



# REPORT

## Workshop "Trade Liberalization: The WTO, the Doha Round and Development Challenges"

San José, Costa Rica, 6-8 November, 2008



WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION  
 ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU COMMERCE  
 ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DEL COMERCIO



Asamblea Legislativa República de Costa Rica  
 Comisión Permanente Especial de Relaciones  
 Internacionales y Comercio Exterior

Foro Interparlamentario de las Américas  
 Fórum Interparlamentar das Américas



Forum Interparlementaire des Amériques  
 Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas

# **Report of the Workshop**

## **“Trade Liberalization: The WTO, the Doha Round and Development Challenges”**

**San José, Costa Rica**

**6-8 November, 2008**

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Presented by:

Special Standing Committee on International Relations and Foreign Trade, Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Costa Rica

Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA)

World Trade Organization (WTO)





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Canada** 

This event has received financial support from the Canadian Government through Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.



Participants in the Workshop  
“Trade Liberalization: The WTO, the Doha Round and Development Challenges”

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## 1. Introduction

The Workshop “Trade Liberalization: The WTO, the Doha Round and Development Challenges” intended for parliamentarians from Central and South America, was held from 6 to 8 November 2008 in San José, Costa Rica.

The event was organized jointly by the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly, the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and was attended by 32 parliamentarians from Costa Rica, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

The presence of countries of differing size and level of economic development, coupled with the interesting blend of representatives from both government and opposition in each country, generated a wide range of perspectives on the issues discussed. The presentations by several experts and scholars from Costa Rican and regional organizations were enriched by this pooling of experience and information.

### 1.1 Workshop rationale



The proliferation of trade agreements and the domestic policies related to them has made knowledge of trade policy a priority for parliamentarians.

In order to effectively represent their constituents' interests in the local implementation of international trade agreements, parliamentarians must themselves be familiar with the complex issues involved.

The Workshop for Central and South American parliamentarians was the second of its kind organized regionally by FIPA, the first one having been held in Ottawa, Canada, in March 2007.

The purpose of this event was two-fold: first, to raise awareness about the multilateral trading system; secondly, to stimulate parliamentarians' interest in these issues and to inform them of the basic functioning of the WTO, the key items on the multilateral and regional trade agenda and the status of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations, in a manner that is relevant to their own interests and those of their constituents. The workshop also aimed to provide a forum for participants to discuss and share ideas and opinions regarding the content of the negotiations and their possible impact on countries in the region, and to encourage discussion of the potential role of parliaments and international organizations in trade and development.

## **1.2 Programme Overview**



The workshop agenda was designed to provide technical modules that would be supplemented by discussions to relate the topic to the experience of parliamentarians and to current affairs.

In order to provide all participants with essential background knowledge, the workshop began with an introduction to basic notions of the multilateral trading system and the WTO Doha Development Agenda. This was followed by modules on the current status of negotiations on agricultural issues, market access for non-agricultural products and trade in services, as well as a session on new regional agreements relating to the multilateral system. Once the basic framework was established, subsequent modules attempted to provide some of the analytical and policy tools needed to adapt global trade rules so as to engender sustainable development, growth, and equity.

The first module emphasized the developmental dimension of the Doha Round. The following modules addressed the challenges posed by trade liberalization in relation to poverty reduction and gender equality. The last working session focused on the unique contribution that parliamentarians and parliamentary organizations can make to the development of trade and economic policies to address local needs.

*(See Annex 2 for the full workshop programme.)*

## **1.3 Sponsors and hosts**

FIPA's effort was supported by several organizations. Catering and logistics costs were borne by the Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Costa Rica, while the World Trade Organization covered the airfares and accommodation of parliamentarians attending the event.

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada also provided financial support, which enabled in particular the participation of Canadian speakers and the provision of high-quality interpretation services.

The Canadian ambassador to Costa Rica, Neil Reeder, and his wife, Irene Hansen-Reeder, hosted a reception at the official residence in honour of participants, while the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly organized a dinner at the Costa Rican Ministry of International Affairs and Worship, which was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, Bruno Stagno.



## 2. Workshop proceedings

### 2.1 Opening ceremony



The opening ceremony was held at the seat of the Legislative Assembly. It was attended by Costa Rican parliamentarians and by the President of the Legislative Assembly, Deputy Francisco Antonio Pacheco.

In his opening address Deputy Pacheco emphasized not only the complexity of trade liberalization processes, but also the highly positive impact that free trade agreements can have on the welfare of peoples.

