WTO and OECD Launch Requests for Information to Support Doha Development Agenda

OECD Ministers issued an urgent call at their annual ministerial meeting in Paris for action to address the trade concerns of developing countries, including market access, welcoming the OECD work with the World Trade Organisation to create a database in support of the Doha Development Agenda.

In a joint letter sent to aid donors, multilateral agencies and development banks as part of this drive, WTO Director-General Mike Moore and OECD Secretary General Donald J. Johnston launched a process of data collection on trade-related technical assistance/capacity building activities (TRTA/CB) for the WTO Doha Development Agenda TRTA and CB Database, jointly established with the OECD.

In their letter, the heads of the two organisations noted the importance attached in the Doha Declaration to “well-targeted, sustainably financed, technical assistance and capacity building programmes” and the commitment of WTO members to help the weakest among them to participate effectively in the multilateral trading system.

Reflecting the urgency of scaling-up TRTA/CB activities and the need to co-ordinate this work effectively with the multilateral agencies, the WTO Director-General will present a progress report to the WTO General Council in December 2002 on the “implementation and adequacy” of TRTA/CB efforts. A more comprehensive report will go to the WTO Ministerial in Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003.

Agencies and country providers have agreed to the purposes and objectives of this database as follows:

(i) transparency of TRTA delivered;
(ii) exchange and sharing of information;
(iii) minimization and/or avoidance of duplication;
(iv) estimation of progress in the implementation of the Doha Mandates on technical cooperation and capacity building;
(v) coordination and coherence; and
(vi) meeting the objectives of the report mandated in para.41 of the Doha Declaration.

The database will provide a snapshot of information for the period 2001-2002 and therefore provide timely and current information for the progress report to the WTO General Council at the end of 2002. It will subsequently be updated for the WTO Ministerial and beyond. The full text of the letter is available on the OECD website at www.oecd.org/dac/trade.