



**High-level Dialogue on
"Safeguarding the Multilateral Trading System
for Sustainable Development"
2 November 2017**

CR 4

UNCC, ESCAP, Bangkok

MODERATOR AND SPEAKER GUIDELINES ("Scenario")

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
MC	<p>The MC will ask all participants to be seated.</p> <p>MC will invite the moderator and panellists to be seated on their designated chairs.</p> <p>MC will then request Dr. Mia Mikic to introduce the session as moderator and introduce the panel.</p>	5 minutes	09.10– 09.15
Moderator	<p>Dr. Mia Mikic, Director, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, ESCAP will welcome and introduce the Moderator.</p> <p><i>Good morning ladies and gentlemen and welcome to High-level Policy Dialogue on "Safeguarding the Multilateral Trading System for Sustainable Development".</i></p> <p><i>Please allow me the pleasure of introducing the panel for this High-level Policy Dialogue.</i></p> <p><i>Joining me here on the Panel today, we have:</i></p> <p>1. H.E. Sok Sopheak, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia</p> <p>2. Dr. Ratnakar Adhikari, Executive Director, EIF Secretariat, WTO</p>	15 minutes	09.15-09.30

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
	<p>3. Mr Chandra Kumar Ghimire, Secretary and EIF Focal Point, Ministry of Commerce, Nepal</p> <p>4. Mr Pierre Sauvé, World Bank</p> <p>5. Mr Taufiqur Rahman, Head of LDC Unit, WTO</p> <p>6. Ms. Ranja Sengupta, Third World Network, India</p> <p>Welcome</p> <p>Brief opening remarks:</p> <p><i>“The Eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference (MC) is scheduled to be held at Buenos Aires, Argentina from 10 to 13 December 2017. Holding this High Level Dialogue by ESCAP is important and timely as it goes with the work programme of ESCAP which has been supporting its Member States in preparation for all major MCs by organizing regional consultations as well as technical assistance programmes for its member States on building negotiating capacity and evidence-based policymaking in the context of balancing their domestic policies and existing multilateral commitments. High-level Dialogue also seeks to be a platform for the policymakers in the region to interact with other stakeholders deepening understanding of issues and concerns about the multilateral trading system at present time.</i></p> <p><i>The Nairobi Declaration adopted at the Tenth MC in 2015 expressed two positions by Members: on one hand many WTO Members reaffirmed their full commitment to conclude the Doha Development Agenda; and on the other some Members had a different position believing that new approaches are necessary to achieve meaningful outcomes in multilateral negotiations. Nevertheless, Members showed a strong commitment to advance negotiations on the</i></p>		

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	<p><i>remaining Doha issues, including agriculture, non-agriculture market access, services, development, TRIPS and rules. In the last General Council meeting held on 26-27 July 2017 no decision on agenda for the MC was taken.</i></p> <p><i>Trade has been an engine of growth for the Asia-Pacific economies and the present stalemate in multilateral negotiation for further trade liberalisation is seen as adversely affecting their development prospects. Though recently WTO estimated a stronger growth in international trade for 2017, just released APTIR 2017 points to a fragility of this recovery for many countries in the region. As discussed in that Report, for trade to be effectively used as a means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development we need sustained growth and a predictable and stable liberal trade regime. With countries moving aggressively towards the preferential trade agreements – including bilateralism- there is an anxiety about the future of the multilateral trading system as we know it. While DG WTO reflects confidence in preferential regimes one day positively influencing WTO, we see that many countries are taking obligations which are not only “WTO plus but also WTO beyond”; yet these issues remain contentious in multilateral talks. The parallel process which lacks harmonisation between PTAs obligations with the multilateral obligations will be detriment to the interest of many nations as it does not follow the ‘building block’ approach.</i></p>		
Moderator	<p>It has been globally recognised that the multilateral approach is the best way of making trade easy, transparent and predictable. Yet, it appears that multilateral system we put in place 22 years ago is not effective, The Doha round negotiations is in its 16th year and odds that it will be ever concluded are very high. Let me open our dialogue with our colleague from the WTO Secretariat Mr. Taufiqur Rahman.</p>	2 minutes	09.30-09.32

