

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS/345
19 June 2003

(03-3301)

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

WTO Director-General establishes a Consultative Board on the future of the multilateral trading system

WTO Director-General Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi has established a Consultative Board of eminent persons chaired by Mr. Peter Sutherland to advise him on the challenges and opportunities confronting the organization and the multilateral trading system.

The Consultative Board will be charged with preparing a report on how to institutionally strengthen and equip the WTO to respond effectively to future systemic challenges brought about by an increasingly integrated global economy. Dr. Supachai has tasked his Board, as well, to reflect on how to improve the functioning of the organization as it expands to near universal membership, the role of the Secretariat and its resources, and ways to create more effective partnerships with other international organizations and greater public outreach.

"I have said that one of my priorities as Director-General would be to strengthen the WTO as an institution. To further this goal I have asked a small group of eminent individuals to lend me their experience and expertise as we seek to adapt our organization to the challenges of the 21st century. Each of them have had distinguished careers in government, academia, business, the non-profit sector, trade and economic policy-making. I'm sure they will provide me with some fresh insights on how we can move forward in a manner which provides benefits for all," Dr. Supachai said.

The members of the Consultative Board are:

Mr. Peter Sutherland (Chairman of the Consultative Board)
Chairman, BP p.l.c.;
Director-General of the WTO, GATT (1993-95)

Professor Jagdish Bhagwati
University Professor, Columbia University

Dr. Kwesi Botchwey
Director, Africa Programs and Research, Harvard Centre for International Development; Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy, Kennedy School of Government (1998-2002); and Minister of Finance of Ghana (1982-95)

Mr. Niall W A FitzGerald KBE
Co-Chairman and CEO, Unilever

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Professor Koichi Hamada
Professor of Economics, Yale University

Professor John Jackson
University Professor of Law, Georgetown University

Professor Celso Lafer
Professor of the Law School of the University of São Paulo; Minister of Foreign Relations of Brazil (2001-2002) and Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the WTO (1995-98).

Professor Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and President of the French Institute for International Relations (IFRI)

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