



WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION



WORLD BANK GROUP



BRIDGET CHILALA

**DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION
WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

OPENING REMARKS

JOINT WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION/WORLD BANK GROUP TRADE AND POVERTY FORUM

"CONNECTING TO TRADE: POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR MAXIMIZING POVERTY REDUCTION
IMPACT" IN COLLABORATION WITH THE WTO CHAIRS PROGRAMME

26 MAY 2016

Thank you, Anabel. It is always a pleasure to welcome you back to WTO.

As you rightly recall, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo and World Bank Group President Jim Kim launched the joint report on "the Role of Trade in Ending Poverty" in this very room on 30 June last year.

It is my honour to be with you here today to outline how we are taking this work forward and explain how we shall proceed with this Forum today.

Trade and the SDGs

Since the launch of the joint report, our Heads of State and Government agreed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The first of the Sustainable Development Goals is a commitment to end poverty in all its forms everywhere.

In his remarks last year, DG Azevêdo highlighted that trade can be an engine of growth and poverty reduction. He identified trade as working through a number of channels to achieve this outcome:

- it provides access to new markets;
- it increases the efficiency of how resources are used;
- it lowers prices for the poorer consumers; and
- it provides access to the advanced technologies that are available in the global market.

The joint report underlined how high trade costs block these channels, diverting resources and resulting in deadweight economic welfare losses.

Aid for Trade – Promoting Connectivity

The theme of how high trade costs can hamper economic development and trade connectivity was discussed in depth at the last Global Review of Aid for Trade. The conclusions from the last Review are being taken forward in various ways.

One way they are being taken forward is through Members' efforts to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement. Research points to implementation of the TFA as offering real potential to lower trade costs – and with the biggest welfare gains accruing to those with the highest costs.

Last year's World Trade Report sets out in detail the economic welfare gains that can be expected from TFA implementation. 79 Members have now deposited their instruments of acceptance. Some 5 Members have now notified their Category C commitments – an important step in ensuring that Aid for Trade support is aligned with TFA implementation needs.

Another way that work is advancing is through the new Aid for Trade work programme. Indeed, today's event is the first thematic event to be held in this new framework.

As we build towards another Global Review in 2017 so we will seek to capture further insights and perspectives on services trade costs and infrastructure constraints – particularly those linked to TFA implementation. In line with the organizing theme of "Promoting Connectivity", we will also examine how e-commerce can help exporters provided that they can bridge the digital divide.

WTO Chairs Programme

The Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation, the Division I head, is also helping contribute to taking this work forward.

Today's programme features a lunchtime session at which papers examining the link between trade growth and poverty alleviation will be presented. These papers are the fruit of the WTO's Chairs Programme. Three Chair holders from Benin, Jordan and Tunisia will be offering presentations examining their national experiences. These national experiences should make for interesting discussion.

This lunchtime session foreshadows further work that will be done under the ambit of the Chairs Programme for the Public Forum and the next Global Review.

Trade and Poverty Forum

Today's event is an opportunity to showcase new research and to entertain new perspectives as we seek to make good on the 2030 goal to eradicate all forms of poverty everywhere.

It is also an opportunity to advance the inter-related and complementary areas of policy analysis that were identified in the Trade and Eradicating Poverty report as worthy of consideration.

To recap these included:

- Lowering trade costs for deeper integration of markets;
- Improving the enabling environment;
- Intensifying the poverty impact of integration policies;
- Managing and mitigating risks faced by the poor; and
- Improving data and analysis to inform policy.

Closing

DG Azevêdo stated his hope that the report would not be the end of our work here, but rather the beginning. I can happily report nearly a year later that we are taking this work forward. I trust that today's event will add significantly to our stock of knowledge on the role of trade in eradicating poverty.

Thank you.