

(Thursday, October 6th, 2011-Castries Saint Lucia) The OECS Secretariat's Trade Policy Unit and Geneva Mission convened a video conference on 23rd September with trade officials to commence preparations for the upcoming eighth ministerial conference of the World Trade Organisation which is scheduled for 15-17th December in Geneva, Switzerland.

It is important for the OECS Member States to participate in this ministerial conference in order to ensure that their interests relating to the rules for trade in agricultural and industrial products are preserved and that they register their views on the work programme of the World Trade Organisation for the next two years.

The representatives of the Geneva Mission provided officials with information on the subjects that are likely to be on the agenda of the Conference of interest to the OECS such as climate change, Aid For Trade, and dispute settlement and recommended positions that Member States should adopt on these issues for the approval of the OECS Heads of Government. Administrative issues relating to member state participation in the conference and the preparation of ministerial statements were also discussed.

The Trade Policy Unit intends to convene monthly meetings in order to update officials on the preparations for the conference and to assist them to crystallize their positions.