
**Working Group on the Interaction
between Trade and Competition Policy**

**SECRETARIAT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES PURSUANT TO
PARAGRAPH 24 OF THE DOHA MINISTERIAL DECLARATION**

Note by the Secretariat

This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of Members and to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

1. Paragraph 24 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration calls for the provision of enhanced support for technical assistance and capacity building in the area of the interaction between trade and competition policy, including policy analysis and development so that developing and least-developed countries may better evaluate the implications of closer multilateral cooperation for their development policies and objectives, and human and institutional development. It indicates that such assistance shall be provided in cooperation with other relevant intergovernmental organisations, including UNCTAD, and through appropriate regional and bilateral channels.

2. As requested by the Working Group (WT/WGTCP/M/21, to be issued), this note is to inform the Group regarding the activities that have been undertaken by the Secretariat pursuant to the foregoing mandate. It covers the following aspects: (i) scope of activities undertaken and cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations; and (ii) design and content of workshops and symposia organized by the Secretariat in this subject area. Annex I of the note provides information on specific activities that have been organized by the Secretariat or in which it has participated in the period since the Doha Ministerial Conference.

3. As detailed below, in response to the mandate in paragraph 24 of the Doha Declaration, a large number of activities have been undertaken by the Secretariat. A major problem in organizing and delivering these activities has been the limited Secretariat staff resources in this area. In July 2002, an additional staff member was recruited to assist with the work, which has enabled the Secretariat to step up the level of its activities in this area.

I. SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

4. The following are the main types of activities that have been undertaken by the Secretariat in response to the mandate set out in paragraph 24 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration:

- First, the Secretariat has organized a number of regional workshops on the relationship between competition policy, economic development and the multilateral trading system in addition to the options before the WTO in this area, in various parts of the developing world. These regional workshops are the principal tool through which the Secretariat has sought to respond to the mandate in paragraph 24. A list of such workshops is provided in Annex I.

- Second, the Secretariat has participated in an extensive series of workshops that have been organized by UNCTAD, in addition to two international conferences that were co-organized by the OECD,¹ on matters relevant to paragraph 24 and the proposals before the WTO in this area.
- Third, the Secretariat has organized two one-day Symposia in Geneva on the various issues before the WTO in relation to the Doha mandate and aspects of the current proposals for a multilateral framework on competition policy.
- Fourth, the Secretariat has organized two national workshops on the same set of topics that have been addressed in its regional workshops – i.e, the relationship between competition policy, economic development and the multilateral trading system in addition to the options before the WTO in this area.
- Fifth, modules on the issues before the WTO in the area of trade and competition policy have been presented in various multi-subject training courses and other activities organized by the Secretariat, both in Geneva and in the regions.
- Sixth, and in response to a request by the Working Group (WT/WGTCP/M/18, paragraphs 96-98) pursuant to the mandate in paragraph 24 of the Doha Declaration, a study has been prepared, with the assistance of a consultant, on specific issues relating to a possible multilateral framework on competition policy (document WT/WGTCP/W/228, issued 19 May 2003). The study responds, in particular, to the need for "policy analysis and development" which is identified as part of the wider mandate for technical assistance and capacity building in paragraph 24.

5. A list of individual activities in the above categories in which the Secretariat has participated subsequent to the Doha Conference is provided in Annex I to this paper.

6. In carrying out the activities referred to in this note, the Secretariat has cooperated extensively with UNCTAD and, to a lesser extent, with other intergovernmental organizations active in this area. In January 2002, the Secretariat organized a meeting of interested representatives of the Secretariats of UNCTAD, the OECD and the World Bank to discuss possible approaches to implementing the mandate in paragraph 24 of the Doha Declaration. At the meeting, the participating agencies agreed that cooperation between them should be viewed as an ongoing process, that they would remain in regular contact and that they would periodically exchange information on upcoming events with a view to facilitating coordination and avoiding unnecessary duplication (WT/WGTCP/M/17, paragraph 58).

7. Following the above-mentioned meeting, UNCTAD was invited to and contributed a speaker to all of the regional and national workshops that have been organized by the Secretariat in the area of the interaction between trade and competition policy since the Doha Ministerial Conference. Similarly, the WTO Secretariat, on the invitation of UNCTAD, has contributed a speaker to each of the regional workshops and conferences that have been organized by UNCTAD in relation to the post-Doha mandate on trade and competition policy. The Secretariat has also benefited from the participation in several of its workshops by representatives of the OECD Secretariat (from both the trade and competition sides of the Secretariat), and has participated in two international conferences dealing with the issues before the WTO in this area that were co-organized by the OECD. In addition, a representative of the World Bank participated in a regional workshop organized by the Secretariat for the benefit of countries of the Asia-Pacific region, in Bangkok.

