



Azevedo - “The Intermission is Over!”

For his first speech as Director General of the WTO, Brazilian diplomat, Roberto Azevedo, pledged to do his utmost to “rebuild trust and faith” in the organization and its multilateral trading system, which have been lacking ever since the Doha Round went quiet.

Speaking before the organization’s full Membership, Mr. Azevedo vowed to make a successful Ministerial Conference in Bali (MC9) his top priority as a deal there would inject fresh life into, not only the negotiating arm of the organization, but also to the WTO as a whole.

“The WTO is more than Doha,” but the latter’s paralysis “casts a shadow well beyond the negotiating arm, over every other part of our work (...) that is why success at the Bali Ministerial Conference is vital,” Azevedo told the General Council meeting today.

As much as a success this December would provide gains to the global economy, the consequences of failure would be even greater, as it would accentuate the current negative perception that nothing is happening at the WTO, he added. That is the message he took to St-Petersburg where G-20 leaders held a meeting on September 5-6.

If a successful MC9 is the 1st priority, the second would be tackling the remaining outstanding issues in the Doha Round through different approaches. Azevedo said he has several ideas as to how this can be done. However, these options would be discussed once the confidence in the organization has been restored.

Unlike his predecessor, Mr. Azevedo plans to spend the next few weeks in Geneva working with ambassadors and senior officials from capitals on the Bali Ministerial. Azevedo said he will be only traveling when “strictly necessary.” One of those trips will be to Bali to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit where the WTO traditionally chairs a meeting on trade, where another high profile negotiation – the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement – will also be discussed.

The rest of the time will likely be devoted to trying to strike a deal on the three elements of the Bali package i.e. trade facilitation, development and some elements of agriculture, which Azevedo plans to start discussing this week, and hopefully conclude, before Members board their planes to Bali for MC9.

“There are just 84 days until the Ministerial Conference,” Azevedo said, “we must all be ready to live with some compromises. We cannot lose sight of the bigger picture,” he told the full Membership.

Upcoming Events

- TPP Chief Negotiators Meeting, September 18–21, Washington DC (U.S.)
- TPP Market Access Negotiating Group, September 20-23, 2013, Washington DC (U.S.)
- WTO Public Forum, October 1–3, 2013
- APEC Leaders' Summit, October 1–8, 2013
- General Council, Oct. 8-9, Nov. 5-6, 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

