations and other cases. For more information, please see http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_40382599_40393118_1_1_1_1_1_1,1,00.html

18 March, London, UK. GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICES: THE IMPACT OF REGULATION ON COMPETITIVENESS. As the global financial crisis shows early signs of receding, this is a key moment to ask what will be the likely future shape and structure of financial services firms. If moves to regulate the industry more tightly are successful, what impact will this have on financial firms' ability to do business? At this event sponsored by Chatham House, policymakers and financial services industry leaders from the major economies will discuss the role, structure and regulation of the financial services industry, and which forums, mechanisms and institutions will be effective in restoring confidence in its activities. For more information, please see <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/gfs/>.

Resources

CONCLUDE DOHA: IT MATTERS! By Bernard Hoekman, Martin Will and Aaditya Mattoo. The World Bank, 2009. The Doha Round must be concluded not because it will produce dramatic liberalisation but because it will create greater security of market access, the authors of this working paper argue. Its conclusion would strengthen, symbolically and substantively, the WTO's valuable role in restraining protectionism

in the current downturn. What is on the table would constrain the scope for tariff protection in all goods, ban agricultural export subsidies in the industrial countries and sharply reduce the scope for distorting domestic support - by 70 per cent in the EU and 60 per cent in the US. Greater market access for the least-developed countries will result from the "duty free and quota free" proposal and their ability to take advantage of new opportunities will be enhanced by the Doha-related "aid for trade" initiative. Finally, concluding Doha would create space for multilateral cooperation on critical policy matters that lie outside the Doha Agenda, most urgently the trade policy implications of climate change mitigation. The working paper is available at http://econ.worldbank.org/external/default/main?pagePK=64165259&theSitePK=469382&piPK=64165421&menuPK=64166093&entityID=000158349_20091118112934

THE WTO SINGLE UNDERTAKING AS NEGOTIATING TECHNIQUE AND CONSTITUTIVE METAPHOR. By Robert Wolfe. *The Journal of International Economic Law*, November 2009. Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. Negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) proceed simultaneously, not sequentially, and all members must accept all the results. The author of this article shows that the so-called Single Undertaking is both a negotiation technique and a constitutive metaphor. It does not cause an outcome to negotiations, whether in a round or the daily life of the WTO, but it shapes the possibility of an outcome. The methodological innovation of the article is the use of counterfactual analysis to assess whether the Single Undertaking can be relaxed using concepts suggested by the various critiques. The study is available at <http://jiel.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/jgp038v1> (subscription or article purchase required).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS IN A CHANGING WORLD. By Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz and Pedro Roffe, eds. December 2009. Intellectual property (IP) has gained an unprecedented importance in the new world of globalisation and the knowledge economy.

However, experience, as well as cyclical attitudes toward IP, show that there is no universal model of IP protection. This comprehensive book considers new and emerging IP issues from a development perspective, examining recent trends and developments in the area. Presenting an overview of the IP landscape, the contributing authors subsequently narrow their focus, providing wide-ranging case studies from countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America on topical issues in the IP discourse. For more information, or to purchase the book, please visit http://www.elgar.co.uk/Bookentry_Main.lasso?id=13620.