WTO Chairs Annual Conference

11-12 July, 2013
Geneva

The WTO Chairs Programme (WCP) was launched in January 2010 in support of 15 WTO Chairs in universities situated in developing countries. The programme aims to strengthen knowledge and understanding of the trading system among academics, citizens and policy makers in developing countries by stimulating teaching, research and public debate on international trade and trade cooperation. This year’s Annual Conference marks a transition as the WCP program is nearing its end. The Conference will take place over two days, with the first day having a strong focus on research outputs and the second day specifically addressing the achievements of the programme and reflections on the way forward.

The first conference day will be dedicated to presentations by WCP Chairs on the results of individual research papers addressing the theme “Overcoming Supply Side Constraints: Issues for Policy Makers”. This research segment will be open to Geneva based policy makers and academics in order to enhance visibility of the WTO Chairs Programme. The event may also attract participants of the Aid for Trade Review, which takes place at the WTO on July 8-10. Indeed, the theme “overcoming supply side constraints” is likely to complement well the discussions at the Aid for Trade Global review.

The objectives pursued on the second day of the conference are twofold: to assess its achievements (with a focus on 2012) and to discuss the future of the programme. These reflections will be conducted by WTO Chairs, the Advisory Board Members, WCP Counterparts and the WCP team.

The first three sessions of the second day will be structured around the three pillars of the WCP programme: curriculum development-teaching, research and outreach. The output generated by the Chairs will be presented for each of these three pillars. The relevant presentations will be prepared by the WCP team of the WTO Secretariat, in close co-ordination and collaboration with the WCP Chairs in the run-up to the event. Members of the Advisory Board and WCP counterparts will be invited to contribute to the discussion on the generated outputs. It is expected that this approach will be conducive to providing a comprehensive and structured overview of the achievements of the WCP program in the past year and that the resulting discussions will provide useful guidance for future work.

An active and constructive participation of moderators, discussants, Chairs and participants would set the stage for the final session of the second day, providing further guidance on the future of the WCP program. A discussion paper will be prepared by the Secretariat for this purpose.
Overcoming Supply Side Constraints: Issues for Policy Makers

While trade opening is indispensable to development and inclusive growth, it is not necessarily sufficient per se. Supply side constraints may make it difficult for low-income countries, in particular least developed countries to reap the full benefits from trading opportunities.

Technical and hard infrastructure capacities, human resources, a weak enabling environment for enterprises, as well as transition costs are among the most frequently cited supply side constraints low-income countries face. They make it difficult for companies to expand exports in existing product lines, to move into new production or export lines or to allow exporters to stabilize their export position and survive once they have managed to enter new markets. Yet the process of diversifying exports is one that appears to be inherent to the process of expanding trade as statistical evidence has shown that diversification of exports and levels of exports tend to move together at least in early stages of development.

While there is ample empirical evidence identifying relevant supply side constraints much less is known about the design of policies to overcome these constraints. The objective of this segment is to provide insights gained from research by WCP Chairs on the design of policies targeting trade-related supply side constraints, including those that have been conducted in the context of the Aid for Trade initiative.

OPENING SESSION

9h30-10h00 Opening speech
Pascal Lamy, Director-General WTO

Introduction to the programme and objective of the conference
Bridget Chilala, Director, Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation, WTO

Introduction to the research segment of the Annual Conference
Patrick Low, Director, Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO


Presentations should not exceed 15 minutes and the discussants will have 15 minutes.

SESSION 1: Presentations of the research outcomes (1)

10h00-11h15

Moderator: Richard Newfarmer

Presenter 1: Mauritius: Export Diversification and economic growth: The Case of Mauritius

Presenter 2: Barbados: Diasporas, Innovation and Trade Diversification in the Caribbean

Discussants: Roberta Piermartini, Jorge Castro

General discussion

11h15-11h30 Coffee break (Salle des Pas Perdus)
SESSION 2: Presentations of the research outcomes (2)

11h30-12h30

Moderator: Raymundo Valdes

Presenter 3: Indonesia: Value Chains Governance in Indonesia’s Extractive and Natural Resources Export Commodities: Policy Notes on Its Upgrading and Diversification Endeavours

