

Talking Points: Information Session on the 2014 Public Forum

About the Public Forum

- Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning and welcome to this information session on the 2014 Public Forum. I'd like to introduce to you my colleague **Anoush Der Boghossian** who is the co-ordinator of our Public Forums.
- Many of you may be vaguely familiar with Public Forum or may have attended a Forum in the past. But we thought **this session might provide you with additional information that may prove useful to you in your preparations for this year's event** whether you plan to organize an event or simply to participate in as many sessions as possible.
- The Public Forum, first launched in 2001, is the largest and one of the most important occasions for interaction between stakeholders and the WTO. The Forum offers a great opportunity for public debate and discussion across the full spectrum of WTO issues and activities.
- Since 2001 more than **9,000 representatives from civil society, academia, business, the media, governments, parliamentarians and inter-governmental organizations have attended the Public Forum.**
- All the information I'm about to convey to you can be found on the WTO website under the section on the Public Forum. All information is available on the web site: www.wto.org/pf14. If you have any follow up question please feel free to get in touch with either Anoush or myself.

THIS YEAR'S THEMES

- Every year the Director-General selects a theme for the Forum and this year DG Azevêdo has chosen "**Why trade matters to everyone**" as our central topic.
 - ~ Our objective is to tell the human story behind trade, to illustrate the impact of trade on people's daily lives and to raise awareness about how trade can raise living standards.
 - ~ Under this thematic umbrella, there will be **three subthemes: trade and jobs — trade and consumers — trade and Africa.**
- **Secondary theme: Doha Round work programme**
 - ~ On 3 October, a special half day session will be dedicated to the Doha Round work programme **with the focus on the implementation of the Bali accords and on our efforts to set the rest of the Doha round on firm footing for a timely conclusion.**

About the programme

- Dates: 1-3 October
- On October 1&2 the day will kick off with morning plenary debates featuring high profile guests invited by DG Azevêdo.
 - ~ The Forum will begin on 1 October at 9:30 by a keynote speech, to be followed by the opening plenary debate, in which high-level speakers will consider the question: "Why trade matters to every one?"

- ~ The second plenary debate will be held on 2 October from 9:30 to 12:00. **Speakers will focus on what trade means for Africa.**
- **We expect to have roughly 55 sessions and of these around 50 will be organized by participants.** Members can and do organize these sessions. If you wish to organize a session you will need to complete an application form which can be found on the WTO website. **A word of guidance: We will receive many more applications than we have slots available so we will be selective in choosing among the applications. Among the criteria we will use in making our selections are relevance to the topic of the forum, the quality of the panellists and the intellectual strength of the proposal.**
- ~ **Organizers can choose between working sessions or workshops.**
 - Working sessions are composed of a limited number of panellists, selected by the session organizers, who will offer their point of view to the audience. A moderator will engage the participants in an open discussion. Interpretation in the three official WTO languages (English, French and Spanish) will be available for these sessions.
 - Workshops take the form of informal brainstorming discussions focusing on particular issues related to the Forum's overall theme. There will be no interpretation to allow for better interaction.
- ~ For those wishing to organize either a workshop or a session, applications must be sent it to **PublicForum14@wto.org no later than 20 June 2014.**