Next, Deputy Mayi Antillón Guerrero, President of the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly and host to the event, introduced the workshop rationale and the issues to be discussed during the next three days, namely matters related to the Doha Round and the development challenges that these negotiations pose for Central and South America.

Next to take the floor was Chilean Deputy Ivan Moreira, FIPA Vice-President for South America, who pointed out the importance of such events, which serve as a tool for exchange and learning. He emphasized that parliaments play a significant role in trade liberalization processes since they voice the manifold interests, concerns and aspirations of citizens. He gave examples of the different means of enhancing the role of parliaments, parliamentary conferences on the WTO being one of them.

The closing remarks of the ceremony were delivered by the representative of the World Trade Organization Secretariat, María Pérez-Esteve, External Relations Division counsellor. She stressed the importance of the multilateral trading system and of the WTO Agreements reached by the WTO Members through multiple trade negotiations. She further underscored the importance of the Doha Development Round, the main objective of which is to promote economic growth and development through the progressive liberalization of trade. Lastly, she emphasized the essential part parliamentarians play in securing understanding and acceptance of the WTO at national level, as well as their key role in the ratification of trade agreements and the development of a legal framework for trade.





## **2.2 Session 1 – Basic principles of the multilateral trading system and introduction to the WTO Doha Development Agenda.**

The commitments that countries have made under the World Trade Organization and regional and bilateral trade agreements have far-reaching implications at local and national level, so legislators must be able to influence the international trade policy-making process and understand what it means for their peoples. Developing countries face a two-fold challenge since they are the most vulnerable to the changes brought about by economic globalization yet their resources for managing, let alone benefiting from, the changes are limited.

It was with these considerations in mind that Jorge Castro, counsellor of the Legal Affairs Division of the WTO Secretariat, opened the workshop with an overview of the basics of trade regulations and related political dynamics.

He explained the structure and functioning of the WTO, presenting a background history of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the WTO, the main rules of the international trading system (binding of commitments, banning of trade restrictions, most-favoured-nation treatment, national treatment, transparency), and the exceptions that allow countries to take the necessary measures to achieve national objectives provided they are not protectionist or discriminatory.

He then gave an introduction to the Doha Development Agenda to serve as a basis on which to address more specific issues during the workshop.

To read Jorge Castro’s full presentation in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)

## **2.3 Session 2 – Doha Development Agenda: Current state of negotiations. Agriculture.**



The second working session was led by María Pérez-Esteve, External Relations Division counsellor at the WTO Secretariat, and Álvaro Monge, international trade consultant.

Ms Pérez-Esteve’s presentation focused on the current process of agricultural negotiations at the WTO. She explained that these talks had begun in early 2000 pursuant to Article 20 of the WTO’s Agreement on Agriculture and continued in accordance with the mandate set in the Doha Declaration. The Declaration is based on work already done, and reaffirms and enlarges on the objectives of the negotiations. The Declaration further confirms the long-term goal, already set in the Agreement on Agriculture, of creating a fair and market-oriented agricultural trading system by means of a fundamental reform process.

The aim is to correct and prevent restrictions and distortions in agricultural markets worldwide.



She explained the purposes of the negotiations geared towards making significant improvements in access to markets, phasing out all forms of export subsidies and substantially reducing trade-distorting domestic support.

She pointed out that the Doha Declaration provides that special and differential treatment to developing countries shall be an integral part of all elements of the negotiations and shall be included in the new commitments made by countries and in relevant rules and disciplines, whether new or revised. The outcome should be operationally effective, and allow developing countries to meet their needs, particularly in relation to food security and rural development.

She said that Ministers had taken note of the non-trade concerns (such as environmental protection, food security, rural development) reflected in the negotiating proposals already submitted, and had confirmed that such concerns would be taken into account in the negotiations as provided for in the Agreement on Agriculture.

She referred to the current state of the negotiations and to progress made between their start in Doha, in 2001, and the high-level negotiations held in July 2008. She introduced the elements that raise the level of ambition in each pillar and those flexibilities that reduce it. She ended by underscoring the complexity of the negotiations, largely a result of the differing interests of Member countries or groups of Member countries.

Trade expert Álvaro Monge focused his presentation on the impact of the current agricultural negotiations on Latin America in the light of the food crisis. He began by describing factors related to the crisis, particularly rising oil prices, growing consumption in countries such as China and India, biofuel production and the effects of climate change on agricultural production.



