

# *CUTS 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture on* **Better Governance for Inclusive Growth**

## **1. Background**

1.1 Established in 1983 in Jaipur, India, CUTS International ([www.cuts-international.org](http://www.cuts-international.org)) is a non-governmental think- and action-tank conducting research- and network-based advocacy on various dimensions of trade, regulation and governance issues in pursuance of its Mission of “consumer sovereignty in the framework of social justice and equality, within and across borders”.

1.2 Over a period of three decades, the organisation has established its credentials at various levels by addressing contemporary development issues from grassroots to the international policy-making arena. Given the adage that “consumer interests are synonymous with national interest” its work is focused on the following streams:

- Trade policy and economic development
- Competition policy and economic regulations
- Consumer policy, governance and human development

1.3 Through research, advocacy and networking and in partnership with more than hundred like-minded organisations from different regions of the world, the organisation’s growth has been organic and *sui generis*. With support from many progressive governments, including India, and foundations, CUTS has been able to create a strong and objective southern voice, articulating the peoples’ aspirations in the policy discourse at various levels.

1.4 Bearing in mind its philosophy of “liberalisation yes, but with safety nets”, the organisation has nurtured and advanced the political space for global partnerships for development. By addressing development challenges as a dynamic process, CUTS has been successful in institutionalising an intellectual discourse of addressing contemporary development issues and their impact on people.

1.5 In 2003, when celebrating its 20th Anniversary, the CUTS Partnership Conclave took a close look at why and how governance matters in poverty reduction. On its 25th Anniversary in 2008, it looked at issues relating to development of global partnerships as many of the emerging challenges were, and still are, of the nature of global public goods. This helped the organisation in its strategic planning for the next 25 years.

1.6 In 2013 CUTS will celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by organising a series of Public Lecture in different cities of the world in order to address its future ([http://cuts-international.org/pdf/CUTS\\_IN\\_2034-A\\_VISION\\_DOCUMENT.pdf](http://cuts-international.org/pdf/CUTS_IN_2034-A_VISION_DOCUMENT.pdf))

interventions to promote inclusive growth from the point of view of their impact on consumer welfare in the light of contemporary policy discourse on trade, regulation and governance.

1.7 Drawing from the World Bank's work, CUTS believes that "inclusive growth is about raising the pace of growth and enlarging the size of the economy, while levelling the playing field for investment and increasing productive opportunity".

[\(<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/468980-1218567884549/WhatIsInclusiveGrowth20081230.pdf>\)](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/468980-1218567884549/WhatIsInclusiveGrowth20081230.pdf)

1.8 And for that to happen on a sustainable basis and given the emerging challenges of development, CUTS advocates that there should be inter-disciplinary, network-based policy research and advocacy including capacity building of a diverse set of stakeholders on trade, regulation and governance.

## **2. Context**

2.1 CUTS 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture series on Better Governance for Inclusive Growth will not be focused just on the current state of affairs on development but will address, among others, the following questions:

- Are resources inadequate in meeting contemporary and emerging development challenges?
- Is political will lacking and why it may be so?
- What are macro-micro gaps and how to bridge them?

2.2 The rest of this decade will experience a number of international events to shape and reshape the future direction of global development discourse. While that will be state-led, the proposed series of Public Lecture will not only provide a much-needed platform to non-state actors to express their views and concerns on contemporary development discourse but also, and more importantly, to strengthen the state and civil society relationship through historical evidence, and not just views.

2.3 Drawing evidence from CUTS' interventions and those of its partners from grassroots to international policy-making arena and with the objective of aligning consumer interests with contemporary and future challenges of development, the above-stated questions and concomitant development challenges will be discussed in a thematic manner. Among others, policy as well as institutional dimensions of the following topics were and will be addressed:

- (i) Financial Consumer Protection
- (ii) The Transformatory Potential of Aadhar - Providing empowerment, Choice and Convenience
- (iii) Inclusive Growth: What Does it Mean

- (iv) 30 Years that have Changed the Face of World Trade
- (v) Trade, Competition and Consumer Protection
- (vi) The Future of Global Trade Policy
- (vii) India's Economic Integration with Asia
- (viii) Regional Integration for Sustainable Development in East African Community
- (ix) Regional Integration as a Tool for Poverty Reduction in West Africa
- (x) Capacity-Building in New Competition Systems
- (xi) Developing Countries and Trade, Competition, and Corruption
- (xii) India Pakistan Trade & Economic Relations
- (xiii) Fiscal Federalism: The Unequal Balance
- (xiv) Decentralisation of Governance and Public Service Delivery
- (xv) Economic Governance in India
- (xvi) Trade and Domestic Reforms: The Australian Experience
- (xvii) Regional Trade a Catalyst for Growth and Sustainability of Small Business in the COMESA Region
- (xviii) India's Export Competitiveness, Prospects & Challenges: the Role of Trade Policy

### **3. Structure**

3.1 This series of Lectures have been or will be held in Jaipur, New Delhi, Kolkata, Geneva, Lusaka, Nairobi, Accra, London, New York, Washington DC, Mumbai, Canberra and Islamabad.

3.2 A group of eminent persons are delivering the lectures with panellists commenting. The Lectures will be published in a volume along with an introductory chapter. They will help CUTS and the global development community to shape future discourse on trade, regulation and governance and their impact on inclusive growth.

3.3 13 lectures have already been held in Kuala Lumpur, Jaipur, New Delhi, Geneva, London, Nairobi, Accra, Washington DC, New York, Islamabad and Kolkata. On December 18, 2012, Professor Sothi Rachagan, VC, Perdana University spoke about Financial Consumer Protection. On January 24, 2013 Nandan Nilekani, Chairman, Unique Identification Authority of India, holding the rank of a Cabinet Minister, spoke about "Aadhar and Cash Transfers" at Jaipur along with Ashok Gehlot, Chief Minister of Rajasthan. On June 04, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of India spoke on "Inclusive Growth: What does it Mean" at New Delhi.

