

CUTS CITEE in Action

October-December 2011

Events

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FRONTLINE: Developing Country Negotiators in the WTO

A new book published by CUTS International, was launched in Geneva on December 14, 2011, on the eve of the 8th WTO Ministerial Conference, by Rob Davies, Trade & Industry Minister of South Africa and Dr H V Singh, Deputy Director General of the WTO alongwith Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS, Dr Matthes Buhbe, Resident Director, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Geneva and R Badrinath, Director, CUTS, Geneva.



L to R: Dr Matthes Buhbe, R Badrinath, Dr H V Singh, Pradeep S Mehta and Rob Davies

The event was attended by representatives of the international trade and development community who were gathered in Geneva to attend the 8th WTO Ministerial Conference.

The publication, edited by Pradeep S Mehta, Atul Kaushik and Rashid Kaukab of CUTS, was made possible by the critical support of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, both long term development partners of CUTS.

This unique book has received enthusiastic response from the trade and development community. Because, it captures the 10 year history of the Doha Round negotiations, through the eyes of developing country negotiators. More often, the overloaded and understaffed developing country negotiators are unable to write their unique experiences. But many did rise to the challenge after sustained persuasion and have earned the title of Scholar-Ambassadors by Minister Davies.

Through nine chapters on substantive negotiating issues and seven others on negotiating coalitions, the book preserves the key moments, strategies, experiences and knowledge on negotiations as experienced and analysed by developing country negotiators. These negotiators share their hands on experience and insights, as well as their views on the future. It will thus be a valuable resource for the trade policy community as:

- record of the tumultuous history from the developing countries' views,
- database for researchers,
- a training resource for contemporary and future negotiators, and
- inspiration to others to write similarly.

http://cuts-international.org/pdf/Reflections_from_the_Frontline_Developing_Country_Negotiators_in_the_WTO.pdf

Redefining Paradigms of Sustainable Development in South Asia

CUTS organised two sessions entitled, 'Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia' and 'Cost of Economic Non-Cooperation to Consumers in South Asia' at the 14th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) 'Redefining Paradigms of Sustainable Development in South Asia' organised by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Islamabad, Pakistan on December 13-15, 2011.



The SDC series has been established as a prime Conference in South Asia on development issues attracting leading intellectuals, development practitioners, communities and policy-makers working in or on South Asian issues.

Bipul Chatterjee of CUTS in the session on 'Climate Change Concerns and their Possible Impacts on South Asian Countries' said food insecurity and livelihood threats in South Asia are due to climate change impacts such as flooding and sea levels rise. He called for adopting climate resilient measures including low carbon economy to minimise the impacts of climate change.

http://sdpi.org/sdc/concept_note.php?event_id=45



BRICS Trade & Economics Research Network Launched

Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Trade & Economics Research Network (BRICS-TERN) is an initiative in the direction of promoting cross regional cooperation through research and advocacy on a wide range of contemporary issues. Five reputed policy research organisations from each of the BRICS countries came together to form the network.

This initiative was launched in Shanghai on November 19, 2011 at the WTO Annual Conference to commemorate the 10th anniversary of China's accession to the WTO. On the lines the gaining importance of preferential trade agreements (PTAs) grew in the last two decades which is reflected with the phenomenal rise of intra-regional and cross-regional PTAs between 1990 and 2010.

Acknowledging the trend, partners shared their countries' experiences *vis-à-vis* the role of PTAs to buttress development through trade, cooperation and strategic relations at the meeting and highlighted the role the network can play in advocating for increasing intra-BRICS trade and investment for mutual benefits.

Apart from the BRICS-TERN partners, Faizel Ismail, Ambassador of South Africa to the WTO; Sun Zhenyu, former Ambassador of China to the WTO; Gopal K Pillai, former Commerce & Home Secretary of India; Cheng Shuaihua, Head-Asia Pacific and China, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development; Feng Shaolei, Head of the School of International Relations and Regional Studies, East China Normal University; and Li Zhongzhou, Chief Expert of EU-China Trade Project added their valuable inputs to the discussion.

During the meeting the future actions points were decided. Based on the discussion, mention areas of research were identified; papers would be prepared on these and discussed in the next meeting scheduled in March 2012 prior to the BRICS Leaders Summit, as research inputs and recommendations could be flagged at the Summit.

<http://cuts-international.org/BRICS-TERN/>

Upcoming Events

Assessing Consumer Behaviour on Energy Efficient Products in India

CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE) with the support of the ClimateWorks Foundation, US through Shakti Sustainable Foundation, New Delhi will be organising the final dissemination meeting of the project entitled, 'Assessing Consumer Behaviour on Energy Efficient Products in India' in New Delhi, on January 25, 2012. The objective of this meeting is to disseminate CUTS findings from the field study and also to receive comments from the experts. On the basis of the comments received, the report will be finalised. In the mentioned meeting people from government departments to representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs), business houses, academia and media will be invited.

www.cuts-citee.org/CONBEE/Dissemination_Meeting-CONBEE.htm

Cost of Economic Non-Cooperation to Consumers in South Asia

CUTS CITEE with the support of The Asia Foundation will organise a final dissemination meeting of the project entitled, 'Cost of Economic Non-Cooperation to Consumers in South Asia' in Kathmandu, on February 03-04, 2012. The objective of this meeting is to disseminate CUTS findings from the field study and also to receive comments for the experts. On the basis of the comments received, the report will be finalised. In the mentioned meeting government officials of five project countries (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal) will be invited. Apart from that, CSO representatives, business houses, academia and media will also be invited.