8. In several instances, the Secretariat has been unable to respond favourably to requests for its participation in activities organized by other intergovernmental organizations and/or national donors, and thereby to reciprocate for their participation (in some cases) in WTO events. This has been due

¹ One of these, the Seoul Competition Forum and Workshop (November 2002) was also co-organized by UNCTAD.

principally to the constraint imposed by the fact that a given activity or the interest in the Secretariat's participation in that activity may become known only weeks before the event is to take place and, therefore, the activity cannot be specified in advance in the Secretariat Annual Technical Assistance Plan.

9. Following the upcoming Fifth Ministerial, the Secretariat's plans call for the organization of intensive training courses on trade and competition policy for officials from the developing world. Initially, these would be presented for officials from Africa and Asia, respectively. It is hoped that these courses can be organized in cooperation with the World Bank. The Secretariats of UNCTAD and the OECD would also be invited to participate.

II. DESIGN AND CONTENT OF WORKSHOPS AND SYMPOSIA ORGANIZED BY THE SECRETARIAT

10. The regional and national workshops organized by the Secretariat in the area of trade and competition policy are typically of a duration of two to three days. With respect to the topics addressed, the first day of the workshop is generally devoted to discussion of the nature and content of competition policy and its significance for developing countries. Typically, this includes an update on pertinent developments at the national level in the relevant region (or country). The second and, where relevant, third days of the workshop are devoted to a discussion of the Doha mandate on trade and competition policy, the content of the current proposals for a multilateral framework on competition policy, and the pros and cons of those elements.

11. The purpose of the the regional and national workshops organized by the Secretariat in this area is to provide the participating Members with sufficient information and background on the links between competition policy, development and the multilateral trading system in addition to the nature and content of the current proposals for a multilateral framework on competition policy to enable them to assess their own interests in this area and to make an informed judgement in regard to the decisions to be taken on this issue at the upcoming Ministerial Conference in Cancun.

12. With regard to participation in the various workshops, in the case of the regional workshops, each participating country is invited to send two representatives – one from its trade ministry and one from its competition agency, where such an agency exists, or from another ministry with responsibilities in this area. In the case of national workshops, the host government is responsible for nominating participants and typically invites 30-40 representatives from various ministries.

13. Particularly in presenting the regional and national workshops organized by the Secretariat, an interactive format has been used. In addition to the setting aside of substantial portions of time for questions and answers/general discussion following formal presentations by expert speakers, each of the regional workshops has included two "breakout sessions", in the course of which participants have had an opportunity to discuss specific questions regarding the subject-matter of the workshop in small groups. The purpose of these sessions is to provide maximum scope for the exchange of views by participants and expert resource persons.

14. In organizing both the regional and national workshops and the Geneva symposia, the Secretariat has consistently sought the participation of speakers representing diverse regions of the world and viewpoints on the issues. In the case of regional workshops, typically, 50% of the speakers at the workshop come from within the region. In most cases, the workshops organized by the Secretariat have also benefited from the participation of Professor Jenny, Chairman of the Working Group, participating in his personal capacity as a subject-matter expert.

ANNEX I

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN PURSUANT TO THE MANDATE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN PARAGRAPH 24 OF THE DOHA MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

I. REGIONAL WORKSHOPS ORGANIZED BY THE WTO SECRETARIAT

15. Since the Doha Ministerial Conference (November 2001), the following regional workshops have been organized by the Secretariat for the benefit of countries in the relevant region:

- Regional workshop for the countries of Central America, in Guatemala City, 17-18 September 2002, organized in cooperation with the government of Guatemala and the Inter-American Development Bank (INTAL);
- Regional workshop for the countries of French-speaking Africa, in Libreville, 9-11 October 2002, organized in cooperation with the government of Gabon. This workshop was held back-to-back with an UNCTAD training programme;
- Regional workshop for the countries of English-speaking Africa, in Port-Louis, 12-14 November 2002, organized in cooperation with the government of Mauritius;
- Regional workshop for the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, in Bangkok, 21-23 January 2003, organized in cooperation with the government of Thailand. The workshop was held back-to-back with a national workshop on competition policy organised by the Thai authorities in which the Secretariat also participated;
- Regional workshop for the countries of the Caribbean region, in Kingston, 2-4 April 2003, organized in cooperation with the government of Jamaica and the Inter-American Development Bank (INTAL); and
- Regional workshop for the countries of the Arab and Middle-Eastern region, in Cairo, 6-7 May 2003, organized in cooperation with the government of Egypt.

16. Currently, the Secretariat is in the process of organising a regional workshop for the countries of Latin America (to be held in Buenos Aires, on 18-20 June 2003, in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank (INTAL) and the government of Argentina); a further two-day workshop for the countries of Africa (to be held in Nairobi on 10-11 July 2003, in cooperation with the government of Kenya) and a workshop for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (to be held in Budapest on 17-18 July 2003, in cooperation with the government of Hungary).

