

# TRADE FACILITATION

## Addressing Consumer and SME Interests and Concerns in Developing Countries

### ABOUT

Facilitated flows of goods can improve the variety, quality and quantity of the offer, push down prices, and increase levels of competition thus benefitting consumers at all levels. SMEs are the “traders” that have less capacity to overcome customs, documentation and infrastructure barriers as they have lower capacity to absorb financial risks. At the same time, they are the larger employer in both developed and developing countries.

The main objective of the session is to identify what are key issues of interest to consumers and SMEs in Trade facilitation (TF) and how they are being considered in the current WTO TF negotiations. The session will identify how TF can contribute to consumer welfare and SMEs competitiveness. It will also seek to draw linkages between current TF standards and consumer and SMEs concerns and how current TF standards could be adapted or improved.

The session will be based on a proposed CUTS project seeking to promote a pro-consumer and pro-competitiveness TF reform in developing countries.

### EVENT DETAILS

**THURSDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2013**  
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM  
WTO building Room S3

### SPEAKERS

**David Vivas Eugui**, Senior Advisor, CUTS International Geneva

**Edouard Bizumuremyi**, Commercial Attaché Mission of Rwanda

**James Baxter**, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Australia to the WTO

**Jan Hoffmann**, Chief, Trade Facilitation Section, TLB, DTL, UNCTAD

**Stephen Fevrier**, Trade Adviser for Small States, Commonwealth Secretariat

Chairman: **Rajesh Aggarwal**, Chief, Business and Trade Policy, ITC

### KEY QUESTIONS

- ▶ What are the key issues for SMEs and consumers in current trade facilitation negotiations in the WTO?
- ▶ Which of the potential new trade facilitation standards will have higher impacts on SMEs and consumers?
- ▶ How improved trade facilitation could better enable SMEs to participate in global value chains and reduce costs for consumers?
- ▶ Is there a need to differentiate between “traders” based on their economic sizes and capacities to overcome trade facilitation barriers and bottlenecks?
- ▶ How consumers groups can be better involved in the design and implementation of TF standards and technical assistance needs assessments?
- ▶ Are there particular products that need fast tracking due to consumer needs (food, drugs, seeds, etc.)?
- ▶ How supportive services such as logistic, transport and financial services can better enable a pro SME and pro consumer TF reform in developing countries?