

**INVITATION TO WTO MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A WTO SYMPOSIUM ON
CURRENT ISSUES FACING THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM**

I would like to invite you to participate in a symposium which will be held in Geneva on 6 and 7 July 2001. This event will focus on some of the challenges confronting the world trading system. It will include representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations, the media and members of the academic community. It is my hope that this symposium will further discussion and thinking about how to tackle some difficult issues.

The symposium, which will begin and end with plenary sessions, will feature separate work sessions during the two days. The work sessions will focus on trade in agriculture, food safety and sanitary and phytosanitary standards, intellectual property rights (the TRIPS Agreement), development and environment issues and trade in services (the GATS). A fifth working session will address the relationship between the WTO and civil society.

Member governments are encouraged to participate in the five work sessions and are invited to complete the attached registration form. I believe your participation will make an invaluable contribution to furthering the debate.

Mike Moore

SYMPOSIUM ON ISSUES CONFRONTING THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM

World Trade Organization – Geneva, Switzerland

The World Trade Organization will be the venue of a symposium on critical issues confronting the world trading system on 6 and 7 July 2001. Representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations, the media and members of the academic community are invited to participate.

The Symposium – Aim and Structure

The aim of the two-day symposium on the state of the world trading system is to provide as much time as possible for both general and specific, issues-based discussion. An opening plenary on the morning of the first day of the symposium will be followed by five separate work sessions, each with a moderator and several discussants. Specific subjects under each general heading will be addressed by the discussants and ample time will be allotted during each session for comments, questions and debate. The work sessions will start in the afternoon of the first day of the symposium and continue the next morning. A draft programme will be made available on the WTO's website as soon as possible.

The closing plenary session will be held on the afternoon of 7 July. At that time, the chairpersons of the five work sessions will make oral summaries in a personal capacity of key points raised during their respective sessions. Reports providing a short and factual summary of all interventions made during each work session will be issued a few days after the symposium.

Special work sessions during the two-day symposium will focus on trade in agriculture, food safety and sanitary and phytosanitary standards, intellectual property rights (the TRIPS Agreement), development and environment issues and trade in services (the GATS). A fifth working session will address the relationship between the WTO and civil society.

Due to the limited seats available for the different workshops, which will be conducted simultaneously, not all participants will be able to attend the work session of their choice. Therefore, participants are requested to select in preferential order the session they are interested in attending. The final list of organizations and member governments and corresponding work sessions will be posted on the WTO's website.

Registration forms can be downloaded from the WTO's website at www.wto.org. Given space constraints, the number of participants will be limited to the first 700 registration forms received. **Individual organizations can register a maximum of three participants for the symposium.**

To facilitate discussions and preparations for the five separate working sessions, on-line forums on the subject areas will be launched on the WTO's website as of mid-June. Participants are encouraged to familiarize themselves not only with the issues, but with the views and concerns expressed by others.

SYMPOSIUM ON ISSUES CONFRONTING THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM

World Trade Organization – Geneva, Switzerland

Friday, 6 July

8:00 – 10:00 Registration, badge distribution

10:00 Plenary opening

Welcome – Mike Moore – WTO Director-General

Introduction by Chairperson (20 minutes)

Followed by three speakers

12-12.30 Chairperson announces work sessions and arrangements for moderators, discussants, venues and reporting procedures for final plenary session

2:30-5:30 pm Work sessions:

- I: Agriculture**
- II: TRIPS – Access to Essential Medicines**
- III: Trade and Environment**
- IV: Services**
- V: WTO & Civil Society**

I: Agriculture – Issues and Negotiations

Issues to be covered: agricultural reform – negotiations
developing country concerns
non-trade concerns

Program: Introduction by Moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by Discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by Moderator (15 minutes max.)

II: TRIPS - Access to Essential Medicines

Issues to be covered: The relationship between the TRIPS Agreement and the generation of and access to pharmaceuticals

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by moderator (15 minutes max.)

III: Trade and Environment

Issues to be covered: Market access - Agriculture and Fisheries
MEAs and WTO rules
PPMs and labelling / GMOs

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by Moderator (15 minutes max.)

IV: Services

Issues to be covered: 1) Regulation and liberalization under GATS
2) Status of public services

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (15 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by Moderator (15 minutes max.)

V: WTO & Civil Society

Issues to be covered: 1) What role for NGOs in capacity building
2) WTO institutional reform

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by Moderator (15 minutes max.)

Saturday, 7 July

10:00-1:00 pm Work sessions:

- I: Food Safety and the SPS Agreement**
- II: TRIPS – Bio-technology / Bio-diversity**
- III: Trade and Development**
- IV: Services**
- V: WTO & Civil Society**

I: Food Safety and the SPS Agreement

Issues to be covered: precaution
GMOs
developing country concerns

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by moderator (15 minutes max.)

II: TRIPS – Bio-technology / Bio-diversity

Issues to be covered: Patenting of biotechnological inventions, protection of traditional knowledge and genetic resources; relationship between the TRIPS agreement and the CBD

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by moderator (15 minutes max.)

III: Trade & Development

Issues to be covered: Contribution of trade to development and poverty alleviation
Importance of market access and equitable rules for developing countries
Capacity building needs and mainstreaming of trade into development policies
Trade liberalization, development and the environment - towards sustainable development

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by moderator (15 minutes max.)

IV: Services

Issues to be covered: Participation of developing countries
Negotiating issues for the current services round

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)
Presentations by discussants (15 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by moderator (15 minutes max.)

V: WTO & Civil Society

Issues to be covered: WTO institutional reforms (continued)

Program: Introduction by moderator (10 minutes)

Presentations by discussants (10 minutes each)
Open discussion
Summary by moderator (15 minutes max.)

3:00 – 5:00 p.m. Afternoon – Final Plenary Session

Moderators report on sessions (15 minutes each)

Wrap-up by Chairperson of the Symposium

Final comments

REGISTRATION FORM

SYMPOSIUM ON ISSUES CONFRONTING THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM

6 & 7 JULY 2001 – GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Name of organization/Member government/other:

Name of participant:

Main contact address:

Tel: /Fax:

e-mail:

website:

*I wish to attend the working session on _____
(please indicate order of priority for all subjects from 1 to 5 with 1 being your first choice)*

| Friday afternoon work sessions 14:30 – 17:30 | Saturday morning work sessions 10:00 to 13:00 |
|---|--|
| Agriculture | Food Safety & the SPS Agreement |
| TRIPS – Access to essential medicines | TRIPS – Bio-technology / Bio-diversity |
| Trade & Environment | Trade & Development |
| Services (The GATS) | Services (The GATS) |
| WTO & Civil Society | WTO & Civil Society |

NOTE: *Please send the completed form to symposium@wto.org or to fax number:
00 41 22 731 42 06*
