

WTO Director General Selection Process

The WTO full membership gathered on March 19th to review the process of appointing the next Director General to replace Pascal Lamy. The informal General Council meeting led by its new chair, Pakistan's Ambassador to the WTO, Shahid Bashir, was aimed at clarifying how the committee – composed of the Dispute Settlement Body's chairman, Canadian ambassador Jonathan Fried and the Trade Policy Review Body's chairman, Sweden's ambassador Joakim Reiter – intends to proceed, through a series of consultations, to narrow the field of candidates and ultimately select a new director General.

“[T]he ultimate aim of the consultation process shall be to identify the candidate around whom consensus can be built,” Bashir told the membership. In order to do so, the committee plans to hold three rounds of consultations, with a possible fourth one to arrive to a consensual candidate.

The first round scheduled to start the week of April 2 will seek to eliminate 4 of the 9 candidates from the race. WTO Members will be asked to identify the candidates least likely to attract their support for the job. The second slated to start shortly after the April 9 – when the results of the first round are known – will seek to eliminate three more candidates. As such Members would be asked to select their two preferred candidates likely to attract consensus to go head to head in what should normally be the third and final round before the process is concluded with a General Council meeting to be called by May 31st at which point the new Director-General would have to be appointed.

Because “unexpected circumstances” may occur depending on Members' preferences, a fourth Round may be necessary, the committee said.

Nine candidates are running for the WTO top job with two coming from Africa - Mr Alan John Kwadwo Kyerematen, Ghana's former Trade Minister and Ms Amina Mohamed from Kenya who has chaired three WTO bodies (Dispute Settlement Body, Trade Policy Review Body and General Council) during her tenure as Kenya's Ambassador to the UN in Geneva from 2000-2006.

The Latin America continent has 3 candidates - Ms Anabel González, Costa Rica's current Minister of Foreign Trade who has been Director of the WTO Agriculture Division between 2006 and 2009. She is joined by Mexico's former Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Herminio Blanco, and current Brazilian ambassador to the WTO, Mr Roberto Carvalho de Azevêdo.

Two candidates originate from Asia – Indonesia's former Trade Minister, Ms Mari Elka Pangestu, and Korea's former Trade Minister Mr. Taeho Bark.

The last two candidates are New Zealand's Trade Minister, Mr Tim Groser and Former Minister of Industry and Trade of Jordan, Mr. Ahmad Thougan Hindawi.

Upcoming Events

- Regular Agriculture Committee, March 26, September 4, November 12, 2013
- Panel of Experts' Report: "Defining the Future of Trade", early April, 2013
- Informal TNC (Bali Stocktaking), April 11, 2013
- APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade, April 20-21, 2013
- General Council, May 1-2, July 24-25, Oct. 8-9, Nov. 5-6, 2013
- TPP Round XVII, May 15-24, 2013, Lima (Peru)
- OECD Annual Forum, May 27-31, 2013, Paris (France)
- Deadline for Bali Deliverables, August, 2013
- APEC Leaders Summit, October 1-8, 2013
- WTO 9th Ministerial Conference (MC9), December 3-6, 2013, Bali (Indonesia)

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.

For more information or comments, please visit:

www.dairyfarmers.ca, www.chicken.ca, www.eggs.ca, www.turkeyfarmersofcanada.ca, www.chep-poic.ca/.

Legal Deposit: National Library of Canada, ISSN 1496-9254