



CUTS/WTO Regional Outreach Workshop

“The Multilateral Trading System: Opportunities and Challenges for East Africa”

Nairobi, 29-30 April 2009

Background

Current context and challenges to the multilateral trade system:

The world's economy is currently marked by a severe financial crisis caused, among others, by lack of regulation, supervision and excess. The crisis, which started last year, is having tremendous consequences in every household in the world. Trade has become one of its casualties with a sharp decrease in world trade flows. The biggest challenge today, therefore, is to ensure trade is part of the solution and not part of the problem.

This is why, now more than ever, it is time to stress the value of trade as a multiplier of growth and the value of the multilateral trading system -with its 60 years of global regulation- while tendencies are emerging to engage more intensively in bilateral and regional trade negotiations in which smaller developing countries may have less bargaining power.

The current multilateral trading system is under continuous pressure for further reforms in favour of the interests of developing countries. The Doha “Development” Round launched in 2001 seeks to redress some of the imbalances that currently exist in the rules-based multilateral trading system: The Doha Round also seeks to further the integration of developing countries into the multilateral trading system so that they can better reap the benefits of increased market access opportunities.

Giving the current global economic context, a successful conclusion of the Doha Round would send the political signal that at harsh and difficult times, governments are capable of working together to provide the kind of global answer which is needed and it could be an "insurance policy" against protectionist trends. The Aid for Trade initiative needs also to be maintained and reinforced, particularly now that the crisis is hitting hard many of the most vulnerable countries.

The World Trade Organization (WTO), besides promoting multilateral negotiations, has an important and active role in the midst of the current crisis. It can promote an early end to the recession by restoring sustainable growth in world trade and by monitoring trade and trade-related developments. Governments' stimulus packages and subsidies programs are receiving special attention in order to ensure that economies remain open to competition from abroad. In addition, and as WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy and CUTS Secretary-General Pradeep S Mehta have often highlighted, International Cooperation is the way to overcome the crisis and any isolationist/protectionist measures should be avoided.

But to overcome the crisis and strengthen the foundation of the multilateral trading system efforts from all stakeholders are needed.

In light of the above, the Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) and the WTO will jointly organize a two-day regional workshop from 29 to 30 April 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya on "The Multilateral Trading System: Opportunities and Challenges for East Africa".

The objectives of this regional outreach workshop aim at: (i) fostering greater awareness and interest in the multilateral trading system; (ii) enhancing participants understanding of the basic operations of the WTO, key issues on the international trade agenda, and status of the DDA; and, (iii) encouraging dialogue and exchanges of views and ideas among civil society representatives on trade-related and development-related issues of particular relevance to the EAC countries. In addition, throughout the workshop civil society representatives are encouraged to consider their respective roles in multilateral processes and ways to increase public awareness of the international trade agenda.



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Programme

Tuesday, 28 April 2009

18:00-21:00 Reception Cocktail (Duma Room, Panafric Hotel)

Wednesday, 29 April 2009

08:30-09:00 Registration

09:00-10:00 Opening Session

Welcoming Remarks

- Patrick Low, Director, Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO

Official Opening and Keynote Address

- Hon Amos Kimunya, Minister of Trade of Kenya (TBC)

Introduction to the Workshop

- Clement Onyango, Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) ARC

Chair: **Jasper Okelo**, University of Nairobi

10:00-10:30 Coffee/Tea Break

10:30-12:30 Session One: State of Play of the Doha Round Negotiations: Challenges and Opportunities

Presentation by	Issues to be addressed:
Patrick Low, Director, Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>State of play of the Doha Round Negotiations</i> ▪ <i>Overview of the "development" dimension of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA)</i>
Anne Mwangi, Chair, NCWTO Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Opportunities and Challenges for developing countries, in particular EAC countries</i>

Chair: **Mr. Raymond Agaba**, Commissioner External Trade, Ministry of Trade and Industry

