

PRESS RELEASE

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MOORE PRAISES ADVISORS, SAYS EFFORTS WILL LEAD TO NEW IDEAS

The following statement was given by Director-General Mike Moore after a two-day meeting with his group of external advisors. The advisors met with the Director-General and his staff to co-ordinate efforts for a summer publication aimed at addressing some of the key issues and problems affecting the World Trade Organization.

"I'd like to start by thanking all members of the Group for having participated in these discussions. We are fortunate to have as members of this group, some of the world's most authoritative and distinguished experts on the global trading system and the WTO. These are creative and learned people who we have asked to look beyond the immediate horizon and consider how we might shape this organization and the system it oversees in the years ahead.

"Our objective is a publication to come out this summer which will offer collective and individual ideas on how we should move forward on the questions of substance and governance, taking into account the external political factors which will shape our organization in the future.

"The Doha Conference was a great success and it has led to an impressive agenda of work and negotiations in the years to come. We have the development agenda and we intend to carry out the instructions of ministers. But success at Doha does not change the fact that many of the problems which surfaced at Seattle remain and will recur throughout the negotiations. Doha has not reduced in any way the need for serious thought to be given to the problems confronting the system, as well as to the substantive issues in the Doha Agenda itself. It merely gives us a more positive framework for thinking.

"I do not pretend that in two days of discussions we have found all of the answers. But we have, I think, been debating the right questions. A WTO of 144 member governments is not the same as a GATT of 23. We need to develop ideas on how this organization can improve its play, and deliver more to its members both in terms of substance and in terms of process.

"The debate over the past couple of days has been, at times, intense and we have not all agreed on all points. But the differences of view have been healthy. Each of our experts comes from a different background and sees the world from a different perspective. But each shares a common desire: to see a vibrant and representative WTO serving all its member governments and their people more effectively.

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"In the coming months, each member of this group will write a chapter to the publication and I'm sure there will be further differences of opinion. The different perspectives and priorities will be evident in these chapters. But they will also work on a common view for the organization. Some of the ideas that emerge will be provocative and perhaps even controversial. But addressing the issues confronting this organization calls for fresh thinking and creative suggestions on how we can address the problems we face.

"A healthy debate which examines these institutional issues needs to offer up a variety of perspectives for consideration by our clients, the member governments. This is an inter-governmental organization which makes decisions on the basis of consensus. We have not for a moment lost sight of this point. But the assembled wisdom of this extraordinary group can bring to member governments some ideas on how we can best address the problems that confront us today and those which await us tomorrow."

Mr. Moore's Advisors:

Professor Robert Baldwin,
Hilldale Professor of Economics, Emeritus,
University of Wisconsin

Dr. Konrad Von Moltke
Senior Fellow, International Institute for
Sustainable Development, Winnipeg

Professor Jagdish N. Bhagwati
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Special Adviser to the UN on Globalization

Professor Manmohan Singh
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