

RECENT TITLES

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT



South-South Economic Cooperation *Exploring the IBSA Initiative*

One of healthiest developments in the recent past has been the increase in South-South trade as a percentage of world trade. With an agenda of exploring the possibilities of enhancing South-South cooperation further, the foreign ministries of India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) established the 'IBSA Dialogue Forum' in 2003. The IBSA Dialogue Forum aims to promote South-South partnership, cooperation and common positions on issues of international importance, and also to promote trade and investment opportunities between the three regions.

This report presents the fundamental issues pertaining to the IBSA initiative in order to facilitate increased trade and investment among the countries through enhanced contact between business and industry bodies, high political proximity and removal of all types of procedural barriers. It also aims to catalyse discussions among the international trade community and draw a future road map for South-South trade partnerships.

This Advocacy Document would help a whole range of stakeholders, including policy makers, experts, academics, trade community and scholars of IBSA countries, who have been looking for feasible ways to facilitate greater cooperation in trade and investment, with the overall goal of an ever-increasing South-South trade.

Advocacy document

<http://www.cuts-international.org/PDF/advocacy1.pdf>

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Concluding the Doha Round: The Reality Check

(No 1/2007)

The WTO chief, Pascal Lamy had signalled the Geneva-based trade negotiators to start informal consultations in November 2006.

Though nothing much has changed since the official suspension of talks in July 2006, any further delay in resumption may result in losing the ground covered so far. Members, however, have expressed a strong desire to come back to the negotiating table.

The first three months of 2007 are going to be extremely crucial for the Doha Round. First, the US is likely to reveal its cards on what it has in mind on the upcoming review of US Farm Bill. Secondly, key WTO negotiators will enter into a higher gear of talks at Geneva, while Lamy and his team will push them harder to achieve the landing zone.

This Briefing Paper analyses the bottom line and realpolitik involved in the restarting of the Doha Round negotiations.

The same can be accessed at:
<http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/BP07-WTO-1.pdf>



Aid for Trade: Where are we & where will we go?

(TDP No 4/2006)

In the current Doha Round of WTO negotiations, developing countries have called for developed

countries to make commitments as a part of the Round to increase support for building the trading capacity and help them adjust to the impact of preference erosion (commonly called Aid for Trade or AfT). The hope is that the inclusion of AfT as the WTO's newest policy area will ensure that the WTO promotes the trade development of those countries more effectively that are struggling to integrate into the world economy and not just those existing or emerging trading powers.

The Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration mandated the General Council of the WTO to establish an AfT task force to explore the AfT needs of developing countries and draw up recommendations which would be presented to the WTO members in July 2006. This task force was established in February 2006 and since then, it has facilitated discussions and formulated recommendations on who will provide AfT, how AfT should be delivered, what AfT commitments should be made and how exactly it will be tied into the Doha Round and the WTO process in the long run.

This Briefing Paper provides a brief assessment of the recommendations made by the AfT taskforce and attempts to respond to the questions therein.

This briefing paper can be viewed at:
<http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/BP06-DI-6.pdf>



Review of National Textile Policy 2000: Short on Prognosis and far short of Results

(GRANITE No 3/2006)

Indian textile and clothing (T&C) industry contributes about four percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and 14 percent of industrial output, and is the second largest employer after agriculture. In fact, Indian textile industry is diverse, ranging from handloom production to modern mills, including chains of production related to different fibres such as cotton, polyester, jute, silk and wool etc.

The National Textile Policy (NTP) 2000 was brought out five years ago when India signed the Agreement on T&C. This policy looked towards energising the Indian textile sector in the next five years, i.e. by 2005, in order to face the competition from free global textile trade and its consequences.

This Briefing Paper takes a look at the lack of competition in the textile sector and the drawbacks of NTP 2000. It suggests possible measures for the reviewing of NTP 2000 in order to alleviate the problems hampering the sector.

Briefing Paper

Suggested Contribution: Rs 20/US\$5



Functioning of WTO Cells in India: A Critique

(GRANITE No 4/2006)

In an era of globalisation and multilateral trading system under the aegis of the WTO, India felt the need to develop information systems with which domestic agriculture could respond quickly in a global economic scenario, as the knowledge gap *vis-à-vis* the opportunities and challenges of entering into the WTO is enormous. The WTO Cells have been created as a platform for cooperative effort between the State, the Centre and various institutions, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) so that the impact of the WTO agreements

can be identified and worked out effectively.

The WTO Cells have been set up to address the information gap with respect to the various implications of the WTO regulations. In the absence of adequate data, state governments are not in a position to take advantage of the various provisions that would safeguard the interests of the farmers and other stakeholders. In principle, the WTO Cells were created in the state governments and in the agricultural universities so that relevant information is collected on a regular basis.

This Briefing Paper takes a critical look at the aims and functioning of the WTO Cells across the country.

Briefing Paper

Suggested Contribution: Rs 20/US\$5

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT



Draft National Policy for Farmers – A Critique

(GRANITE No 5/2006)

Despite several attempts at agricultural policy reforms by the government from time to time, the last one being in 2002, the agricultural sector continues to ail!

There is clearly a lack of proper policy implementation and a dearth of well functioning institutional arrangements.

The National Commission for Farmers (NCF) has brought out a draft National Policy for Farmers (NPF) that presents an action plan for making hunger history and formulates strategies to enhance the status of farmers and

farming in India. In keeping with the mandate of the government, ensuring highest investment, credit, and technological priority to the continued growth of agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, aquaculture, afforestation, dairying and agro-processing, the NPF lays thrust on the 'farmers first' mantra to free them from hunger, in addition to strengthening the coping capacity of farmers and improving the competitiveness of Indian agriculture. The draft policy to be adopted would be introduced as the First National Policy for Farmers on August 15, 2007.

This Briefing Paper attempts to take a look at the draft NPF, which holds out a more reliable promise for the farmers.

Briefing Paper

Suggested Contribution: Rs 20/US\$5

COMPETITION & INVESTMENT



Competition & Regulatory Scenario in South and Southeast Asia

(No 1/2006)

In order to achieve targeted policy objectives and to make reforms succeed, competition laws and policies in developing countries must be well-adapted to

their national development circumstances, taking into account the local economic, social, and cultural dimensions, etc. It is necessary for the developing countries to foster public acceptance as well as widespread participation and contribution of various national stakeholders into the policy-making process. Externally, sharing and comparing the learnings with other developing countries' experience will also help them overcome the

impediments to having an effective competition regime.

Taking into account select countries in South and Southeast Asia, viz. Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Lao PDR, Nepal, and Vietnam – one can well perceive that all are pursuing market-oriented reforms, which entail an explicit need for an effective competition law and policy. However, given the local capacity and resource constraints, these countries need technical assistance.

This Policy Brief discusses the various ingredients of competition and regulatory scenario, including anticompetitive practices in South Southeast Asia, and recommends why the countries in the region need a healthy competition law.

The same can be accessed at:
http://www.cuts-international.org/pdf/1-2006-Competition_Regulatory.pdf

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