

The Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization is ongoing in Bali, Indonesia, until Friday 6 December 2013. WTO members are expected to advance their discussions on several important issues of the Doha round, including in agriculture, Development/LDC issues and Trade Facilitation, with the aim of concluding deals and revive the Doha Round. Events are also organised on the sidelines at an NGO centre set up for the occasion. CUTS International is there to update you every day on the highlights of the conference.

Plenary Today

The conference was opened by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Hon'ble Dr. Sussilo Bambang Yudhoyono who said that 'failing to claim a Bali package is to lose a giant opportunity.'

He was followed by the chairman, Indonesia's trade minister Gita Wirjawan, who appealed for "all WTO members to come together this week to make the necessary breakthroughs." He also said that it is necessary to show that the multilateral trading system still works.

In his address, Roberto Azevedo, the Director General, WTO said to the trade ministers of the 159 member countries that "It's now or never, a deal is still possible for multilateral trading system to re-emerge. It is all in your hands now."

Finally, the chairman of the General Council, Ambassador Shahid Bashir of Pakistan highlighted the advances of the WTO since the last ministerial conference.

Negotiation Insights

While a lot of backdoor activity seemed to be already happening on the first day, negotiations are expected to pick up over the next two days.

Reportedly, the 'peace clause' for food security in agriculture along side the trade facilitation agreement is the sticking point in the Bali deal. In this context, the blame game has intensified between big industrialised countries and emerging countries despite the fact that emerging countries are the most interested parties in taking forward the multilateral trading system at the WTO.

It is in this parlance that this week will be a make-or-break for the WTO: failing to deliver may result in significantly weakening the organisation in favour of the many, yet less equitable, bilateral agreements under negotiation outside the WTO.

Other Events

REFLECTIONS ON GLOBAL TRADE: FROM DOHA TO BALI AND

In this Bulletin

Plenary Today
Negotiation Insights
Side Events

About CUTS

Since its humble beginnings in 1983 as a local indian consumer-advocacy group of 75 activists, CUTS has grown into an international NGO champion of stakeholder empowerment in economic and development policy.

CUTS organizations in India, Kenya, Zambia, Vietnam, Ghana and Geneva have made their footprints in the realm of economic governance across the developing world. Our activities stretch from Asia to Africa, and from South America to beyond.

CUTS is also a trusted technical cooperation and knowledge partner of international organizations such as the WTO and UNCTAD, where it has consultative status.

cuts-international.org

This event organised in the Bali International Convention Center heard lively and thought-provoking presentations by a high-level panel consisting of current and former ambassadors, heads of NGOs and high-level functionaries of international organizations.

In his keynote address, Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, described the launch of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) as an attempt for development-related trade rule-making. He also mentioned that the future of global development discourse will be shaped by the outcomes of Rio+20, post-2015 development goals and World Summit on Information Society – WSIS 2.

The panelists traced the history of the multilateral trading system from the inequities of the Uruguay round to the development promise of the DDA that has not been met. Many of them also pointed out major changes in global economic geography and global economy requiring global solutions.

While recognising the importance of rule-making, some panelists advised against putting too much emphasis on the so-called “legislative side” and gave examples where national capacity-building and developments have led to significant progress despite the lack of international rules, e.g. competition and investment policies.

The main message of the discussion was the need for coherence among policies as well as international institutions. Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary-General CUTS and a member of the High Level Panel on the Future of Trade particularly emphasized this point. He reiterated the need for a Geneva Consensus among international organisations on trade and related issues. He also spoke in favour of geographically contiguous regional trade agreements that have a positive history of enlarging economic spaces and yielding peace dividends.

JOINT PRESS COMMUNIQUE ON COOPERATION IN COTTON INDUSTRY BETWEEN PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND THE COTTON 4 COUNTRIES | BY PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND THE COTTON 4 COUNTRIES

People’s Republic Of China and the Cotton 4 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad) held consultations today in Bali to review the progress and outcomes of cooperation in cotton-related areas since the 8th ministerial conference.

The C4 expressed appreciation to China for its productive efforts in fulfilling the commitments of the joint communiqué issues during the 8th ministerial conference. The two sides also agreed on a six-point technical and finance programme that will be executed by the end of 2014 within the envelope of USD 20 million offered by China to C4 in 2011.

The cotton issue was the invisible deal breaker in the July 2008 negotiations. In view of changed circumstances in terms of prices etc. it is no longer a sticking point in the current ministerial.

Ph: +91 141 2282821 | Fax: +91 141 2282485
Email: cuts@cuts.org | Skype: cuts-ho