



E15 - Expert Group Meeting on “Trade and Innovation: Challenges and Policy Options”

06 – 07 June 2013

AGENDA

Thursday 6 June 2013

13:45-14:00 Arrivals

14:00-14:30 Introductory remarks

Ricardo MELÉNDEZ-ORTIZ, Chief Executive, ICTSD

Carlos PRIMO BRAGA, Director, The Evian Group@IMD

14:30-16:00 Session I: The global innovation landscape: trends, challenges, and implications for the multilateral trading system

Chair: John Curtis, ICTSD Senior Fellow

Description: Session I will look at the broad setting under which the group will operate considering what are the main features of the current global innovation landscape that call for a reconsideration of the premises prevailing two decades ago. Particular emphasis will be paid to the intensity of globalization and the relevance of knowledge and its dissemination in the new economy including the far reaching developments in the digital age. What are the relevant national experiences to bear in mind and which are, if any, the necessary readjustments to be made to the international trading regime? The session should assist the group in delineating the boundaries of its work: its priorities, what is feasible and necessary to tackle and which are areas well covered in on-going initiatives.

Open discussion

16:00-16:30 Coffee

16:30-18:00 **Session II: Break-out groups on specific sub-themes**

1. The economics of innovation and trade: issues and knowledge gaps

Description: The interaction between innovation and trade is a two way process. Trade and investment flows contribute to technology diffusion and innovation. On the other hand, the strengthening of national innovation capabilities improves a country's ability to engage and benefit from international trade. However, what seemed like effective innovation strategies until recently are no longer sufficient for rapid catch up. The global nature of innovation makes national policy intervention more difficult to design, implement and monitor. This session will discuss the role of global corporations, ICT and global value chains in influencing the optimal scope of trade and innovation policies.

2. Innovation and WTO rules: the need for adjustment?

Description: Are the current WTO disciplines as embedded in the GATT, GATS and TRIPS innovation-friendly? Should the WTO rules be adjusted to better respond to the changing global innovation landscape or should the WTO simply strive for neutrality/non-discrimination and leave the issue of multilateral rules for innovation to other international organizations? In particular, should the WTO revitalize its Work Programme on Ecommerce or develop an Internet-related agreement, for example, in the context of new efforts such as the International Services Agreement? Should Members consider innovation policy-related initiatives to better address problems of countries lacking a sound and viable technological base?

3. Innovation, intellectual property and trade

Description: IPRs affect international trade as knowledge-intensive goods and services (and branded products) cross borders. The importance of IPRs for trade has gained more significance as the share of knowledge-intensive products in global trade has increased. The importance of IPRs for innovation has also increased though there is also an active debate about instances where IPRs or certain practices of the IP system could be detrimental to innovation. The impact of IPRs protection on trade and investment flows is often assumed to be positive, but in reality such impact may be ambiguous in view of opposing market expansion and market power enhancing effects as well as a myriad of factors ranging from the unique circumstances of the particular economic sector, the specific IPRs in question, as well as a country's innovative potential. How has all of this changed in a world in which trade is increasingly related to global corporations and where global value chains play a major role in framing industrial organization across borders? How do these considerations affect the welfare implications of IPRs? Are these assumptions universally applicable to all Members? Are there asymmetries between firms and/or countries that need to be addressed? What role should the WTO play in this context taking into consideration the proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements with robust IP chapters and the public policy implications of IPRs which have been the subject of much attention during the past decade?

18.00-18.15 Close

19.00- 21.00 Dinner

Perle du Lac Restaurant, Rue de Lausanne 126, 1202 Geneva <http://www.laperledulac.ch/>

Friday 7 June 2013

8:45-9:00 Arrivals

9:00-10:00 **Session III: Report back from break-out groups**

The economics of innovation and trade: issues and knowledge gaps

Open discussion

10.00-11.00 Innovation and WTO rules: the need for adjustment?

Open discussion

11.00-11.30 Coffee

11:30-12:30 Innovation, intellectual property and trade

Open discussion

12:30-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 **Session IV: Towards a framework of policy options**

Chair: John Curtis, ICTSD Senior Fellow

In this session, participants will identify cross-connections between the different themes and issue areas discussed in the previous session, with a view to elaborating discussion points that could serve as a basis for elaborating policy options for consideration by decision-makers under the next stage of the E-15 process. Participants will also identify topics that could usefully be explored further in short 'think pieces' to be prepared by individual expert group members.

15:30-16:00 Coffee

16:00-17:30 **Session V: Translating ideas into action**

Chair: Carlos Primo Braga, The Evian Group@IMD

In this session, participants will share and explore proposals for ensuring that the expert group process actively informs domestic and international policy-making, negotiations and decision-making on innovation, trade and intellectual property.

Introductory comments: Lara BIRKES, ICTSD Senior Fellow

17.30-18.00 **Closing Session: ways forward**