

Symposium on Trade in Primary Products and Competition Policy

September 22, 2011 (Thursday) Geneva, Switzerland

Supported by



Objective

To enhance understanding about the existing challenges in the functioning of primary product markets so as to evolve a comprehensive economic governance regime to address anti-competitive behaviour and other related concerns.

Background

Primary product markets are complex in their structure and susceptible to a variety of factors that are seen to cause volatilities in their prices. Not much has been understood about the factors determining such fluctuations as well as anti-competitive practices prevalent in such markets that ultimately raise the costs and adversely affect national economic development.

A sound theoretical understanding of the market structure and the distortions therein is critical in understanding market dysfunctions and governance challenges in the primary product markets. This is an imperative along with the objective of designing a sound domestic competition policy framework so as to successfully target such market imperfections. Such policy options should be looked at how they complement the relevant WTO agreements.

Agenda

The following issues will be covered in different thematic sessions:

- Understanding how primary (agricultural and mineral) product markets work
- Anti-competitive practices and market structures in primary product markets
- Governance of primary product markets and its impact on developing countries
- Systemic issues and policy options for the future

Context

Against this background, on Thursday, the 22nd of September 2011, CUTS International will be organizing a Symposium on Trade in Primary Product Markets and Competition Policy in Room W of Centre William Rappard, Geneva. The event, being organized by CUTS International with the generous support of European Commission (EC), Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) and Agence Française Développement (AFD), will follow the annual WTO Public Symposium (to be held in Geneva on 19-21, September 2011).

The Symposium will witness a high-level participation of experts in trade and competition issues from different parts of the world representing multilateral institutions, governments, academic community and civil society. There are over 20 experts participating as speakers and discussants. The event and its outputs are targeted at the global trade and competition community, including the Geneva-based trade and development community.

The papers presented at the event will be published in the form of an E-book by CEPR, while the proceedings will be published by CUTS.

Trade in Primary Products and Competition Policy
Room CR, WTO, 154 Rue de Lausanne, Centre William Rappard 1211 Geneva,
Switzerland
September 22, 2011

PROGRAMME AGENDA

Opening Session		9.00-9:30 AM
<p>Ramamurti Badrinath, Director, CUTS Geneva Resource Centre Frederic Jenny, Chairman, Competition Committee, OECD Alejandro Jara, Deputy Director General, World Trade Organisation</p>		
Session I: How do primary product markets work?		9:30-11:00AM
<p><i>Chair: Flavio Damico</i> <i>Minister Counsellor,</i> <i>Permanent Mission of Brazil</i></p>		
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Discussants</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market structures • Determinants of supply and demand • Role of speculation and the 'financialisation' of commodities • Anticompetitive practices • Government interventions • Effect on developing countries 	<p>Steve McCorrison Head, Department of Economics and Professor of Agricultural Economics, Exeter Business School, UK</p> <p>Marian Radetzki Professor of Economics, Lulea University of Technology, Sweden</p>	<p>Jamel Zarrouk Chief, Economics and Technical Department, Arab Monetary Fund, Abu Dhabi</p> <p>Qian Hao Associate Professor, China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing, China</p> <p>Ahmed Ghoneim Professor of Economics, Cairo University, Egypt</p>
Session II: Anti-competitive practices in primary markets		11:00-12:30 PM
<p><i>Chair: Ambassador Tim Yeend</i> <i>Ambassador & Permanent Representative to the WTO</i> <i>Permanent Mission of Australia</i></p>		
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Discussants</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International export cartels in primary products • Vertical exclusive arrangements • Monopsony power in international agri-food products 	<p>Frédéric Jenny Chairman, Competition Committee, OECD</p> <p>John M Connor Professor of Agricultural Economics, Purdue University, Indiana, USA</p> <p>Bibek Debroy Professor of Economics, Centre for Policy Research and International Management Institute, New Delhi, India</p>	<p>Marc Ivaldi Professor, Toulouse School of Economics and Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Toulouse, France</p> <p>Aradhna Aggarwal Director, CUTS International</p> <p>Kusha Haraksingh Chair, Caribbean Community Competition Commission, Trinidad & Tobago</p>

Session III: Anticompetitive practices: Governance and Challenges		2:00-3:30PM
<i>Chair: Guillermo Valles</i> <i>Director, International Trade in Goods, Services and Commodities, UNCTAD</i>		
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Discussants</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Export cartels and exemptions from domestic competition laws (e.g. material distribution) • Export restrictions in raw materials • Transnational mergers and acquisitions in raw materials: effects and remedies 	<p>Simon Evenett Professor of International Trade and Economic Development and Director of Swiss Institute for International Economics, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland</p> <p>Pradeep Mehta Secretary-General, CUTS International</p>	<p>Eugenio Diaz-Bonilla Executive Director for Argentina and Haiti, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, DC, USA</p> <p>Dmitri Rylko General Director, Institute for Agricultural Market Studies (IKAR), Moscow, Russia</p>
Session IV: Systemic issues & policy options for the future		3:30-5:30PM
<i>Chair: Michael Plummer</i> <i>Head, Development Division, OECD</i>		
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Discussants</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can competition policy help improve the performance of primary products markets? • To what extent are competition policy principles already built into or interface with WTO Agreements? • Conflicts of jurisdictions and overlapping remedies: issues and solutions. • How does the development of competition policy in major developing countries affect the issue? 	<p>Will Martin Research Manager, Agriculture and Rural Development, in the Development Research Group.</p> <p>Robert Anderson Counsellor, Intellectual Property Division, World Trade Organization</p>	<p>Vera Thorstensen Professor, School of Economics of São Paulo (FGV Foundation)</p> <p>Simon Evenett Professor of International Trade and Economic Development and Director of Swiss Institute for International Economics, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland</p>
Closing Session		5.30-6:00 PM
<p>Ramamurti Badrinath, Director, CUTS Geneva Resource Centre Frederic Jenny, Chairman, Competition Committee, OECD</p>		

For further details and clarifications, please contact:

Ms. Natasha Nayak

Policy Analyst, CUTS International

E-mail: nn2@cuts.org, Phone (Cellular): +918696773382