Mr Monge questioned the validity of the growing protectionism prompted by the crisis, reflected in a series of proposals to increase non-tariff barriers or renegotiate tariffs. He said that, in his view, what Latin America needed was high-quality, high-yield food production. He also introduced the 2008 estimates of the FAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization) for grain production showing favourable trends for most countries in the region. He suggested that liberalizing trade could be an answer to the crisis and that, in this regard, the WTO negotiations would improve market access for the countries of the region, which are highly competitive in agriculture. He mentioned the opportunities that could arise from regional trade agreements, an alternative for small countries.

*To read María Pérez-Esteve's and Álvaro Monge's presentations in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)*

### **2.4 Session 3 – Doha Development Agenda: Current state of negotiations. Market access for non-agricultural products**

This module was introduced by Jorge Castro, counsellor of the Legal Affairs Division of the WTO Secretariat. First, he explained that the issue of access to non-agricultural markets concerns both manufactures and mined products (such as copper and gold).

In identifying a series of factors determining the effectiveness of the access to international markets of non-agricultural products, he emphasized that the Doha Round was aimed at reducing or removing tariff peaks, high tariffs and tariff escalation.



He then presented statistical data on world trade in goods and the Latin American countries' market share. Although it is hard to find reliable statistics on trade in services, he explained that world trade is mostly based on goods, with services accounting for only 20 per cent. Manufactures account for 70 per cent of non-agricultural products traded worldwide.

He said that Europe represents 42.1 per cent of global goods exports, whereas South and Central America account for only 3.6 per cent. Pointing out that most Latin American exports are mined products, he explained that Latin America ships 31 per cent of its goods exports to North America, while 26 per cent is marketed in South and Central America.

The issues raised by Mr Castro were then discussed during the round table facilitated by Deputy Francisco Molina Gamboa, member of the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly. Viewpoints varied regarding the market access issue, which provided an opportunity to share experiences and discuss the situation of the various countries of the region. For instance, it was noted that there was lack of consensus regarding binding coverage in the region and that efforts should be made in this direction. It was also said that the diversity of WTO Members' tariff commitments did not allow equal access to markets for all. Concern was expressed about the Doha Round deadlock, and also some unease over the residual protection in developed countries that affects some products of developing countries. The question of how parliament can influence the executive on trade issues remained open for further discussion in the following days.

To read Jorge Castro's presentation in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)



### **2.5 Session 4 – Doha Development Agenda: Current state of negotiations. Other issues.**

The second day of the workshop started with a presentation by Jorge Castro on current negotiation processes under the Doha Round relating to trade in services, dispute settlement and trade facilitation.

On the latter topic, Mr Castro emphasized the need to facilitate trade in the region and explained that many obstacles remained not only regarding tax collection but also in the form of non-tariff barriers (bureaucracy, sanitary measures, etc.) that hinder the flow of trade in goods and services between Latin America and the rest of the world. By way of illustration, he pointed out that in the Andean region half of the time spent on transportation is wasted at borders.



He further explained that in 2004, negotiations to facilitate trade had been launched on the basis of the modalities in Annex D of the so-called "July package", the aim being to improve some aspects of the GATT Articles on freedom of transit and rights and formalities related to importing, exporting, publishing and the enforcement of trade regulations. He explained that the idea was to rationalize formalities and improve transparency in legislation, which should be public. He said that efforts were being made to streamline formalities and establish joint cooperation mechanisms among customs agencies.

As regards infrastructure, he said that in recognition of the existing asymmetries, the least developed countries will not be required to make investments that exceed their possibilities. He added that the Uruguay Round had helped to improve the functioning of customs systems, but stressed the importance of further promoting both structural and operational changes to encourage trade among nations.

*To read Jorge Castro's presentation in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)*

### **2.6 Session 5 – Development dimension of the Doha Agenda: Aid for Trade**

This presentation by María Pérez-Esteve, External Relations Division counsellor at the WTO Secretariat, and Jaime Granados, representative of the Integration and Trade Sector of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), showed that Latin America is undergoing serious supply-side restrictions. The speakers noted that in spite of the progress made since the 1980s, improvements were still necessary to tap the great potential this region has to offer. Noting some of the current problems, they mentioned the poor quality and low volume of production, infrastructure deficiencies, particularly in customs, the existence of administrative bottlenecks and regulatory problems.

