

HOW TO GET THE WTO BACK ON TRACK: EUROPEAN BUSINESS TWELVE RECOMMENDATIONS

10 December 2003

1. We, representing European business, are united in our wish to see the WTO Doha Development Agenda negotiations (DDA) back on track as soon as possible.
2. We believe that the multilateral trade route will ensure continued economic growth not only in developed countries but also in poor countries seeking development through trade and investment.
3. We call on all WTO Members to re-engage quickly, seriously and with realism in the negotiating process. All efforts must be made, in a pragmatic way, to re-establish confidence and build on the significant work done before and in Cancun.
4. We consider that, to achieve the progress necessary to restart the negotiations with the best chances of success in the shortest timeframe possible, all WTO Members must show forward-looking political leadership and flexibility. All Members, with special consideration for the least developed countries, should contribute actively to the negotiating process and be ready to make commitments commensurate to their level of development. There is no chance of moving forward without balanced commitments.
5. European business priorities for the DDA are:
 - market access for industrial goods (tariffs and stronger emphasis on non-tariff barriers): we consider the proposals on the table far below EU business expectations of a maximum tariff level of 15%;
 - services liberalisation: offers tabled so far by EU trade partners are disappointing and many emerging countries have not yet tabled initial offers. Access to modern and efficient services is essential to economic growth in any country
 - trade facilitation: we look for the launch of negotiations on a multilateral agreement within the Single Undertaking.
6. We urge WTO Members, particularly developed and big emerging countries, to pursue actively further agricultural trade reform and liberalisation. This is key for the DDA negotiations and for economic growth in the developing countries. An agreement on a framework which will lead to an agreement on the modalities for the agricultural negotiations has to be found rapidly. This would allow negotiators to move forward on the other DDA issues with significant economic growth potential. A solution on cotton should also be found in the framework of the agricultural negotiations.
7. We continue to support the improvement of existing WTO rules which are complementary to market liberalisation. Our two priorities are the Anti-Dumping Agreement and the Dispute Settlement Understanding.

8. We support a pragmatic approach on transparency in government procurement, investment and competition. Considering the differences of positions and the need to overcome the current deadlock on these issues, each issue should be dealt with on its own merits.
9. We are fully committed to the further integration of the developing countries in the global economy. We believe, therefore, that exemption from WTO rules is not the solution to development. Instead, for each area of the negotiations, the countries concerned should receive treatment and technical assistance commensurate with their level of development and real needs.
10. We consider that fundamental reform of the WTO is inappropriate in the short term. There is a need, however, for organisational and procedural improvements, in parallel to the negotiating process and within the existing framework, in particular regarding the Ministerial Conferences.
11. We believe that accountability, transparency and responsibility should be the touchstones for governments as much as for business and NGOs interested in the WTO process.
12. We stand ready to do all that we can to ensure that the DDA moves forward and delivers its promise in terms of generating substantial economic growth in the interest of all WTO Members.



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UNICE: UNICE represents more than 16 million small, medium and large companies active in Europe. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 35 central industrial and employers federations from 28 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe (see more information on UNICE and its position on the WTO/DDA in its web-sites: www.unice.org and <http://wto.unice.org>)

The European Services Forum (ESF) is a network of high-level representatives from the European Services Sector committed to promoting the interests of European services and the liberalisation of services markets throughout the world through WTO Services Negotiations. It comprises more than 45 major European service companies at the CEO level and more than 35 European service sector federations covering service sectors like financial services, tourism, telecommunications, air and maritime transport, business and professional services, distribution, postal and express delivery, IT services, energy services and the audio-visual industry (see list of members and position papers in the web-site: www.esf.be).
