



Programme

Unlocking the potential for the World Trade Organization to deliver modern trade deals

Monday 14 – Wednesday 16 March 2016 | WP1456

The last two World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conferences have delivered significant progress. At MC9 in 2013, Ministers agreed the Trade Facilitation Agreement: the first full new multilateral agreement at the WTO since the organisation was formed in 1995 and by far the most significant deliverable so far from the long-running Doha Round, delivering around half the economic value of the Round.

The Ministerial Decision on export competition, agreed at MC10, is the biggest agriculture deal in the organisation's history. MC10 also saw the conclusion of the Information Technology Agreement II, which is the WTO's first major tariff cutting deal since 1996 – demonstrating that plurilateral negotiations within the WTO can deliver results.

However, these successes were delivered in spite of the persistent and fundamental divisions between members on the negotiating agenda of the WTO. For the first time, Ministers at MC10 acknowledged that the organisation's membership is divided on how to progress future negotiations in the WTO. While recognising the "strong commitment of all Members to advance negotiations on the remaining Doha issues", it is clear a new approach is needed to deliver progress. Ministers also noted that some members will wish to identify and bring new issues to WTO negotiations.

The WTO finds itself at a pivotal moment. The UK government is committed to international diplomatic engagement to ensure that the WTO re-establish itself as the driving force for global trade liberalisation and the pre-eminent forum for trade negotiations. To deliver this ambition, it is clear that the flexibility, creativity and political will that has enabled these recent successes will need to be harnessed to provide a new framework for negotiations.

By convening an outcome-focussed meeting for a group of senior international trade experts from a range of WTO member countries, participants at this Wilton Park event will deliver a set of recommendations on how to codify best practice to drive future progress. What has the WTO done well? Where have subject-specific negotiations and flexible approaches enabled progress?

In association with:



Monday 14 March

1300-1430

Participants arrive and buffet lunch available

1500

Welcome and introduction

Kathryn Hingston

Programme Director, Wilton Park

Chris Barton

Director, International Trade and Export Control, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), London

1515-1645

1. Key lessons from the 10th Ministerial Conference in Nairobi

An examination of the outcomes of the 10th Ministerial Conference in Nairobi. What went well? What lessons can be learned?

Daniel Blockert

Ambassador; Permanent Representative of Sweden to the World Trade Organization, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Vangelis Vitalis

Ambassador; Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization, Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva; Chair, Committee on Agriculture in Special Session

1645-1730

Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1730-1900

2. Successful negotiations: what makes a good deal?

- Where have WTO negotiations been successful and why?
- What can be learned from different approaches to negotiations in the WTO?
- What are the negotiations that have enabled progress? What were the key factors in these?
- Which negotiations have broken down and what prompted their breakdown?
- What has changed since 2001 and what areas of common interest can be found?
- Lessons learned from the Trans Pacific Partnership and COP21

Jonathan Fried

Ambassador; Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization, Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

David Shark

Deputy Director General, World Trade Organization (WTO), Geneva

Barry Lowen

Head, Economic Growth and Business Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), London

1900

Reception followed by dinner

Tuesday 15 March

0800-0845

Breakfast

0900-0915

Welcome back

Kathryn Hingston

Programme Director, Wilton Park

Paul Walters

Deputy Director, International Trade, Department for International Development (DFID), London

0915-1045

3. Identifying and prioritising new directions for the World Trade Organization

- What specific new issues should the WTO look to address –for example, digital trade?
- What other fora operate on this subject area, what is their focus and how would WTO activity on this issue add additional value?
- How could this new issue be taken forward in the WTO?
- What are developing country interests in this new issue and how can they be focused on in any future activity?
- What would success on this new issue by MC11 look like?

Julian Braithwaite

Ambassador; Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz

Chief Executive, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), Geneva

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

Briefing for Session 4 workshop facilitators

1115-1245

4. Workshops: operationalising the new narratives – what can we learn from plurilateral ways of working?

How might plurilateral negotiations help to effectively tackle the Doha and post-Doha agenda?

Looking at the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA), the expanded Information Technology Agreement (ITA II), the Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), how can we make plurilaterals more inclusive, help developing and least developed countries consider the benefits of joining plurilaterals, and make sure that new approaches do not leave much of the WTO membership behind?

Facilitators:

Remigi Winzap

Ambassador; Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the World Trade Organization, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the World Trade Organization and EFTA; Chair of the WTO Negotiating Group on Market Access (NAMA), Geneva

Harald Neple

Ambassador; Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization and EFTA, Permanent Mission of Norway in Geneva

1245-1415

Lunch

1345

Briefing for Session 6 workshop facilitators

1415-1500

5. Feedback from workshops

1500-1630

6. Workshops: delivering remaining issues – what to prioritise and how to get there

Do we need to re-package some of these issues to make progress? Can we make incremental progress to build more momentum? What have we committed to do by MC11?

- Agriculture: can we make progress on domestic subsidies and market access? How do we resolve the special safeguard mechanism and public stockholding by MC11?
- NAMA: what has already been delivered through the plurilateral agenda and how can more countries benefit from this progress? What is next after EGA and ITA II?
- Services: what is next in services? Does the Understanding on Financial Services or the Basic Telecoms Agreement offer alternative models for the way forward?
- Rules: Can a plurilateral approach be applied to rules? Is there potential for progress on fish or anti-dumping, state trading enterprises and horizontal subsidies?

Facilitators:

Hamish McCormick

Ambassador; Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization, Permanent Mission of Australia to the World Trade Organization, Geneva

Pascal Kerneis

Managing Director, European Services Forum (ESF), Brussels

Debapriya Bhattacharya

Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Dhaka

Andrew Staines

Economic Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

1630-1700

Tea/coffee

1700-1800

7. Feedback from workshops

1800-1815

8. Complete eQuestionnaire

1815-1930

9. Conclusions and commitments to action

Kathryn Hingston

Programme Director, Wilton Park

Paul Walters

Deputy Director, International Trade, Department for International Development (DFID), London

1930

Reception followed by conference dinner

Wednesday 16 March

0800-0845

Breakfast and checkout

0900

Participants depart