

International Parliamentary Network

Declaration on the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the WTO

Cancún/México

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We, members of the International Parliamentary Network (IPN), founded on occasion of the World Parliamentary Forum in Porto Alegre/Brazil, are deeply committed to the idea that another economic and trade paradigm is possible, which benefits the majorities of the populations all over the world.

We believe that the present economic world order, with the Bretton Woods organisations as the leading institutions on economic and financial questions on the one hand, and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on the other, does not lead to this aim. Since the creation of the WTO, in 1995, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened dramatically. The Doha Development Agenda, agreed upon at the Fourth Ministerial in November 2001 in the capital of Qatar, is not worthy of its title.

In the run up to the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the WTO, which is going to take place in Cancún/México, on September 10-14, 2003, we as parliamentarians, propose the following minimum set of demands to be covered by the conference agenda. We engage ourselves to support these demands in all parliamentary debates and resolutions before the Ministerial and to lobby for them during the Conference itself.

10 Demands in the run up to Cancún

1. Ensure Democratic Scrutiny

The WTO process of negotiating, concluding and implementing binding agreements cannot only be an intergovernmental affair. We believe that elected bodies should play their role in the whole process of the negotiating and implementing WTO agreements. Governments' positions on trade issues should be discussed beforehand in parliaments and be co-decided by elected bodies in all WTO member states.

2. Settle pending issues first and build consensus

The time is not ripe for the negotiation of new WTO treaties on investment, competition, public procurement or customs regulations (the so-called "Singapore Issues" or "New Issues"). It is not acceptable to enlarge the WTO's competencies in this way whilst at the same time side-stepping the settlement of issues that promote the aim of sustainable development. A large number of issues

pending since the creation of the WTO are still not being sufficiently negotiated, concluded and implemented. The WTO has missed the deadlines on Implementation issues, Special and Differential Treatment, TRIPS and Public Health and Modalities on agriculture, amongst others. The launch of negotiations on the "Singapore Issues" would unduly enlarge the competencies of the WTO and serve the interests of corporations in the EU and the US, against the interests of the developing world.

3. Maintain and strengthen core public services

The present negotiations on GATS (General Agreements in Trade of Services) put into danger affordable access to public services. No demands should be imposed on WTO members, particularly developing countries, to privatise their public services, especially water collection, treatment and distribution, energy, education and health. Certain service sectors, such as water and sanitation, have a special status in developing and least developed countries, impacting directly and dramatically on people's daily lives, and therefore require special treatment.

4. Access to Medicines must be guaranteed - public health comes first

At the WTO Ministerial in Doha in November 2001 an agreement was reached on the issue of access to essential medicines. We call on all WTO members to stick to the Doha commitment concerning the outstanding question of compulsory licences for imports (paragraph 6 of the Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health). In this context we remind them that to impose new constraints as part of the solution to the paragraph 6 problem would violate the spirit of that Declaration and be justifiably seen by developing countries as evidence of bad faith. Each country must have the ability to produce or import generic medicines if needed to protect public health.

5. No patents on life

Patenting of life forms must be prohibited in order to preserve biodiversity, food security and indigenous peoples' rights and protect them from corporate control of genetic resources. At present, patenting is governed by the WTO Agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Its Article 27.3b however, allows a revision of provisions dealing with patents on life forms. We support the developing countries in their demand to implement Article 27.3b and particularly the position taken by the Africa group. This calls for a clarification that plants, animals and micro-organisms should not be patentable; that a "sui generis" system of plant varieties protection can include systems that protect the intellectual rights of indigenous and farming communities; that TRIPS be made to harmonise with the Biodiversity Convention and the FAO Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources.

6. Protect the independence of Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs)

The WTO is the only international set of rules with sanctioning power. This, however, does not mean that it is superior to any other internationally agreed set of rules. Environmental concerns, for instance, should not be subject to the WTO. The protection of the environment is not a trade distorting measure to be sanctioned by the WTO, but a necessary means to guarantee our common future. Therefore we object to any moves/wording towards WTO-compliance for MEAs, as proposed by US and EU, but rejected by the majority of the participants of the WSSD in Johannesburg.

7. Uphold perspective on "multifunctionality" in agriculture worldwide

Consumers and producers worldwide are interested in rural development, environmental protection and animal welfare. The right of peoples to nourish themselves, as well as the issues of food and

water security are fundamental for our common future. Trade rules can and should be consistent with these objectives.

8. Meet the needs of Developing Countries - abolish export subsidies

Subsidies and other export support mechanisms distort the agricultural supply chain. They mainly serve the profit aims of big agroindustrial exporters, putting into danger the survival of small peasants everywhere, in the North as in the South. Only a sustainable practice and fair trade are able to guarantee the existence of agriculture and food security for the future. We ask for the suppression of agricultural export subsidies of all countries, especially industrialised countries.

9. Improve workers rights

We call on WTO members to respect the ILO Convention and its core labour standards especially freedom of association for workers. International regulations on labour standards must remain a competence of the ILO and cannot be used as a protectionist or trade barriers mechanism. We ask for the WTO to respect ILO decisions and to grant observatory status for the ILO in the WTO.

10. Apply precaution and sustainability principles systematically

The one size-fits all approach cannot be applied to unequal partners. Trade is a means, not an end in itself. In order to avoid adverse effects - market access often turns into market displacement - impact studies concerning the sustainability of trade measures in its three aspects (social, environmental and economic) should be carried out, before negotiations start. Each country shall be free to make its own determination of risks to the health and well-being of its citizens and its environment and to take precautionary measures accordingly.