Ms Pérez-Esteve explained that aid for trade is intended precisely to overcome trade limitations resulting from these internal, or supply-side, obstacles. She referred to four major spheres of aid for trade: capacity-building for trade policy-making, participation in negotiations and enforcement of agreements; investment in economic infrastructure; strengthening productive capacity in order to enhance competitiveness in export markets, and aid to mitigate the potential costs of liberalization. She recounted a number of success stories in the provision of aid for trade noting that many developing countries the world over were facing similar problems.



Mr Granados commented on three IDB areas of action for trade-related capacity building at regional and national level: infrastructure, institutional and productive capacity building, and competitiveness and market access.

He said that the actions undertaken by the IDB are specifically aimed at enhancing production processes, supporting marginalized sectors, improving technology and assisting SMEs (agricultural exporters). He further mentioned that the IDB was also responsible for

monitoring trade and competitiveness indicators.

He pointed out that, in recent years, the IDB had strongly supported Central America, particularly through funding to promote productivity and through training for businessmen in plant health and sanitation processes to help them to meet international trade requirements. He said that this aid was important in view of the potential that trade holds for Latin America and of the opportunities it can afford, in infrastructure development, for instance.

He concluded his presentation by citing some of the IDB's recommendations, namely:

- Prioritizing trade in development agendas.
- Aligning donors' strategies with countries' needs.
- Working jointly with the private sector to create incentives.
- Improving mechanisms for channelling aid for trade.
- Creating more efficient fund monitoring indicators.
- Intensifying efforts in projects with short-term outcomes.
- Drawing on the region's experience in integration processes to promote the implementation of regional projects.
- Simplifying administrative requirements.

Mr Granados also emphasized that greater advantages were to be had from working together as a region rather than each country on its own.

To read María Pérez-Esteve's and Jaime Granados' presentations in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)



## 2.7 Session 6 – The multilateral system and new regional trade agreements

In this sixth session, Amparo Pacheco, the Costa Rican Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, and Eduardo Lizano, Economist and Honorary President of the *Academia de Centroamérica*, recounted their own experiences of regional trade agreements.

Ms Pacheco spoke about the CAFTA (Central America Free Trade Agreement) process, emphasizing that such an important process ought not be the “slow and cumbersome” exercise it had been in Costa Rica. She admitted that although the process was proof of citizen participation, at the same time it had been a challenge for her Ministry. She also noted how difficult it is to convince the people and parliamentarians that free trade can be of benefit. As an example of the benefits she cited the potential for consumers to have access to a greater range of products and lower prices.



Eduardo Lizano, one of the most influential economists in Costa Rica, provided clear examples of the situation in Central America and illustrated the role of Costa Rica in international trade. He urged parliamentarians to standardize tax and administrative processes in order to facilitate trade and protect sectors that could be adversely affected by negotiation processes. Mr Lizano argued that countries should put the resources generated by international trade to good use so as not to lose this development opportunity and that Latin American countries needed sound infrastructure to achieve full development.

The speakers also referred to the issue of winners and losers in trade agreements and to the fact that governments should support the least favoured sectors through the adoption of financial and social measures.



The presentations were followed by a discussion facilitated by Deputy Mario Quirós Lara, member of the International Relations Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly.

Participants had the opportunity to clear up any doubts regarding negotiation processes and, thanks to the experiences recounted by the two speakers, they were able to share anecdotes and pool proposals on their countries’ needs and their concerns about international trade. Worries were expressed, in particular, about the potential conflict between environmental sustainability and trade liberalization, and about intellectual property issues.

## **2.8 Session 7 – Development challenges and trade liberalization: Poverty reduction**

In a dynamic presentation, the Rector of the *Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (INCAE)*, Arturo Condo, portrayed free trade as advantageous to developing countries.

He reminded participants that voices have been raised over the years against globalization and free trade, and that some countries have gradually become isolated because of their radical stances. However, globalization offers concrete advantages, namely increased connectivity among countries and people, faster technological development, greater freedom of capital flows, increased use of resources and pressures to increase productivity. In this context, countries in Latin America have been urged to become more actively involved in “this game called international trade” in order to gain additional benefits and so leave underdevelopment behind.

He said that trade goes hand in hand with globalization, since without it there cannot be efficiency, lower costs and a closer relationship with consumers, nor is it possible to make the most of each country’s individual advantages, gain further skills and have a larger and better flow of technology.

He admitted, however, that economic growth should be accompanied by social equity and an environmental balance allowing an equilibrium in which people in every country are able to improve their quality of life.