Presenter 4: Jordan: The Potential Effects of FTA between Jordan and Canada

Discussants: Robert Teh, Mustapha Sadni-Jallab

General discussion

12h30-14h30 Lunch

SESSION 3: Presentations of the research outcomes (3)

14h30 - 16h00

Moderator: Pierre Sauvé

Presenter 5: Kenya: Non-Tariff Measures in Kenya: A Case Study

Presenter 6: Mexico: Climate change in the international economic law

Discussants: Karsten Steinfatt, Giorgio Sacerdoti

General discussion

16h00-16h15 Coffee break (Salle des Pas Perdus)

SESSION 4: Presentations of the research outcomes (4)

16h15-17h30

Moderator: Alexander Sarris

Presenter 7: Russia: Russian Foreign Trade as an issue for national policy makers

Presenter 8: Senegal: Informality, Regional Integration and Smuggling: Case Studies in West Africa

Discussants: Marc Auboin, Faustin Luanga

General discussion

18h00-19h30 Cocktail (Atrium)
WTO Chairs Programme: Review of Activities and Learning from the Past

Taking into account the ending of the four years of the WCP in December 2013, it is time to take stock of the achievements of the programme, to agree on the best way forward for the final months and to discuss lessons learned from nearly four years of collaboration. In this segment, outputs of the year 2012 will be presented and discussed in separate sessions on each pillar of WCP activities: research, curriculum development and teaching, outreach.

The insights gained from these presentations will contribute to a discussion about the aspects of the WCP that may need to be reconsidered with regard to relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the WCP. The original reporting templates, for instance, were not designed in the context of a results-based management (RBM) approach. In 2012, new reporting formats based on the logical framework approach were introduced in line with the new requirements that ITTC activities have to meet. The experience learnt from last year’s programme and from the progressive implementation of the RBM approach will represent a useful input into the discussions during the final session of this segment of the Annual Conference, i.e. the session during which the future of the WCP program will be discussed.

9h00–9h15 Introduction to the review of activities done by the Chairs in 2012

Bridget Chilala, Director, Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation, ITTC

SESSION 5: Research pillar

09h15–10h30

Moderator: Marc Bacchetta

Overview of research conducted under WCP 2012 and planned activities 2013 (prepared by WCP team in collaboration with Chairs)
Marion Jansen, Counsellor, ERSD

Discussant: Alexander Sarris, Henry Gao

Comments from the Chairs

General discussion

10h30-10h45 Coffee break (Salle des Pas Perdus)

SESSION 6: Curriculum development and teaching pillar

10h45-12h00

Moderator: Susan Hainsworth

Overview of curriculum development under WCP 2012 and planned activities 2013 (Prepared by WCP team in collaboration with Chairs)
Gerardo Thielen, Head Academic Programme and Reference Centre Unit, ITTC

Discussant: Pierre Sauvé, Vlasta Macku

Comments from the Chairs

General discussion

12h00-14h00 Lunch
SESSION 7: Outreach pillar

14h00-15h15

**Moderator:** Fatima Chaudhri, Economist, Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO

**Overview of outreach activities under WCP 2012 and planned activities 2013** (Prepared by WCP team in collaboration with Chairs)

**Mustapha Sadni Jallab**, Head, WTO Reference Centre Programme, ITTC, WTO

**Discussant:** Ravindra Ratnayake, Diana Tussie

**Comments from the Chairs**

**General discussion**

15h15-15h30 Coffee break (Salle des Pas Perdus)

SESSION 8: Looking into the future: Improving the WCP

15h30-16h45

**Moderator:** Patrick Low, Director, Economic Research and Statistics Division, ERSD

**Main finding of the operation of the WCP and the way forward**

**Maarten Smeets**, Head of TA Coordination, Partnerships and Internship Programmes, ITTC, WTO

**Discussant:** Richard Newfarmer

**Comments from the Chairs**

**General discussion**

**Concluding remarks**

16h45-17h00 **Alejandro Jara**, Deputy Director General WTO