

November 2011

The Trade Policy Unit and the Geneva Mission assist delegations attendign the WTO's Ministerial Conference in Geneva, Switzerland

Staff of the Trade Policy Unit and the OECS Technical Mission in Geneva has been providing technical support to OECS delegations who will be attending the Eighth WTO Ministerial Conference scheduled for 15-17th December in Geneva, Switzerland. The Unit and the Mission have convened two coordination meetings with delegates attending the conference in addition to preparing briefing documents for their guidance. All OECS-WTO members will be represented at the meeting.

This ministerial conference will produce a two-part chairperson's summary which will consist of issues raised by members during the meeting and others agreed by members. Some of the items that will be endorsed by members of interest to the OECS include a work programme on small economies, an appraisal of the Trade Policy Review mechanism of the WTO, a work programme on e-commerce and moratorium on customs duties on e-commerce transactions.

During the meeting, the OECS will support other members in reiterating the importance of the multilateral trading system and the WTO, the connection between trade and development and the conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations which have been ongoing since 2001.

The OECS regards participation in the WTO as important because it is the forum that allows small developing countries to establish equitable rules that govern how global trade in goods, services and agricultural commodities is undertaken.

The Secretariat recommends continued support for Article 164 industries

In preparation for a regional meeting to consider the findings of a study which analysed the operation of the infant industry regime in CARICOM commonly known as Article 164, the Secretariat undertook an internal review of the study commissioned by the CARICOM Secretariat. The Secretariat was of the view that the performance of some of the industries was affected by the absence of financial and technical assistance, and recommends that a support programme be implemented which is tailored to the needs of each industry. Firms eligible to participate in this programme will be required to meet specific conditions in order to benefit.

The regional meeting is scheduled for 13-14 December in Antigua/Barbuda.

The next issue of UpDate will be available in January 2012

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An Update from the OECS Trade Policy Unit on Trade Matters of Importance to the Sub Region