He said that, in his view, tapping into the economic growth generated by trade is up to the countries themselves, and that the responsibility for joining the world trade system, making the most of it and achieving an environmental balance is theirs.



He added that a stable political environment, an efficient legal framework and a prosperous macroeconomic system are all necessary elements for each country to realize its full potential and succeed in international trade.

To illustrate this point he cited several examples, including the travel sector in Costa Rica and shrimp farming in Ecuador.

He also pointed out the potential impact on regional trade of Barack Obama’s election as United States President.

To read Arturo Condo’s presentation in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)

## **2.9 Session 8 – Development challenges and trade liberalization: Gender issues**

Laura Dawson, associate of the Centre for Trade Policy and Law of Carleton University, Ottawa, followed on with a presentation on the inclusion of women in the economy. She argued that



although today thousands of women work for large companies Latin America still falls short of full inclusion of this sector of the population. For example, there are still tangible differences in terms of salaries, access to education and to jobs.

She went on to indicate that international trade generates major changes in a country's economic structure, affecting not only the labour force but also the price of goods. She explained that the impact on consumption is significant, and that the financing of social expenditure is likewise affected by trade. These changes can be either positive or negative, depending on how successful countries are in managing them.



She said that gender inequality impacts the relationship between trade policy and business performance, and that as a rule trade affects men and women differently.

She presented data showing that 70 per cent of the world's poor are women. Indeed, women's work is remunerated at lower rates, as is evidenced in particular by those labour market sectors that have been "feminized". It is for these reasons that women-led households (30 per cent of the total) number disproportionately among the poorest.

To respond to such a situation governments in all countries should pay attention to gender segregation among the working population, and to each sector's behaviour. Women should be given equal access to resources and an acceptable level of involvement in government. There is also a need to protect them from segregation and discrimination.

Legislators have a role to play by analyzing both the laws and the policies implemented to ensure fairness in society, and by measuring the effects that structural changes have on each gender. For example women's involvement in the economic and social arena needs to be analysed thoroughly when it comes to developing programmes and implementing policies.

The current situation in the Americas in terms of women's participation in society and in the production sector shows that there is greater recognition of the value of the non-remunerated work performed by women and of the low remuneration they receive for "women's traditional chores". There is also greater awareness of the fact that trade agreements can contribute to fostering growth, but that other policies are needed in order to ensure equitable distribution and to reduce poverty.



Though recognizing these problems, the region has few practical measures in place, partly because it is not easy to ascertain the extent of poverty and the effects of trade agreements. Unequal



access between men and women is, for the most part, rooted in strong social and cultural traditions that can be mitigated only by measures that are truly comprehensive.

She concluded by saying that the implementation of programmes to overcome inequality and imbalances, even if costly, will bring greater benefits and result in a fairer, more participatory society.

Her remarks were supplemented by a presentation from Patricia Langan-Torell, Canadian ambassador to Panama, who talked about initiatives undertaken by the Canadian Government to increase women’s involvement in international trade. In this connection, she explained that there were national initiatives under way to assist businesswomen in overcoming the obstacles facing them, either by providing them with information on the services available or helping them to expand and diversify their markets and customer base. With its international development aid policy, the Canadian Government supports women in developing countries through training and support programmes for microenterprises. The ambassador encouraged parliamentarians to lead change and give women the room they need, further underscoring that much of the potential offered by international trade may be wasted without a proper system for women’s inclusion and involvement.

*To read Ms Dawson’s presentation in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)*

## **2.10 Session 9 – Parliamentarians and trade policy**



The last module started with a discussion on the role of parliamentarians in trade policy.

The first speaker was Canadian Member of Parliament Mario Silva, who recounted the Canadian Parliament’s experience of parliamentary involvement in trade policy. He presented a number of Canada’s mechanisms for allowing parliamentarians to contribute to trade policy and facilitate the dissemination of information to citizens. He also referred to the challenge posed by the integration

of the Canadian-United States manufacturing sector, which was particularly affected by the current economic crisis.

He was followed by Ms Laura Dawson, who talked about the role of parliamentarians and the impact of public opinion on the formulation of trade policy.

She reminded participants of the various roles that parliaments play: they approve or reject bills; they represent their constituents; they monitor the work of government; and they are involved in “parliamentary diplomacy”, among other activities. She expressed the view that representation is a particularly complex role, since in their capacity as the liaison between citizens and negotiators,



parliamentarians have the difficult task of managing the public's perception of trade and the WTO. Moreover, since these are complex and technical issues, public perception is also influenced by the actions of anti-globalization groups that use images to capture the public imagination in an attempt to hinder trade initiatives. She stressed the importance of educating citizens about trade issues and of providing them with suitable information throughout the entire negotiation and implementation process of any trade agreement.