Signatures to the Declaration of the IPN on the WTO Ministerial in Cancún

19/09/05

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14. DESIR, Harlem PES France
15. DHAENE, Jan Greens/EFA Belgium
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17. EVANS, Jill Greens/EFA Wales
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19. FIGUEIREDO, Ilda GUE/NGL Portugal

20. FRAHM, Pernille GUE/NGL Denmark
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52. WURTZ, Francis GUE/NGL France
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55. CASTRO Alicia Frente para el Cambio

Austrian Parliament

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57. MANDAK, Sabine Greens
58. VAN DER BELLEN, Alexander Greens

Belgium Senate

59. CORNIL, Jean PS
60. DEROECK Jacinta Agalev
61. MAHOUX, Philippe PS
62. VAN DUPPEN Jos SP.A

Belgium Chamber

- 63. DI RUPO, Elio PS
- 64. LALIEUX, Karine PS
- 65. BOUKOURNA, Mohammed PS
- 66. GERKENS, Muriel Ecolo
- 67. VAN DER MAELEN Dirk SP.A

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- 68. Dr ROSINHA PT
- 69. ZIMMERMAN Tarcicio PT
- 70. MURAD Jamil PCdB

Canadian Parliament

- 71. NYSTROM, Lorne New Democratic Party
- 72. PAQUETTE Pierre Bloc Québécois
- 73. BLAIRIE Bill
- 74. CRETE, Paul Bloc Québécois

Chilean Parliament

- 1. AVILA Nelson

Colombian Parliament

- 75. ALMENDRA, Lorenzo
- 76. ARENAS, Pedro
- 77. ALVEIRO SILVAS, Venus
- 78. BORJA DIAZ, Wilson
- 79. LOPEZ, Alexander
- 80. NAVAS TALERO, Germán
- 81. PETRO, Gustavo
- 82. SINESTERRA, Herminsu
- 83. ZARRATE, Hugo

Congo senate

- 1. ISSANGA

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- 84. 1. CERFARTY, Osvaldo PCC
- 85. 2. GONZALES Leonel PCC

East African Legislative Assembly

- 86. 1.OVONJI-ODIDA Irene

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- 87. 1. AYLES Anacristina FMLN
- 88. 2. BONILLA BLANCA FMLN

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- 89. AUBAN Bertrand PS
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- 97. BRET, Robert CRC
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- 107. FRAYSSE, Jacqueline CRC
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- 111. MATHON, Josiane CRC
- 112. MUZEAU, Roland CRC
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- 115. RENAR, Yvan CRC
- 116. TERRADE, Odette CRC
- 117. WEBER, Henri PS

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- 121. BRAOUZEC, Patrick CRC
- 122. CARRILLON-COUVREUR, Martine PS
- 123. CHANTEGUET, Jean-Paul PS
- 124. CHARZAT Michel PS
- 125. CHASSAIGNE, André CRC
- 126. BOCQUET, Alain CRC
- 127. DESALLANGRE Jacques
- 128. DRAY, Julien PS
- 129. DUTOIT, Frédéric CRC
- 130. EMMANUELLI, Henri PS
- 131. FLOCH, Jacques PS
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- 134. GOURIOU Alain PS

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- 141. LEBRANCHU, Marylise PS
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- 145. LONCLE François PS
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- 147. PEREZ Jean-Claude PS
- 148. TOURTELIER Philippe PS
- 149. QUILES Paul PS
- 150. VIDALIES, Alain PS

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- 153. GUTIERREZ, Gladys UD

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- 155. DONATI, Anna Greens
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- 157. CRUCIANELLI, Famiano DS

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- 158. MARTONE, Francesco Greens

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- 159. BRONFMAN, Roman Meretz/The Democratic Choice

Mexican Senate

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- 161. COLDWELL Addy PRI
- 162. ESCALANTE Aracely PRI
- 163. GARCIA MEDINA Maura PRD
- 164. HIGUEIRA GERARDO Ricardo PRD
- 165. SARCEDO Mario PRD

Mexican Chamber

- 166. ARMAND Francisco PVE
- 167. BOCERRA Enrique PRD
- 168. GARCIA OCHOA Juan Jose PRD
- 169. GARCIA IAGURRA Eliana PRD
- 170. MICHER Martha PRD
- 171. ORTEGA Hector PRD
- 172. PORTILLO Cristina PRD

Nicaraguyan Parliament

- 173. PALACIOS Alba FSLN

Norwegian Parliament

- 174. LANGE LAND, Hallgeir H. SV
- 175. JACOBSEN Bjorn SV

Spanish Parliament

- 176. BORELL, Josep PSOE
- 177. LLAMAZARES, Gaspar IU
- 178. PAJIN IRAOLA, Leire PSOE
- 179. SAURA LAPORTA, Joan Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds

Scottish Parliament

- 180. RUSKELL, Mark Scottish Green Party
- 181. BALLANCE, Chris Scottish Green Party

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- 183. GUTIERREZ, Ricardo MVR
- 184. SAAB, Tarek William MVR
- 185. VIVAS Darrio MVR
- 186. CHAVEZ, Virgilio MVR
- 187. VARELA RANGE, Iris MVR

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- 188. CORREA, Rafael MVR
- 189. DURAN, Filinto MVR

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