3.4 On July 09, Pascal Lamy, DG, WTO and Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary General, UNCTAD spoke on the topic "30 Years that have Changed the Face of World Trade" and "Trade, Competition and Consumers" respectively at WTO, Geneva. The event was chaired by Professor Frederic Jenny, Chairman, OECD

Committee on Competition and Policy.

3.5 On July 15, in 5<sup>th</sup> CUTS' 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture hosted by Commonwealth Secretariat, Martin Wolf, Chief Economic Commentator, FT spoke on the "The Future of Global Trade Policy" in London while Rt. Hon. Justin Greening, Secretary of State, International Development commented. Kamallesh Sharma, Secretary General, ComSec chaired the event. Other commentators included Alan Winters and Jim Rollo of University of Sussex.

3.6 On August 13, Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister, India, spoke on "India's Economic Integration with Asia" in New Delhi while Ajay Chhibber, former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Rajiv Kumar, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, commented. Abhishek Manu Singhvi, MP chaired the event.

3.7 On August 19, Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera, Secretary General, East African Community delivered a lecture on "Regional Integration for Sustainable Developments in East African Community" in Nairobi. Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi; incoming Secretary General, UNCTAD from September, 2013 and former Kenyan Minister of Trade and Industry; chaired the lecture while Jasper Okelo, WTO Chair, School of Economics, University of Nairobi and Frank Mutsaers, Chief Executive Officer of TradeMark East Africa commented. In another lecture in Accra on August 26, Hanna S Tetteh, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration spoke on "Regional Integration as a Tool for Poverty Reduction in West Africa" while Professor Ernest Aryeetey, Vice Chancellor, University of Ghana chaired. The panellists included, Dr. Toga Gayewea McIntosh, Vice President, ECOWAS, and Ishmael E. Yamson, Chairman, Standard Chartered Bank, Ghana.

3.8 Two events in the USA was organised in September 2013. Rakesh Mohan, Executive Director, IMF and Professor Bill Kovacic of George Washington University were the key speakers of the event held at George Washington Law School on September 23. India's Ambassador to USA, Nirupama Rao chaired the lecture. Bill Kovacic delivered a lecture on "CUTS and Capacity-Building in New Competition Systems" and Rakesh Mohan on "Emerging Powers and Global Governance". The panellists were Swaminathan S. Anklesaria Aiyar, Consulting Editor of the Times of India Group and Edward Luce, Chief US Commentator, FT.

3.9 On September 25, a lecture event was organised in New York, hosted by New York University School of Law. The theme of the lecture was "Developing Countries and Trade, Competition, and Corruption – The Dilemmas of the 21st Century and How to Make Progress in Solving Them". Professors Jagdish Bhagwati of Columbia University, Eleanor Fox from New York University and Kevin Davis, Vice Dean, Beller Family Professor of Business Law spoke at the

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event on the topics, “Trade Policy Conundrum”, “Competition/Development Conundrum” and “Corruption and Development” respectively. Welcome remarks were given by Peter Henry- Dean, Leonard N. Stern School of Business, New York University, Trevor Morrison – Dean New York University School of Law, while Merit E. Janow, Dean, Columbia School of International and Public Affairs chaired the lecture.

3.10 Three lectures were held in December. First one was organised in Islamabad on December 11, 2013 on the topic, “India Pakistan Trade & Economic Relations”. India’s High Commissioner to Pakistan, T.C.A. Raghavan chaired the lecture and Khurram Dastagir Khan, Minister of State for Privatisation, Pakistan was the panellist. Second one was organised in New Delhi, on December 18, 2013 on the topic, “Fiscal Federalism: The Unequal Balance”. Yashwant Sinha, Chairman Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance & MP delivered the lecture in the august presence of B L Mungekar, Member of Parliament and Sunil Mitra, former Revenue Secretary, Government of India & N K Singh, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, India chaired the lecture.

On December 23, 2013, Pranab Bardhan, Professor of Economics at the University of California, Berkeley, delivered a lecture on “Decentralisation of Governance and Public Service Delivery” in Kolkata, in the august presence of M.N.Roy, Former Member, Expert Committee on Leveraging Panchayat Raj and T.R. Raghunandan, Member, Committee on West Bengal Panchayati Raj Act. Ajay Chhibber, Director General, Independent Evaluation Office chaired the lecture.

3.11 On January 21, 2014 a lecture was organised in Mumbai on the topic, “Economic Governance in India”. Rajiv Lall, Executive Chairman, IDFC Limited was the key speaker.

3.12 A lecture is being organised on February 03, 2014 in Canberra on the topic, “Trade and Domestic Reforms: The Australian Experience”. Peter Varghese, Secretary Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will be the key speaker of the event to be held at Australian National University. Raghbendra Jha, Professor of Economics & Executive Director, Australia South Asia Research Centre, Australian National University and Shiro Armstrong, Research Fellow, International Development Economics, The Australian National University will be panellists. Margaret Harding, Deputy Vice Chancellor, The Australian National University will chair the lecture.

3.13 On March 10, 2014, a lecture was organised in Lusaka on the topic, “Regional Trade a Catalyst for Growth and Sustainability of Small Business in the COMESA Region”. Caleb Fundanga, Former Governor, Bank of Zambia & currently President, Institute of Finance and Economics was the key speaker.

3.14 A lecture is being organised in New Delhi on April 04, 2014 on the topic, “India's Export Competitiveness, Prospects & Challenges: the Role of Trade Policy”. Rajeev Kher, Commerce Secretary, Government of India will be the key speaker.