She went on to explain that parliamentary organizations such as FIPA can play a key role by undertaking training activities for parliamentarians, while also encouraging governments to improve transparency and accountability. Ms Dawson used the Inter-Parliamentary Union as an example: through its Annual Conference on the WTO, it has defined guidelines for parliaments' access to trade information.

Next Ms Dawson and María Pérez-Esteve, from the WTO Secretariat, opened up the discussion by putting some questions to parliamentarians: "Do you have the tools you need as parliamentarians to assist in educating and informing voters?" How effective is parliamentarians' involvement in the framing of international trade policy?" "Should parliamentary diplomacy play a bigger role?"

Using these questions as a starting point, the participants engaged in a most fruitful discussion, facilitated by Deputy Hilda González, member of the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of Costa Rica. Costa Rican deputy Lorena Vásquez Badilla made introductory remarks, followed by several other participants.



The discussion reflected the great diversity of experience of trade liberalization that exists in the region. All participants agreed, however, that parliamentarians need access to more and better information on the working of international trade agreements and issues, and to become more involved in the debates that always accompany an agreement negotiation process, rather than taking part only when it comes to ratifying such agreements. Several underscored the usefulness of tools such as the FIPA workshop, and others requested that similar activities be undertaken in their home countries. Concerns were raised regarding the negative image of parliamentarians conveyed by the media. In this regard, participants emphasized the need to further reinforce the role of parliaments in order to improve citizens' trust in parliamentary institutions.

To read Ms Dawson's presentation in PowerPoint format, please visit the FIPA website: [www.e-fipa.org](http://www.e-fipa.org)

### **2.11 Closure of the workshop**

Following the last session, Dominican Deputy María Estela de la Cruz (FIPA Vice-President for Central America), Deputy Fernando Sánchez Campos (Secretary of the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Assembly) and WTO Secretariat representatives María Pérez-Esteve and Jorge Castro took the floor to make some closing remarks.

Deputy de la Cruz expressed FIPA’s special appreciation to the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Legislative Assembly and to its President, Mayi Antillón, for the warm hospitality and the logistics, and to the World Trade Organization and to Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada for their technical and financial support.

Following these remarks, the workshop was formally closed by the host, Deputy Mayi Antillón.

## **3. Conclusions**

International trade affects all sectors of society. Initiatives such as the workshop held in Costa Rica from 6 to 8 November 2008 provide parliamentarians with an opportunity to receive information on this topic, enlarge on concepts and better understand the working of international organizations such as the WTO.



As Deputy Mayi Antillón had said, the event had “surpassed expectations”. The workshop's usefulness was reflected in the active participation of parliamentarians in the working sessions, as well as in the anecdotes and experiences the countries' representatives shared outside the meeting room.

The various interventions by speakers and participants gave a clearer picture of the situation in the region, thus allowing parliamentarians to identify any weaknesses and areas for improvement. Although the challenges are enormous, there is a real willingness to look for solutions, and it is up to each individual parliamentarian to take the next step forward.

Foreign trade is a complex and difficult issue, yet it is important and vital for communities. In view of the need to gain a deeper understanding of trade matters and because this event has been a success both for participants and for organizers, we should seize this opportunity to organize similar events regularly in the future.



## 4. Annexes

### 4.1 Annex 1 – List of participants

#### PARLIAMENTARIANS

##### Argentina

Senator Selva Judit Forstmann

##### Bolivia

Senator René Zamora Ortega

Deputy Ricardo Froilán Aillón Álvarez

Deputy Marco Antonio Córdova Santivañez

##### Brazil

Deputy João Almeida dos Santos

##### Canada

Mario Silva, Member of Parliament

##### Chile

Deputy Iván Moreira Barros

##### Costa Rica

Deputy Mayi Antillón Guerrero

Deputy Evita Arguedas Maklouf

Deputy Hilda González Ramírez

Deputy Francisco Molina Gamboa

Deputy Mario Quirós Lara

Deputy Fernando Sánchez Campos

Deputy Ronald Solís Bolaños

Deputy Lorena Vásquez Badilla

##### Dominican Republic

Deputy Albert Atallah

Deputy María Estela de la Cruz

Deputy Tulio Jiménez

##### El Salvador

Deputy Sonia Farfán

Deputy Manuel Vicente Menjivar Esquivel

##### Mexico

Senator Guadalupe Mondragón González

Deputy Margarita Arenas Guzmán

Deputy Alfonso Othón Bello Pérez  
Deputy Miguel Ángel Peña Sánchez  
Deputy Salvador Ruiz Sánchez

