



Under the patronage of Caroline Lucas, MEP and Harlem Désir, MEP

Public Hearing
From Rio via Doha to Johannesburg:
Counterbalancing the WTO with strong environmental and social rules

European Parliament, Brussels
Eastman Building, Rue Belliard 135
Wednesday, 17 April 2002
9.30-6.30

followed by reception

The context

Following the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, governments have shifted their priorities in favour of more trade and investment liberalisation and global competitiveness. Transnational Corporations have gained a significant amount of economic and political power and influenced the conclusions of the Uruguay round of trade negotiations and creation of the World Trade Organisation in 1995.

The World Trade Organisation with its powerful enforcement measures has given rise to a new type of global governance, while UN agreements on environment, development, human rights, labour, women and children lack adequate implementation measures.

Currently, a number of international as well as EU policies that promote sustainable development are threatened by WTO rules. The decision at the 4th WTO Ministerial in Qatar in November 2001 to expand the WTO agenda by launching new trade negotiations raises further concerns. These new negotiations are predicted to have widespread effects on environmental sustainability, development, and democracy in both industrialised as well as developing countries.

The public hearing

Caroline Lucas, MEP, the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF) and Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE) would like to invite you to a hearing to address two specific cross cutting issues:

Environmental Governance and Alternatives to Trade and Investment Liberalisation:

1) Environmental Governance:

Amongst the new issues to be negotiated at the WTO is the **relationship of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and WTO rules**. Will the EU succeed in maintaining that Multilateral Environmental Agreements are the best way to tackle international environmental problems and must therefore be preserved from WTO threats, ratified and effectively implemented? Or will trade interests undermine MEAs with the new WTO negotiations as we approach Rio plus 10? Which political steps in the run up Johannesburg are needed for an effective system of environmental governance?

2) Alternatives to Trade and Investment Liberalisation:

The EU's push for trade and investment negotiations in the WTO has been hotly debated. While global rules are needed, civil society groups have argued that instead of further trade and investment liberalisation measures, different regulations are needed, such as a binding set of rules for Transnational Corporations under the auspices of the UN.

Future WTO negotiations and the World Summit for Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in August 2002 offer a unique opportunity to rectify existing imbalances in international governance to establish global rules that work for the poor and the environment.

The event aims to foster a dialogue among EU officials and civil society representatives from the North and South on controversial WTO matters and discussions on positive alternatives in light of future WTO negotiations and the WSSD in Johannesburg.

The following institutions and organisations will be invited:

- MEPs, in particular of the Trade/Industry and Environment Committee;
- Permanent Representations in Brussels of the EU member states and accession countries;
- Foreign Affairs, Trade and Environment Ministries;
- Representatives of key NGOs dealing with WTO and WSSD matters,
- other stakeholders,
- the media.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Welcome and introduction

9.30-10.00

Caroline Lucas, MEP
Martin Rocholl, Director, FoEE
Barbara Unmüßig, Member of the Board, Heinrich Böll Foundation

SESSION ONE:

From Doha to Johannesburg: Developing Strong Sustainable Development Agreements

10.00-11.40

Facilitator: Caroline Lucas, MEP and GLOBE EU

The challenge: WTO threats to global and EU sustainable development agreements
Matthew Stilwell, Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)

Upcoming negotiations on MEAs in the WTO as a win win scenario
Invited or represented Margot Wallstrom, Commissioner for Environmental Affairs

The need to strengthen Multilateral Environmental Agreements versus WTO rules
Invited or represented Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director, UNEP

The road from Doha to Johannesburg: Developing Strong Sustainable Development Agreements
Vice Yu, FoEI WTO Programme Officer, Geneva

11.40 –12.30

Discussion

**SESSION TWO:
Alternatives to Trade and Investment Liberalisation
2.30–4.30**

Facilitator: Harlem Désir, MEP

Investment negotiations in the WTO. A lose-lose scenario for people and the environment?
Lori Wallach, Director, Global Trade Watch, Public Citizen, US

Trade and investment negotiations in the WTO. Alternatives from Civil Society Groups in the run up of Johannesburg
Martin Khor, Director, Third World Network, Malaysia

The Commission's approach to sustainable trade
Invited or represented Commissioner Pascal Lamy

The need for binding corporate regulations in Johannesburg
Matt Philipps, Friends of the Earth International

From Doha to Johannesburg: Towards Sustainable Economies
Karin Nansen, REDES, Uruguay

4.30-5.30
Discussion

**CLOSING PANEL
The road from Doha to Johannesburg:
Developing strong rules that work for people and the environment
5.30 – 6.30**

With representatives of European Commission, European Parliament, Heinrich Böll Foundation (Sascha Müller Kränner, Director, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Washington D.C.) and Friends of the Earth Europe (Alexandra Wandel, Trade and Sustainability Coordinator, Brussels)

Followed by **reception**

About the patrons and organisers of the event:

Caroline Lucas is a MEP and a member of GLOBE EU. She has written extensively on trade issues, is an acknowledged expert on globalisation and Advisory Board Member of the 'Protect the Local, Globally' think-tank.

Harlem Désir is a MEP. He is actively engaged in the campaign to reform and democratize the WTO and was rapporteur on "openness and democracy in international trade" (report adopted by the European Parliament in October 2001 before the WTO Doha Conference).

Friends of the Earth Europe is the largest grassroots environmental network in the world, campaigning to protect the environment and create sustainable societies. Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE) unites more than 30 national member organisations with thousands of local groups.

Heinrich Böll Foundation is a political non profit foundation. Striving to promote democracy civil society and international understanding, the work of Heinrich Böll Foundation centres on the core political values of ecology, democracy, solidarity and non-violence.

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