

INFORMATION NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

WTO Public Forum

“The Forces Shaping World Trade”

15-17 September 2010

The WTO Public Forum represents an important opportunity for the public at large to engage in open discussion about the state of world trade and the latest global issues. This year the Public Forum has as its theme "The Forces Shaping World Trade". It intends to explore how different factors on the world scene have an impact on the multilateral trading system, and to examine the WTO's role in bolstering international trade flows and strengthening trade rules.

In the 15 years since the establishment of the WTO, the world has undergone major changes that have had an important impact on international trade. A shift of power has occurred in international politics, leading to the rise of new political actors on the global scene. But the forces shaping world trade go beyond political stakeholders. Non-state actors are also influencing trade policy formulation both at the national and international level. At the same time, new issues are changing the nature of how the public views trade, and new technologies have changed the way business is conducted and the way people interact. Finally, the economic and financial crisis has posed new and more pressing challenges for the multilateral trading system.

Against this backdrop, this year's Public Forum wishes to identify future steps for the WTO. While the Doha Development Agenda remains a priority, the WTO needs to assess its post-crisis agenda, to continue brainstorming on all aspects of WTO work, and to contribute to greater coherence across issues of global governance. For further information on this year's programme and core themes, visit our website <http://www.wto.org/publicforum>.

We kindly invite you to forward this message to any civil society organizations in your country who might have an interest in participating and contributing to the discussions during the WTO Public Forum 2010.

If you have any suggestions on how to ensure that this Public Forum is a success, please contact Maria Perez-Esteve (tel.: +41 22 739 55 46, email: maria.perez-esteve@wto.org) from the Information and External Relations Division.

The global importance of this year's topic makes your participation and contribution even more valuable. We invite you to book these dates in your calendar and to engage with the WTO and its stakeholders in discussing the "forces shaping world trade".