#### **Paraguay**

Deputy Juan Artemio Barrios Cristaldo  
Deputy Concepción Cubas de Villaalta  
Deputy Blanca Nidia Duarte Frutos de Villalba  
Deputy Oscar Escobar  
Deputy Juan Bernardo Ziett

#### **Peru**

Congresswoman Yaneth Cajahuanca Rosales  
Congresswoman Marisol Espinoza Cruz

#### **SPEAKERS**

Mr Jorge Castro, World Trade Organization Secretariat  
Mr Arturo Condo, *Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas*  
Ms Laura Ritchie Dawson, Carleton University  
Mr Jaime Granados, Inter-American Development Bank  
H.E. Patricia Langan-Torell, Canadian Embassy in Panama  
Mr Eduardo Lizano, *Academia de Centroamérica*  
Mr Álvaro Monge, International Trade Consultant  
Ms Amparo Pacheco, Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Trade  
Ms Maria Pérez-Esteve, World Trade Organization Secretariat

#### **OBSERVER**

Mr Mark Strasser, Canadian Embassy in Costa Rica

#### **FIPA TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT**

Ms Emmanuelle Pelletier, Executive Secretary

#### **COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, COSTA RICA – LIST OF ADVISORS**

Mayela Araya Herrera, Advisor to Lorena Vásquez Badilla  
Cinthya Berrocal Quirós, Advisor to Evita Arguedas Maklouf  
Gianina Dinarte Romero, Advisor to Francisco Molina Gamboa  
Juan Pablo Estrada Gómez, Advisor to Fracción Partido Unidad Social Cristiana  
Marcela Losilla Vásquez, Advisor to Lorena Vásquez Badilla  
Freddy Morera Blanco, Advisor to Mario Quirós Lara  
Carlos Peña Quintana, Advisor to Mayi Antillón Guerrero  
Jorge Rodríguez Vives, Advisor to Mayi Antillón Guerrero  
Heidi Venegas Rojas, Advisor to Elizabeth Fonseca Corrales  
Luis Álvarez Soto, Advisor to Mayi Antillón Guerrero  
Xiomara Villegas Badilla, Advisor to Fernando Sánchez Campos



## 4.2 Annex 2 – Programme

### REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS OF CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

#### TRADE LIBERALIZATION – WTO, THE DOHA ROUND AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA 6-8 NOVEMBER, 2008

#### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Afternoon & Evening      Arrival and transfer of delegates from Juan Santamaría International Airport to the Radisson Europa Hotel and Conference Center

#### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6

8.00 a.m.                      Meeting in the Radisson Europa Hotel lobby – Transfer to the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly

8.30 a.m.      9.30 a.m.      Opening Ceremony  
*Costa Rican Legislative Assembly*

- Deputy Francisco Antonio Pacheco,  
 President of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly
- Deputy Mayi Antillón Guerrero,  
 President of the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly
- Deputy Iván Moreira,  
 FIPA Vice-President for South America.
- María Pérez-Esteve,  
 Counsellor, External Relations Division, WTO Secretariat

9.30 a.m.      10.00 a.m.      Coffee break

10.00 a.m.      10.30 a.m.      Transfer to Radisson Europa Hotel

10.30 a.m.      11.30 a.m.      Session 1: Basic principles of the multilateral trading system and introduction to the WTO Doha Development Agenda

- Mr Jorge Castro, Counsellor, Legal Affairs Division, WTO Secretariat

- 11.30 a.m. 1.00 p.m. Session 2: Doha Development Agenda: Current state of negotiations. Agriculture.
- Ms María Pérez-Esteve, Counsellor, External Relations Division, WTO Secretariat
  - Mr Álvaro Monge, International trade consultant
- Discussion*
- 1.00 p.m. 2.30 p.m. Lunch break
- 2.30 p.m. 4.00 p.m. Session 3: Doha Development Agenda: Current state of negotiations. Market access for non-agricultural products (NAMA)
- Mr Jorge Castro, Counsellor, Legal Affairs Division, WTO Secretariat
- Discussion*
- 4.00 p.m. 4.30 p.m. Coffee break (lobby)
- 4.30 p.m. 5.30 p.m. Round table on the various session topics  
Facilitator: Deputy Francisco Molina Gamboa.  
Member of the International Relations Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly
- 6.30 p.m. Meeting at the hotel lobby and transfer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 7.00 p.m. 9.00 p.m. Dinner hosted by the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly. Special guest: Mr Bruno Stagno, Minister for Foreign Affairs – Republic of Costa Rica.  
*Venue: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship – Dorado Hall.*