www.cuts-citee.org/COENCOSA/Dissemination_Meeting.htm

Latest Publications

Grassroots Reachout of Foreign Trade Policy: Evidence from Indian States



Given the ground reality that the national trade policy making process in India is centralised and adequate channels of communication between the grassroots and the policy makers are yet to be established and implemented, CUTS stepped in to act as a conduit or channel linking those framing the NFTP to those affected by it. CUTS has performed three major roles in this regard through the Grassroots Reachout and Networking in India on Trade and Economics Phase II project namely demystifying the trade policy, taking feedback from those affected by the policy to those implementing it and communicating this feedback to the formulators so that adequate changes can be made taking into account the demands and needs of the grassroots.

This monograph analyses the findings emerging from product-specific case analyses carried out in the third year of Phase 2 and tries to relate these to findings emerging from the studies carried out in the first two years of the project. These case analyses are intended to complete the scenario presented by those carried out in the second year.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Grassroots_Reachout_of_Foreign_Trade_Policy.pdf

Fiscal Federalism in India: Call to Revisit the Debate

In a large and diversified country like India fiscal federalism should be practiced in its letter and spirit. However, in India the fundamentals of fiscal federalism have been eroded over time. Given this era of coalition governments at the Centre and also in many states, fiscal federalism assumes a greater significance.

This Issue Note for our parliamentarians, legislatures and the polity at large including non-state actors deals with the concept and importance of fiscal federalism, summarises its current state of affairs in India, and offers some important points for discussion.

www.parfore.in/pdf/1-2011Fiscal_Federalism_in_India_Call_to_Revisit_the_Debate.pdf

Participation

- **Anutosh Biswas** spoke at a National Workshop on Handloom Sector: Inclusive Growth Policies organised by Chetna Society and with support of Oxfam India and European Commission in New Delhi, on December 12, 2011.
- **Archana Jatkar** participated in an 'Interactive Workshop on Harmonisation of Criteria for Ecolabels, in Mumbai, on December 01-02, 2011.
- **Faisal Ahmed** delivered a lecture to Post Graduate students on 'Economic Integration in the Emerging World Order' at Institute for Integrated Learning in Management, Greater Noida, Delhi NCR on November 30, 2011.
- **Archana Jatkar** spoke at an interactive workshop on IPR and Patenting issues in Traditional Medicine organised by Department of AYUSH and Ministry of External Affairs, in New Delhi, on October 10-11, 2011.

In Media

SAFTA: Overlooked Barriers; Underrated Benefits

Diplomatist, December 16, 2011

Joseph George

The fact that South Asian countries are importing many products from outside the region although regional trading partners are relatively more price competitive, also indicates the existence of numerous non-tariff barriers. As noted by many research studies, intra-regional trade costs because of poor connectivity and transport infrastructure, costly customs procedures and absence of adequate trade finance is very high in South Asia.

www.cuts-citee.org/article-SAFTA_Overlooked_Barriers_Underrated_Benefits.htm

A win-win trade for India & Pakistan

The Financial Express, October 18, 2011

Pradeep S Mehta and Abid Suleri

Both Pakistan and India are members of the World Trade Organisation and also of the South Asia Free Trade Agreement. The WTO agreement requires each member state to grant Most Favoured Nation status to all other members to facilitate smooth trade flows. SAFTA takes up closer economic cooperation among all member states of SAARC. Alas, in the case of Pakistan and India there are several bottlenecks in achieving a harmonious trade relationship in spite of both the agreements. Why should the status remain status quo, when both will gain hugely.

www.cuts-citee.org/article-A_win-win_trade_for_India_and_Pakistan.htm

The 'Greenhouse' Effect

The Great Indian Dream, October 2011

Suresh P Singh

The development of renewable sources of energy (wind, solar, hydro-electric energy etc.) is considered to be at its nascent stage and is yet to reach a level where it can guarantee a sustained economic growth.. To address various barriers that exist and could hamper the progress of S&L programme in India, an integrated market transformation programme is required with a combination of both regulatory and market based activities.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Article-The_Greenhouse_Effect.pdf

Centre should consult states on its SEZ policy

November 29, 2011, Jaipur

"The SEZ Act of 2005 has significantly achieved its objectives which are compatible with the National Foreign Trade Policy of India. Much needed investments in new activities have been generated leading to income and employment generation and other positive multiplier effects on local economies," said Pradeep Mehta, Secretary General of CUTS International. He was reacting to the Discussion Paper on Potential Reform of the SEZ Policy and Operating Framework, prepared by the Department of Commerce, Government of India.

www.cuts-citee.org/press_release-Centre_should_consult_states_on_its_SEZ_policy.htm

Durban Climate Change Deal: A Good Beginning to a Challenging Time Ahead

December 13, 2011, Jaipur

'The commitment, to forge a comprehensive global treaty on climate change, by the countries meeting in Durban, South Africa, is a far sighted move in upholding consumers right to healthy environment. It is commendable that countries decided to keep aside respective objectives of their own, in order to achieve a greater common and long term solution to climate change, at a multilateral platform', said Pradeep S Mehta on the outcome of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Durban 2011.

www.cuts-citee.org/press_release-Durban_Climate_Change_Deal_A_Good_Beginning_to_a_Challenging_Time_Ahead.htm