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NOTIFICATION

Ad hoc Expert Group Meeting on Trade remedies in green sectors: the case of renewables

Geneva, 3–4 April 2014

UNCTAD will convene an Ad hoc Expert Group Meeting entitled: “Trade remedies in green sectors: the case of renewables” on 3 and 4 April 2014 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a second ad hoc group in a series dedicated to issues at the interface of green economy and trade. The meeting will commence at 10 a.m. on Thursday, 3 April, in Room XXVI. Information concerning this Ad hoc Expert Group Meeting will be available on the UNCTAD website <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/MeetingDetails.aspx?meetingid=531>.

Background and purpose of the meeting

In recent years, trade remedies - anti-dumping and countervailing duties - have increasingly been directed towards goods used in conjunction with renewable energy sources - solar panels, wind turbines and biofuels. This puts these measures at cross purposes with national and international climate and environment policies. The developed as well as the developing countries are using these measures. And while one can argue that a given amount of environmental expenditure would go further in the absence of trade remedies, it is not clear that the amount of public support would remain at the same level.

There can be little doubt that trade remedies are a sensitive area. Trade remedies may have a significant effect on value and job creation throughout the supply chain as a whole. Trade remedies are bound to have implications for competitiveness. Trade remedies against renewables provide a counterpoint to the initiative to reduce tariffs on environmental goods, particularly since some of the most active users of trade remedies participate in the initiative. Trade remedies shatter the alliances among interest groups. A profound shift is under way in the new generation of “trade and environment” disputes.

What are the actual or potential effects of trade remedies involving *renewables*? What kind of conclusions can be drawn from the various cases? What is the impact of trade remedies on jobs and value added along the entire solar and wind energy value chain? Are competitors with different supply chain using trade remedy cases to “raid” each other? Are these measures remedying truly anti-competitive behaviour or undesired competition? Are there alternative approaches that might lessen the impact of trade remedies on the deployment of renewable energy? Do trade remedies constitute a problem for the liberalization of trade in environmental goods and services? Which options are available to WTO members should they decide to negotiate a limited carve-out for environmental goods? Can increased input from economics in anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations provide more robust, empirically sound and predictable outcomes and better connect trade law to the “real world”?

The meeting will address these and other, related questions, with some of the leading experts in the field who can easily cross the boundaries between analysis, bottom line decision making and trade policy and negotiations.

Participation

Experts will be participating in the meeting in a personal capacity and are expected to have proven expertise in the subject matter and may be drawn from governmental or non-governmental organizations, private entities or academia. The meeting may be of particular interest to trade policy officials and practitioners, trade negotiators, representatives of environmental authorities, business associations and private companies operating in the renewable energy sectors. Experts from international organizations dealing with issues relevant to the meeting will also be invited.

Specialized agencies and intergovernmental bodies wishing to participate in the Ad hoc Expert Group Meeting, as well as non-governmental organizations in the General Category and those in the Special Category wishing to participate as observers, are requested to inform the UNCTAD secretariat of the names of their representatives by **28 March 2014**.

Logistics

The meeting will take place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva in Room XXVI. Simultaneous interpretation will *not* be available.

Upon arrival, participants are requested, before entering the Palais des Nations, to collect their badges at the United Nations Security Service, Pregny Gate entrance, 14 Avenue de la Paix. The Security Service is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Because of the security measures in force, participants are strongly advised to arrive before 9 a.m. in order to complete entry procedures in good time and proceed to the meeting in Room XXVI of the Palais. Participants are requested to carry a passport or similar national identity card with them. Taxis are not allowed to enter the grounds of the Palais des Nations, and visitors will therefore be dropped off at the entrance gates. Furthermore, **luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the Security Service gives special clearance**.

Further information and contact details

All communications concerning representation at the meeting should be sent to the UNCTAD secretariat, Intergovernmental Support Service, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10 (*fax*: +41(0)22 917 0214; *e-mail*: meetings@unctad.org).

All other enquiries should be addressed to the coordinators in the substantive division, Alexey Vikhlyaev, (*tel*: +41 (0) 22 917 5618; *fax*: +41 (0) 22 917 0247; *e-mail*: alexey.vikhlyaev@unctad.org) and Lalen Lleander +41 (0) 22 917 2116; *fax*: +41 (0) 22 917 0247; *e-mail*: lalen.lleander@unctad.org.

(signed)

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

20 March 2014