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

- 8.30 a.m. 10.00 a.m. Session 4: Doha Development Agenda: Current state of negotiations. Other issues: trade in services; rules; trade facilitation, etc.
- Mr Jorge Castro, Counsellor, Legal Affairs Division, WTO Secretariat
- Discussion*
- 10.00 a.m. 10.30 a.m. Coffee break (lobby)
- 10.30 a.m. 12h30 Session 5: Development dimension of the Doha Agenda: Aid for Trade, etc.
- Ms María Pérez-Esteve, Counsellor, External Relations Division, WTO Secretariat
  - Mr Jaime Granados, Inter-American Development Bank



*Discussion*

- |            |           |  |
|------------|-----------|--|
| 12.30 p.m. | 2.00 p.m. | Lunch break  |
| 2.00 p.m.  | 4.00 p.m. | Session 6: The multilateral system and new regional trade agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ms Amparo Pacheco, Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade, Costa Rica</li> <li>▪ Mr Eduardo Lizano, <i>Academia de Centroamérica</i></li> </ul> |
|            |           | <i>Discussion</i>  |
| 4.00 p.m.  | 4.30 p.m. | Coffee break (lobby)   |
| 4.30 p.m.  | 5.30 p.m. | Round table on session issues<br>Facilitator: Deputy Mario Quirós Lara<br>Member of the International Relations Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly  |
| 6.30 p.m.  |           | Meeting at the hotel lobby and transfer to the official residence of the Canadian Ambassador   |
| 7.00 p.m.  | 9.00 p.m. | Reception hosted by H.E. Neil Reeder, Canadian Ambassador, and his wife, Ms Irene Hansen-Reeder<br>Official residence of the Canadian Ambassador   |

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 8

- |            |            |   |
|------------|------------|---|
| 8.30 a.m.  | 10.30 a.m. | Session 7: Challenges posed by development and trade liberalization: Poverty reduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mr Arturo Condo, Chair of the <i>Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (INCAE)</i></li> </ul>   |
|            |            | <i>Discussion</i>   |
| 10.30 a.m. | 11.00 a.m. | Coffee break (lobby)  |
| 11.00 a.m. | 12.30 p.m. | Session 8: Challenges posed by development and trade liberalization: Gender issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ms Laura Ritchie Dawson, associate of the Center for Trade Policy and Law, Carleton University</li> <li>▪ Ms Patricia Langan-Torell, Canadian Ambassador to Panama</li> </ul> |
|            |            | <i>Discussion</i>   |



12.30 p.m.	14.00 p.m.	Lunch break
2.00 p.m.	4.00 p.m.	Session 9: Parliamentarians and trade policy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ms Laura Ritchie Dawson, associate at the Center for Trade Policy and Law, Carleton University</li><li>▪ Ms María Pérez-Esteve, Counsellor, External Relations Division, WTO Secretariat</li><li>▪ MP Mario Silva, Canadian Parliament</li><li>▪ Deputy Lorena Vásquez Badilla, Division head of the <i>Partido Unidad Social Cristiana</i>, Costa Rica.</li></ul>
		Facilitator: Deputy Hilda González, Member of the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee, Costa Rica. <i>Round Table</i>
4.00 p.m.	4.30 p.m.	Workshop assessment and recommendations for future activities
4.30 p.m.	5.00 p.m.	Concluding remarks and closure of the workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ms María Pérez-Esteve, Counsellor, External Relations Division, WTO Secretariat</li><li>▪ Mr Jorge Castro, Counsellor, Legal Affairs Division, WTO Secretariat</li><li>▪ Deputy María Estela de la Cruz, FIPA Vice-President for Central America (Dominican Republic).</li><li>▪ Deputy Fernando Sánchez, Secretary of the International Relations Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly</li></ul>
6.30 p.m.	9.00 p.m.	Closing Event hosted by the International Relations and Foreign Trade Committee of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly

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