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
Moderator	<p>I think many in this room are wondering, what is going on in Geneva? Can you shine some light on the status of preparation for the MC11 to bring us all to the same speed, before we move deeper into our discussion on the topic?</p> <p><i>[Background: In Nairobi (MC10) a difference in opinion among members was also reflected in the Ministerial Declaration. This difference only grew in last two years. While members are committed to Doha agenda, a few members now want new issues to be included on the negotiating agenda. How important is WTO in the present trading system? Do you think that at present the multilateralism is in crisis?</i></p> <p><i>In other words, is there any reason to hope that a consensus would emerge on the entire (DDA) package? A substantial amount of work has already done, especially in agriculture and NAMA, and if DDA is abandoned, how to use the already agreed outcomes? What is needed to conclude the Doha Development Agenda?]</i></p>	5 minutes	09.39-09.44
Panellist	Mr Taufiqur Rahman , Head of LDC Unit, WTO	7 minutes	09.44-09.51
Moderator	<p>Thank you Taufiqur.</p> <p>Its time now to touch upon an issue which is very important for countries in this region, especially the LDCs. The WTO recognises the fact that LDCs need special attention and a special treatment. We are happy that we have two panellists representing the LDCs from this region.</p> <p>I would now call upon Mr. Sok from Cambodia – the coordinator of LDC group in the WTO- and Mr. Chandra from Nepal.</p> <p><i>“Special and differential work programme has been a key priority for least developing countries.</i></p>	3 minute	09.51-09.54

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
	<i>The DFQF, Services waiver and preferential rules of origin are already being discussed and debated in WTO. Positive developments have already taken place in DFQF and services waiver. What is your expectation at the Buenos Aires Ministerial Conference in December 2017 especially with the LDC perspective?"</i>		
Panellist	H.E. Sok Sopheak , Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia	7 minutes	09.54-10.01
Moderator	Thank you Mr. Sok. You have the floor Mr. Chandra		
Panellist	Mr Chandra Kumar Ghimire , Secretary and EIF Focal Point, Ministry of Commerce, Nepal	7 minutes	10.01-10.08
Moderator	<p>Thank you Mr. Chandra.</p> <p>Now let's turn to panellists who are (at least not at present) directly involved in policymaking or negotiations but are working with governments and other stakeholders on positioning trade towards sustainable development.</p> <p>Dr. Ratnakar from EIF Secretariat, WTO;</p> <p>Mr Pierre from World Bank; and</p> <p>Ms. Ranja from the Third World Network, India</p> <p>Can you please offer your perspective on why is trade so important for sustainable development?</p> <p><i>[Background: The member States of UN have adopted the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. Trade and investment has been engines of growth for the Asia-Pacific economies and the SDGs list trade as means of implementation. How do you see the WTO negotiations in view of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially for the least</i></p>	3 minute	10.08– 10.11

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
	<p><i>developed economies of Asia and the Pacific? Is the achievement of the trade related SDGs dependent upon conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda and the existence of the multilateral trading system?</i></p> <p><i>What in your opinion are possible deliverables of the MC11? What will be the cost (for individual Members and for the system) of a failed Doha work programme? Should the new issues be included? Are the possible winners from such an outcome and who they might be? How to address the concerns of LDCs?]</i></p>		
Panellist	Dr. Ratnakar Adhikari , Executive Director, EIF Secretariat, WTO	7 minutes	10.11– 10.18
Moderator	Thank you Ratnakar		
Panellist	Mr Pierre Sauvé , World Bank	7 minutes	10.18– 10.25
Moderator	Thank you, Pierre,		
Panellist	Ms. Ranja Sengupta , Third World Network, India	7 minutes	10.25– 10.32
Moderator	Thank you, Ranja		
Moderator	<p>We have had one round of discussions with the panel and we have a good feel of the issues and possible outcomes. Before we turn to the panel for the second round, I'm going to open the floor now for comments/questions.</p> <p>I would request audience to refrain from making long statements – not longer than 2 minutes- so that we can take as many as possible. Let me take 3 or 4 in this round. Please identify yourself before you speak.</p>	20 minutes	10.32-10.52

