

## Members Prepare for the MC8

Members have spent the week finetuning their preparation for the 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (MC8) scheduled to start on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The conference itself will generate few surprises as most of the outcome – with the exception of negotiations on Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) – has been hammered out in advance.

As such, Ministers are expected to take decisions on E-Commerce, which features the removal of duties on goods and services sold electronically and which has always been limited in duration until the subsequent Ministerial Conference. A ministerial decision will also be taken on TRIPS (trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights) Non-Violation Complaint whereby Ministers will extend the mid-2013 deadline for least-developed countries (LDCs) to implement intellectual property protection under the WTO agreement and agree that Members continue to refrain from bringing “non-violation” cases to the WTO dispute settlement system until the next Ministerial Conference in 2013 (MC9).

Ministers are also expected to rubberstamp a decision on LDCs services waiver, allowing the granting of preferential treatment to LDCs in the area of services as well as easing their accession to the WTO. LDCs have developed a draft decision that establishes criteria and benchmarks for market access and the multilateral rules negotiations of their accession process.

In addition, Trade Ministers will also be invited to approve the accession of three new WTO Members: Russia, Samoa and Montenegro, as well as taking part in three working sessions that would provide them with the opportunity to outline their view on global trade through three broad themes: Importance of the Multilateral Trading System and the WTO, Trade and Development and the Doha Development Agenda. Countries desiring to take the floor will be granted a three-minute speaking time to express their views on any trade topic that they may wish to intervene on.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Ministerial Conference will be chaired by Nigeria’s Trade Minister, Olusegun Olutoyin Aganga, assisted by Ministers from Switzerland, Johann Schneider-Ammann, Malaysia, Mustapha Mohamed and Trinidad and Tobago, Stephen Cadiz.

### Upcoming Events

- WTO Ministerial Conference (MC8), December 15–17, 2011
- Regular Agriculture Committee, March 21-22; June 20-21, September 26-27, 2012

Geneva Watch is published by Dairy Farmers of Canada, Chicken Farmers of Canada, Egg Farmers of Canada, Turkey Farmers of Canada and Canadian Hatching Egg Producers to report on the various events occurring in Geneva, particularly on the WTO negotiations on agriculture.

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