

UNION INTERPARLEMENTAIRE



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

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Geneva, 12 January 2011

ANNUAL 2011 SESSION
OF THE PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

Since 2002, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the European Parliament have been jointly leading the way in a process known as the *Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization (WTO)* - a permanent mechanism of parliamentary oversight of this inter-governmental body, its de facto parliamentary dimension. The principal objective of the Conference is to enhance external transparency of the WTO and hold it accountable to legislators as elected representatives of the people.

I am pleased to inform you that the next session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO will take place on **21 and 22 March 2011**. For the first time ever, the session will take place on **WTO premises**, Centre William Rappard in Geneva. The choice of the venue is highly symbolic. At the time when the economic and financial crisis has placed the global trading system in front of powerful new challenges, legislators from all over the world will gather at WTO Headquarters to discuss ways of revitalizing the Doha Round and ensuring a more fair and equitable management of globalization through multilateral rules and disciplines enshrined by the WTO.

As on past occasions, the forthcoming session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO is intended primarily for **parliamentarians who specialize in matters of international trade** in their respective parliaments. The session will provide them with an opportunity to obtain first-hand information on recent developments in Doha Round talks, interact with government negotiators and WTO officials, and exchange views and experiences with colleagues in other parliaments.

The session's provisional programme, practical information note and registration form are enclosed. The IPU and the European Parliament, as the Conference co-organizers, very much hope that your Parliament will participate in the forthcoming session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO and look forward to receiving the names of your delegates in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Anders B. Johansson
IPU Secretary General

ANNUAL 2011 SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

Geneva, 21-22 March 2011

Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the European Parliament

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Monday, 21 March

09:00 - 12:30	Pre-Conference session of the Steering Committee (<i>in camera meeting, IPU Headquarters</i>)
10:00 - 18:00	<i>Registration of participants</i>
15:00 - 15:30	Inaugural session
15:30 - 15:40	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational issues
15:40 - 17:00	Debate on substantive theme (a): Multilateralism in the midst of the rising tide of bilateral and regional trade pacts
17:00 - 18:00	Hearing with the WTO Director-General
18:00	<i>Reception</i>
20:00 - 22:00	Steering Committee (<i>in camera meeting, IPU Headquarters</i>)

Tuesday, 22 March

10:00 - 11:30	Continuation of the debate on substantive theme (a), followed by debate on theme (b): Rebalancing the rules of the multilateral trading system in favour of the poor
11:30 - 13:00	Dialogue with Ministers and senior WTO negotiators Trade and sustainable development: from collision to cohesion
13:00 - 15:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
15:00 - 16:00	Continuation and end of the debate on substantive theme (b)
16:00 - 17:40	Interactive panel discussion Connecting to society: Trade policy-making in the era of mass communication
17:40 - 18:00	Closing session