Floor Deliberations

12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

14:00-16:00 Session Two: Trade in Agriculture

Presentation by	Issues to be addressed:
María Pérez Esteve, Counsellor, Information and External Relations Division, WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Overview of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture and State of Play of the negotiations</i>
Atul Kaushik, CUTS Geneva Resource Centre (CUTS-GRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Relevance of the agriculture sector for the EAC: Impacts on employment and export earnings.</i> ▪ <i>Concerns about food security and sustainable rural livelihoods, particularly in view of the continued subsidization and protection of agriculture in OECD countries.</i> ▪ <i>What will be the impact of the latest DDA agriculture modalities on the EAC?</i> ▪ <i>How can international trade contribute to agricultural development, rural livelihoods and food security in the EAC?</i>

Chair: **Eliazar Muga**, Policy Economist, Ministry of Agriculture

Floor Deliberations

16:00-16:30 Coffee/Tea Break**16:30-18:00 Session Three: Standards and Trade: Challenges and Opportunities for the East African Community (EAC)**

Presentation by:	Issues to be addressed:
María Pérez Esteve, Counsellor, Information and External Relations Division, WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Overview of Standards in the WTO: Avenues for EAC countries to deal with standards in the WTO?</i> ▪ <i>The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF)</i>
Gloria Otieno, Institute of Social Studies, Holland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Meeting Standards: challenges and opportunities for EAC countries</i> ▪ <i>The impact of standards on EAC countries' exports</i>

Chair: **Kibre Moges**, Senior Research Officer, Ethiopian Economic Association (EEA)

Floor Deliberations

Thursday, 30 April 2009**09:00-11:00 Session Four: Regional Trade Agreements**

Presentations by:	Issues to be addressed:
Patrick Low, Director, Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Regional Trade Agreements: Challenges and opportunities for the WTO</i> ▪ <i>How can WTO disciplines in this area be improved to safeguard the interests of developing countries?</i>
Amb. Nathan Irumba, SEATINI Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Landscape of Regional Trade Agreements in East Africa: Challenges and Opportunities for the EAC countries</i> ▪ <i>State of play of the EPAs negotiations with the EU</i>

Chair: **Miriam Omolo**, Institute of Economic Affairs, Kenya

Floor Deliberations

11:00-11:30 Tea/Coffee Break**11:30-13:00 Session Five: Aid for Trade**

Presentations by:	<i>Issues to be addressed:</i>
María Pérez Esteve, Counsellor, Information and External Relations Division, WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Overview of the Aid for Trade Initiative and Status of Implementation?</i> ▪ <i>What are the available monitoring mechanisms for implementation of aid for trade commitments?</i>
Victor Ogaló, CUTS ARC, Nairobi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How can Aid for Trade be used to address the challenges faced by East African countries?</i> ▪ <i>What steps can East African countries take to benefit from this initiative?</i>

Chair: **Oduor Ong'wen**, Country Director, SEATINI

Floor Deliberations

13:00-14:00 Lunch Break**14:00-16:00 Panel Discussion: “Multilateralism at Crossroads: Which Way Forward for Developing Countries?”**

Panel presentations (10 minutes for each):		<i>Issues to be addressed</i>
Abdel Gadir Salih, Khartoum University	Sudan	<i>Identify the main challenges and/or opportunities for your country in the following areas:-</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>the WTO/DDA negotiations</i> ▪ <i>the proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements</i> ▪ <i>the food, energy and financial crises</i> ▪ <i>climate change</i> ▪ <i>protectionism and security</i>
<i>Basemera Peace,</i> Ministry of Trade	Rwanda	
<i>John Ochola,</i> Christian Aid	Kenya	
<i>Kibre Moges,</i> EEA	Ethiopia	
<i>Freddy Ndayishimiye,</i> ACOBU	Burundi	
<i>Beatrice Mkenda,</i> Univ. of Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	
<i>Reymond Agaba,</i> Ministry of Trade	Uganda	
<i>Patrick Low,</i> WTO	Geneva, Switzerland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What role can the WTO play to deal with the trade dimension of these challenges and how can multilateralism be strengthened?</i> ▪ <i>What can developing countries do to strengthen multilateralism as a means to promote growth and development for all?</i>

Chair: **Mr. Kassim Omar**, Asst. Vice President, Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Floor Deliberations

16:00-16:30 Tea/Coffee Break**16:00-16:30 Closing Session**

- María Pérez Esteve, Counsellor, Information and External Relations Division, WTO
- Atul Kaushik, CUTS GRC