

## First Expert Group Workshop on the Digital Economy

13 May 2015 – New York, US

### Agenda

# INVITATION ONLY

Wednesday 13 May

#### 09:00 – 09:20 Welcome remarks and brief description of the E15 Initiative

Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz (ICTSD)  
Sean Doherty (World Economic Forum)  
Alexander Wong (World Economic Forum)

#### 09:20 – 09:45 Introduction of the E15 Expert Group on Digital Economy

Andrew Crosby, Convener (ICTSD)  
Dean Merit Janow, Theme Leader (Columbia University)

*Group members and observers will be invited to briefly introduce themselves.*

*The session will recall the discussions at the scoping videoconference which were kicked-off by the concept note prepared by ICTSD.*

#### 9:45 – 11:00 Group overview paper: State of play

Presenter: Joshua Meltzer, Co-convener (Brookings Institution)  
Chair: Dean Merit Janow, Theme Leader (Columbia University)

*Joshua Meltzer will present the overview paper which identifies and maps the key questions being examined by the group and serves as the main basis for the group's discussion. The paper considers the interface between digital technologies and trade rules and identifies key challenges and opportunities that the digital economy creates for international trade and investment frameworks including in terms of global value chains, SMEs, and developing countries. It also outlines how digital trade is treated under existing WTO and other trade rules. Finally, it will also map/identify in general terms key proposals that the Expert Group could focus on in terms of possible adjustments to the global trading system to support digital trade and cross-border data flows.*

Open discussion

#### 11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

#### 11:30 – 13:00 The great transformation: The rise of digital trade and its implications

Presenters: Usman Ahmed (eBay, Inc.); Ulf Pehersson (Ericsson).  
Discussants: Nick-Ashton Hart (Internet & Digital Ecosystem Alliance (IDEA)); Kati Suominen (TradeUp Capital Fund)  
Chair: Sean Doherty (World Economic Forum)

*Cross-border e-commerce has grown to represent more than 10 percent of trade in goods in less than a decade. Digital technologies enable small and big companies as well as individuals to sell and source products, services, and ideas across borders at an unprecedented scale. In addition, the “Internet of Things” in which physical objects are embedded with electronics, software, sensors and connectivity to achieve greater value is developing at a fast pace. It is generating large amounts of data from diverse locations. Businesses are increasingly moving data across borders as an intrinsic part of their daily operations. The spread of digital technologies is taking place in the context of sweeping changes to traditional modes of production/innovation and trade flows with the emergence/expansion of ‘connected’ global value chains, thus the enormous potential impact of digitization couples with new modes of production/distribution of goods and services is only beginning to emerge.*

*Against this background, the group might have a deeper look at the following questions: Which developments brought by digital technologies have significant bearing for international trade frameworks/flows and require further examination? Which key knowledge gaps need to be addressed by empirical evidence?*

Open discussion

**13:00 – 14:00 Lunch**

**14:00 – 15:30 Global trade rules and digital technologies: Key issues and challenges**

Presenter: Rohan Kariyawasam (Anglia Ruskin University)

Discussants: Hosuk Lee-Makiyama (European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE)); Amy Porges (Porges Law)

Chair: Ahmed Abdel-Latif, Group Manager (ICTSD)

*This session will examine how digital trade is treated under existing global trade rules whether multilateral (WTO, GATT, GATS, and Telecommunications Annex, TRIPS, WTO E-Commerce Work Programme, ITA-II) plurilateral (TISA) and regional/bilateral (TPP/other FTAs). It will discuss whether the new developments brought by digital trade and cross-border data flows can be addressed under by adjustments to existing rules or require the elaboration of new rules specifically adapted to the realities and complexities brought by digital trade.*

Open discussion

**15:30 – 16:00 Coffee break**

**16:00 – 17:15 Barriers to digital trade: between data protection and data protectionism**

Presenters: Anupam Chander (University of California, Davis); David Weller (Google)

Discussant: Xiaodong Lee (China Internet Information Network Centre (CNNIC))

Chair: Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz (ICTSD)

*As the importance of digital technologies for international trade has grown, there has also been a trend towards greater data/digital protectionism. A number of governments are restricting digital flows in ways that reduce the ability of businesses to use the Internet as a place for international commerce and limits the access of consumers to goods and services. Some of these restrictions “are being used to achieve legitimate goals such as preventing cybercrime and protecting privacy but may be applied more broadly than necessary to achieve those objectives.” In other cases, such restrictions, which include market access restrictions and localization requirements, could harm international trade.*

*Against this background, the Group might consider examining the following questions: a) Which measures can be considered to fall under the scope of “digital protectionism”? b) Is further research needed to map such measures and where they are implemented? c) What is the scale and economic impact of digital protectionism in light of existing evidence? d) Which responses are required to address digital protectionism? What are the areas of openness needed to support digital trade?*

Open discussion

**17:15 – 18:00 Possible policy options and future work**

Chair: Dean Merit Janow, Theme Leader (Columbia University)

This session will seek to synthesise the day's discussions particularly in terms of possible research (think pieces) to be commissioned which could feed into the work and thinking of the group. It will also seek to identify which possible policy options emerging from the group's discussions merit deeper examination and analysis.

Open discussion

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