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
Participants from floor	<i>[The Secretariat will help you to identify speakers and to decide the order in which they should be taken. If anyone goes over 2 minutes, please interrupt and ask them to conclude.]</i>		
Moderator	<p>Thank you all.</p> <p>We have heard some of the views from the floor. Is anyone from the panel would like to add or respond to the issues raised or answer the questions?</p> <p><i>(Please give a pause and see if someone from panel wants to speak or if a question has been raised to a panellist it is answered.)</i></p> <p>Let me now go for another round with the panellists. I would like to move our discussion towards the trade and SDG nexus.</p> <p>Let me invite now:</p> <p>Mr Chandra and Mr. Sok to comment on what their governments are doing to keep negotiations at the MC11 and in their PTA grounded in the SDG commitments?</p>	10 minutes	10.52-11.02
Panellist	Mr Chandra Kumar Ghimire , Secretary and EIF Focal Point, Ministry of Commerce, Nepal	3 minutes	11.02-11.05
Moderator	Thank you, Mr. Chandra. Mr. Sok, you have the floor.		
Panellist	H.E. Sok Sok , Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia	3 minutes	11.05-11.08
Moderator	Thank you, Mr. Sok.		
Moderator	Let's now take a look at the future of WTO; a pillar of the multilateral trading system. Let me now turn on to Ratnakar, Pierre and Ranja. <i>“What future do you see for multilateralism if there is no consensus</i>	2 minutes	11.08– 11.10

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
	<p><i>on Doha Development Agenda? On new issues one notes that many of them are being included in bilateral or plurilateral PTAs, but opposed in WTO. Why are countries taking different positions under these two platforms? Is Aid for Trade dependent on the strong MTS and how do you see it evolving in case of MC11 failure?</i></p> <p>Ratnakar your turn first.</p>		
Panellist	Dr. Ratnakar Adhikari , Executive Director, EIF Secretariat, WTO	3 minutes	11.10– 11.13
Moderator	Thank you Ratnakar. Pierrie, your turn now.		
Panellist	Mr Pierre Sauvé , World Bank	3 minutes	11.13– 11.16
Moderator	Thank you Pierrie. Ranja, the floor is yours.		
Panellist	Ms. Ranja Sengupta , Third World Network,	3 minutes	11.16– 11.19
Moderator	Thank you, Ranja.		
Moderator	Let me put one last question to Mr. Taufiqur. <i>“Can a new architecture be developed combining the remaining Doha issues and new issues being raised by Members? What are the benefits or risks?”</i>	20 minutes	11.19– 11.39
Panellist	Mr Taufiqur Rahman , Head of LDC Unit, WTO		
Moderator	Thank you Taufiqur. Let me now put a common question to all the panellists. I would request them to be short, possibly two minutes so that we have sufficient time to go for Q&A session after that. <i>“Assume – as we all are a thin outcome from MC11. What next? Which issues should be pursued or prioritized post-MC11”</i>		

Speaker	Topic	Time	Timing
	(Check on the panellists and give them floor turn by turn, perhaps to only those who are interested in speaking.)		
Moderator	<i>I'm going to open the floor now for 15 minutes for further brief comments and short questions. I'll take a maximum of 4 before giving the floor back to the panellists for final thoughts.</i>	20 minutes	11.39-11.59
Participants from floor	<i>[The Secretariat will help you to identify speakers and to decide the order in which they should be taken. If anyone goes over 2 minutes, please interrupt and ask them to conclude.]</i>		
Moderator & Panellists	Let me now go for a final word from the panellists. In one minute, your final thoughts.	12 minutes	11.59-12.11
Moderator	CLOSE	4 minutes	12.11–12.15
