



Media Advisory: Findings from WTO World Trade Report 2003 to be Outlined



23 August 2003

A media briefing on the recently released WTO World Trade Report 2003 will form part of the 15th General Meeting of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council in Brunei on 1-3 September.

WTO Research Department expert, Mr Bijit Bora, will give the briefing at the Press Conference Hall at the International Convention Centre at 12 pm on Tuesday, September 2 following a Plenary Session on *Doha Faltering: Lessons for Cancun and Beyond*

The World Trade Report provides extensive background to the upcoming WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun on 10-14 September. The Cancun meeting is already shaping up to be a controversial event given a lack of progress in the newly launched Doha Development Agenda.

The 270-page report gives extensive examination to the Doha Development Agenda round of global trade negotiations and states clearly that these talks hold significant potential for raising levels of development in impoverished countries. This is particularly true with respect to negotiations on agriculture and non-agricultural market access.

“There is a powerful case to be made that enhanced market access for poor countries' products, and greater equity in WTO rules, can bolster development efforts”, said the Director General of the WTO, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi. “This report argues forcefully in favour of an intensified engagement in the global trading system by all our Member Governments. Without this greater commitment and leadership from governments, there will be a tendency to postpone the difficult political decisions that must be taken if we are to have a successful Doha round and a stronger global trading system”.

There are two sections to the report. The first section titled “Trade and Trade Policy Developments” focuses on three issues of topical interest: South-South trade; non-oil commodity markets; and regional trade agreements. On each issue, the report analyzes developments over the last few years, highlights their implications, and draws a number of conclusions about the options facing governments.

The second section titled “Trade and Development” starts with a brief discussion of development and the relationship between trade and development, and goes on to analyze in depth how the Doha Development Agenda can contribute to growth and development in developing countries with their engagement in the WTO process.

“This is not simply about meeting targets and completing an agenda”, writes Dr. Supachai. “It is about creating conditions for advancement in all countries, and in particular about expanding opportunities for developing countries through their more effective inclusion in the trading system”.



For the past two decades, PECC has been addressing these very same issues, but within the context of the Asia Pacific region through its Trade, Finance and Community Building Forums. During the 15th PECC General Meeting, participants will be addressing such issues as the interrelationship between regional trading arrangements and the WTO, the Asia Pacific stake in the Doha Agenda and its possible contributions and focused training and education especially for developing economies.

The PECC General Meeting will bring together high-level participants in government, business and research from 23 Asia Pacific economies. PECC has a special place in regional cooperation as an Official Observer of APEC. The Host of APEC 2003, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra will speak at the PECC meeting and will be joined by the Sultan of Brunei, the President of the Philippines and the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia.

For more information go to:

<http://www.pecc.net/PECC2003Brunei>

For media accreditation please visit website:

www.pecc.net/PECC2003Brunei/media.htm

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