



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
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CH-1218 LE GRAND SACONNEX/GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



RUE WIERZ, B-1047, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Geneva/ Brussels, 26 June 2003

CANCUN SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

The Final Declaration of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO held in Geneva on 17-18 February 2003 called on the IPU and the European Parliament (EP) to work together in preparing the next session of the Parliamentary Conference, to be held on the occasion of the fifth WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún, Mexico, from 10 to 14 September 2003.

We are pleased to announce that, following consultations between the IPU, EP and the Mexican Parliament, a formal decision was taken by the Post-Doha Steering Committee at its recent meeting in Geneva to hold the **Cancún session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO on 9 and 12 September 2003** at **Hotel Fiesta Americana Grand Coral Beach**, which is across the road from the Conference Centre where the Ministerial Conference will be taking place.

By holding a parliamentary session in Cancún as a parallel event of the Ministerial Conference, the Steering Committee hopes to advance the process of the establishment of a parliamentary dimension of the WTO as a means of enhancing the transparency and democratic accountability of this organization. It also seeks to make the voices of parliamentarians, the legitimate representatives of the people, heard loud and clear by government negotiators who will gather in Cancún for a mid-term review of the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations, including the implementation of the Doha Development Agenda.

As you will see from the enclosed provisional agenda of the parliamentary session, the Steering Committee has decided to focus the attention of delegates on three areas of particular importance for the ongoing negotiations: trade in agriculture with special emphasis on the reduction of subsidies; intellectual property rights and access to essential pharmaceutical products; trade in services. These subjects will be considered on 9 September in a series of interactive panel discussions and a question-and-answer session with the participation of leading trade negotiators and top WTO officials. Conclusions of the debate will be drawn up at a second sitting, to be held on 12 September. The latter sitting is also expected to adopt a Declaration, the initial draft of which will be prepared by the Post-Doha Steering Committee. The detailed programme of work as well as practical information about the parliamentary session in Cancún will be sent to all parliaments shortly, as well as posted on the IPU and EP Web sites.

On 13 May and 4 June 2003, you were already requested to take urgent measures with regard to participation of parliamentarians in the WTO Conference and their accommodation in Cancún. Specifically, you were invited to ensure that senior members of your Parliament who are

active on trade and development issues should be included in your country's official delegation to the fifth WTO Ministerial Conference, thus ensuring that their visa and accommodation needs would be taken care of in advance through the Mexican Organizing Committee, the body in charge of all logistical matters concerning the WTO Conference. You were also informed of a possibility to book rooms by 30 June at the latest at a hotel in Cancún where a certain number of rooms had been pre-booked for parliamentary delegations by the Mexican Parliament.

It is important to bear in mind that security arrangements in Cancún will be very tight at the time of the WTO Ministerial Conference and that only persons duly accredited to the Conference and wearing ID badges with photos will have access to the zone surrounding the WTO Conference Centre, including the hotel where the parliamentary session will take place. Members of parliament and accompanying staff who will be present in Cancún as part of their country's official delegation to the fifth WTO Ministerial Conference (recommended option) will of course have no problem in accessing the premises of the parliamentary session. The same should also be true for members of parliament who are part of NGO delegations officially accredited to the Ministerial Conference.

However, if your parliamentary representatives belong to neither of these two categories and will therefore have no official WTO Conference badge with a photo, they will be obliged to pass a special registration procedure in Cancún, details of which will be made known later. All such delegates must pre-register themselves with the IPU Secretariat by 1 August at the latest using the attached registration form.

We very much hope that members of your parliament will be able to participate in the Cancun session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sergio Páez Verdugo', written over a vertical line.

Sergio Páez Verdugo
President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Patrick Cox
President of the European Parliament