II. PARTICIPATION BY THE WTO SECRETARIAT IN ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

17. In 2002, the Secretariat participated in the following workshops organised by UNCTAD that were relevant to the post-Doha mandate on trade and competition policy: (i) regional workshop for countries of the Middle-Eastern region, in Abu Dhabi; (ii) regional workshop for the countries of Latin America, in Panama City; (iii) regional workshop for African countries, in Tunis; (iv) regional workshop for Asia-Pacific countries, in Hong Kong, China; (v) regional workshop for the countries of Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region, in Odessa; and (vi) regional workshop for the countries of COMESA, in Livingstone.

18. The Secretariat also participated in an international conference organized by the Fair Trade Commission of Korea in cooperation with UNCTAD and the OECD, in Seoul, in November 2002.

19. In 2003, the Secretariat has participated in the following workshops organised by UNCTAD relating to the post-Doha mandate: (i) regional workshop for the Asia-Pacific region, in Kuala Lumpur; (ii) regional workshop for African countries, in Nairobi; (iii) regional workshop for Latin American and Caribbean countries, in Sao Paolo. It will participate in an UNCTAD conference for the countries of Central and East Europe and CIS countries, to be held in Tashkent, in June. In addition, the Secretariat participated in an international workshop organized by the Korea Fair Trade Commission in cooperation with the OECD in May 2003.

III. GENEVA SYMPOSIA

20. Two Geneva Symposia on Trade and Competition Policy were organized by the Secretariat in the period since the Doha Ministerial Conference, on 22 April 2002 and 22 February 2003, respectively, for the benefit of Geneva and capital-based delegates. Both events featured presentations by academic and other experts from both developed and developing countries on the issues before the Working Group, and were held back-to-back with regular meetings of the Group. An additional purpose of the Symposia was to facilitate a continuing dialogue between Members of the WTO and civil society organizations with interests in the area of trade and competition policy. For this purpose, representatives of various consumer-oriented, business and other non-governmental organizations were invited to participate and to contribute speakers particularly to the 2003 Symposium.

IV. NATIONAL WORKSHOPS ORGANIZED BY THE WTO SECRETARIAT

21. Resource constraints require the Secretariat to take a much more selective approach in organising national as opposed to regional workshops in the area of trade and competition policy, but it does attempt to do so when a particular need is expressed. In particular, national workshops on trade and competition policy have been organized for China, in Beijing, on 30-31 July 2002; and for Lesotho, in Maseru, on 16-17 December 2002. The latter was held back to back with a national workshop for Lesotho organised by UNCTAD.

22. The Secretariat has also been asked to organize national workshops for Ghana, Malaysia and Venezuela. Currently, it is expected that these workshops will be organized in the second half of 2003.

V. MODULES ON TRADE AND COMPETITION POLICY PRESENTED IN WTO TRAINING COURSES

23. Apart from its role in relation to regional and other events focusing specifically on the Doha mandate on trade and competition policy, in 2002 the Secretariat presented modules on trade and competition policy in the following multi-subject seminars and courses organized by the WTO, sometimes in cooperation with other organizations, to address various aspects of the Doha Development Agenda: (i) a national seminar for Nigeria on various trade topics; (ii) an OAS-WTO-Georgetown University course for Latin American trade officials, in Washington, D.C.; (iii) an ECA-WTO regional workshop on various issues, held in Addis Ababa; (iv) two special sessions of the WTO Trade Policy course that were held for officials of French-speaking and English-speaking African countries, in Casablanca and Nairobi, respectively; (v) an advanced training course for senior trade policy officials organized by the WTO in cooperation with the Joint Vienna Institute, in Vienna; and (vi) several sessions of the regular WTO Trade Policy Course, in Geneva.

24. Similarly, in 2003, the Secretariat has presented or will present modules on competition policy in the following courses and other events: (i) additional sessions of the regular WTO trade policy course, in Geneva; (ii) an advanced training course organised for senior Arab government

officials, in Cairo, in January 2003; (iii) an advanced training course for senior officials of the countries of English-speaking Africa, in Johannesburg; (iv) an advanced training course for senior officials of the countries of French-speaking Africa, in Ouagadougou; (v) an advanced training course for senior officials of the CEEC countries and Central Asia, in Tbilisi; and (vi) a session of the WTO regular trade policy course for government officials from English-speaking African countries, in Nairobi.

VI. POLICY ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT

25. In response to a request by the Working Group (WT/WGTCP/M/18, paragraphs 96-98) pursuant to the mandate in paragraph 24 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, a study has been prepared, with the assistance of a consultant, on specific issues relating to a possible multilateral framework on competition policy (document WT/WGTCP/W/228, issued 19 May 2003).
