



TWN
Third World Network

Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA): Emerging Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Development

WTO Public Forum, Geneva

Date: **1 OCTOBER 2014**, Time: **13:00 - 15:00**, Place: **W3 - Room B**

Potential results of the plurilateral negotiations for Information Technology Agreement (ITA) - II and Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA) will have major direct or indirect impacts on the lives of people across the world. Though significant progress on trade in IT goods, was achieved in the backdrop of ITA-I, WTO members like India, Indonesia and others have raised important concerns, based on experiences of ITA-I. Further, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) together with 163 other trade union and civil society organisations, in a letter to WTO members in October 2013, stated that the ITA-II could further harm workers and restrict the prospect of industrialisation for participating developing countries.

Similarly the WTO negotiations to liberalise environmental goods trade has important objectives including transfer of technology, addressing environmental damages and promoting sustainable development. However, concerns were expressed on recently launched plurilateral EGA negotiations that, it would not lead to realising the stated objective. It is also important to note that for many developing countries, production of environmental goods and clean technologies is an integral part of their strategies for creating new jobs.

In this context, the views of people, who would be affected by the potential expansion of the ITA and EGA – trade unions and civil society groups, and consumers, particularly from African countries – are very important. The proposed working session would examine issues emerging from ITA-II and EGA negotiations and concerns expressed by WTO members. Speakers would critically analyse whether the expected social and economic opportunities and benefits including employment creation, structural transformation, transfer of technology and sustainable development in developing countries and least developed countries, that may result from these agreements are inclusive enough?

Speakers

- Georgios Altintzís, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
 - Brian Kohler, IndustriALL Global Union
 - Sanya Reid Smith, Third World Network (TWN)
- Gopalakrishnan Manicandan, Forum on FTAs, India