



## WTO Public Forum 2008

### CUTS / FES Geneva / Evian Group Session

# *“What Future for Global Economic Governance? - Potential Role of the WTO”*

**25 September 2008, 11:15 - 13:15 hrs.**

**Venue: WTO Main Building, Ground Floor, Room W**

#### **Panellists:**

*Moderator:* Rashid S. Kaukab, Deputy Director, CUTS Geneva Resource Centre, Geneva  
*Speakers:*

- Winfried Veit, Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Geneva
- Debapriya Bhattacharya, Ambassador & Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the WTO and UN Offices, Geneva
- James Howard, Director, Economic & Social Policy, International Trade Union Confederation, Brussels
- Felix Peña, Director, Instituto de Comercio Internacional, Member of the Evian Group at IMD Brains Trust, Buenos Aires

#### **Topic:**

This session will argue that global economic governance should be dominated by the overall goal and principles of sustainable development. As part of this system, the WTO should also take into account this objective in order not to undermine it and rather take steps to actively promote it. There is no ambitious commitment by the rich countries to reform their trade regimes substantially and to provide effective market access opportunities for developing countries. In the coming time, even when the Doha Round of the WTO is completed, its effective implementation by way of accommodating the development aspects will depend on various other factors, which can be tackled through enhancing global governance for development. Thus, the role of the WTO comes to play its part by way of re-instilling the accountability factor among its member nations. The WTO is a member-driven organisation and member states themselves will need to play a major role to enforce the rules and to ensure the development outcomes of multilateral

trade liberalisation. Furthermore, the onus lies more on rich countries to ensure fair play and positive discrimination in favour of poor countries.

Thus, keeping this in mind, a civil society dialogue is proposed to identify the role of WTO in the global economic governance system; to discuss how it could become more development-enhancing; and to identify the scope and measures for the developed and more advanced developing countries to play a fuller and more effective role in facilitating growth and development in the rest of the world (particularly in the poorer world), i.e. beyond their national borders and regional economic groupings. Based on this, the session aims to formulate recommendations for making global economic governance more effective for sustainable development.

**Questions:**

- What are the positive and negative factors of the current Global Economic Governance System, as identified by participants of the ongoing FES Scenario Building Project on “Global Economic Governance 2020”?;
- What are key WTO governance issues, how do they affect the Global Economic Governance System and what are the lessons learnt (from an LDC and SVE perspective) taking into account the failed July 2008 “Mini-Ministerial”?;
- How could the social dimension of globalisation be better addressed in the Global Economic Governance System?;
- What are the possible future directions of the Global Economic Governance System and what role should the WTO play as part of it?

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