

WORKING SESSION AT THE WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2017

MAKING TRADE BENEFIT WORKERS

GENEVA

27 SEPT. 2017
14:00 – 15:30

World Trade Organization
Room S3

Welcome Remarks

Adrienne Woltersdorf

Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Office
for Regional Cooperation in Asia

Speakers

Do Quynh Chi

Director, Research Centre
for Employment Relations, Vietnam

Henner Gött

LL.M. (Cantab.), PhD Candidate,
University of Göttingen

Mr Paolo Garzotti

Deputy Permanent Representative
of the EU to the WTO

Georgios Altintzis

Trade Policy Officer,
International Trade Union Confederation

Moderator

Hubert René Schillinger

Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Geneva

To ensure that the benefits of trade are more equally shared, special attention needs to be given to decent work in global supply or value chains (GVC). The asymmetric power relationship in GVCs leads to downward pressure on wages and working conditions as suppliers in developing countries have little control over price-setting. Research from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan, and Vietnam shows that the labour cost in garments and footwear production is only a tiny fraction of the retail price yet workers are in many cases not paid the minimum wage let alone a living wage. Moreover, social clauses in trade agreements have so far had little impact on the enforcement of the ILO core labour standards, let alone other legally binding ILO conventions. More robust clauses could perhaps change this. This Working Session aims to discuss how to address these challenges in order to create a virtuous circle generating benefits for all, including workers in the developing world, with researchers from Vietnam and Germany together with representatives of the EU and trade unions.

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Do Quynh Chi (Ph.D. in Industrial relations) is the co-founder and director of the Research Center for Employment Relations, an independent research institute in Vietnam. Before that, she used to work for the Ministry of Labour in Vietnam and the International Labour Organization (ILO). For the past 16 years, she has been doing research on labour relations in manufacturing industries, rural migration, labour law and global supply chains. She also provides trainings and advising for companies, NGOs, unions, and workers in Vietnam.

Henner Gött is a research fellow and PhD candidate with Prof. Dr. Peter-Tobias Stoll at the Institute for International and European Law, Department for International Economic Law and Environmental Law, University of Göttingen. He holds degrees in law from the Universities of Münster and Cambridge and completed his legal clerkship with positions at the German Federal Foreign Office, the German Federal Constitutional Court and two international law firms. His research focuses on international law, especially international economic law and international labour law, international institutional law, as well as on European and German constitutional law.

Paolo Garzotti was appointed Deputy Permanent representative of the European Union Mission to the World Trade Organization in Geneva in September 2016. Following his studies at the Faculty of Law of the University of Trento, he started his career in the European Commission in 1994 in the Directorate-General for Customs and Taxation. In 1998, Paolo Garzotti moved to Directorate-General for Trade. Before coming to Geneva, was in charge of the division (Head of Unit) dealing with multilateral affairs as well as the one responsible for coordinating trade policy with the Council and the European Parliament.

Georgios Altintzis is the policy advisor of the International Trade Union Confederation on trade, investment and labour rights. He coordinates trade unions' engagement with global governance processes, like the G20, and international organizations working on trade and investment.

Before joining the Singapore office, **Adrienne Woltersdorf** was Resident Representative for Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Kabul, Afghanistan from 2012 to 2015. As a journalist, Adrienne was the head of the Chinese programmes at Deutsche Welle. Before that she was based in Berlin and Washington DC where she was the political correspondent for the German daily taz, die tageszeitung. She holds a master's degree in sinology, political science and modern history from Freie Universität (FU) Berlin.

Hubert René Schillinger is Director of the FES Geneva office, which serves as liaison office to Geneva-based international organizations and specializes in trade policies, international social policies and human rights. Since joining FES in 1980, he has held various positions at FES headquarters and abroad, including project leader in Senegal and FES country director in Morocco, South Africa and Namibia. From mid-2009 to mid-2014 he led FES Dialogue on Globalization Programme at FES headquarters in Berlin. He holds a master's degree in economics from the University of Constance, Germany and graduated from the Center for Advanced Training in Rural Development (SLE) at Technical University, Berlin.

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