

WTO 20th Anniversary Event
Technical Barriers to Trade

More information:

https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tbt_e/tbtat20nov15_e.htm

Context

Over the last 20 years, the TBT Committee has quietly resolved trade problems of everyday commercial and social significance. From toys, to food, to cars, electronics and cosmetics, there are few products the Committee has not discussed. By developing best practices and sharing information and experiences, the Committee has helped Members avoid trade disputes and enhanced regulatory cooperation. This event is intended to take stock of the Committee's work over the past 20 years, and look ahead to challenges on the horizon.

Programme

9:45-10:45 LOOKING BACK

The first Panel will set the stage with a look back at key challenges posed by the negotiation of the TBT Agreement and the early days of the TBT Committee (Juan-Antonio Dorantes Sanchez, former TBT Chairperson, Mexico). Participants will also hear what WTO accession to the WTO TBT Agreement entailed for a large developing Member (Mr LIU Yuhua, DDG of the Department of WTO Affairs, Ministry of Commerce of China). Two perspectives from academia will be heard; one legal (Professor Joost Pauwelyn), one economic (Professor Jacques Pelkmans). The session will be moderated by Aik Hoe Lim (Director, Trade and Environment Division, WTO).

10:45 ADDRESS BY WTO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo will emphasize the importance of the work of the TBT Committee to the WTO.

11:00-12:00 TBT STAKEHOLDERS, BEYOND GOVERNMENTS

This Panel will engage the users of the TBT Agreement, beyond governments. The speakers (from industry, trade associations, a standards body and a consumer representative) have been asked to answer the following key questions: why does TBT matter for them, how do they engage with governments, and what challenges matter most in this area? The panel will include brief interventions from the following speakers: Pär Stenmark (IKEA), Dominique Taeymans (Nestlé), Bev Postma (Food Industry Asia), Jane Ngige (Kenya Flower Council), Dr Scott Steedman (British Standards Institution, BSI) and Sadie Homer (Consumers International). This session will be moderated by Devin McDaniels (Trade and Environment Division, WTO).

12:00-13:00 CHALLENGES AHEAD

This panel is intended to engage the practitioners: government experts who regularly participate in the TBT Committee. The intention is to look ahead: what is coming in the next 20 years on the subject of standards and regulations? Speakers on the panel will include: George Opiyo (Uganda), Fabrizio Sacchetti (EU), Jennifer Stradtman (US) and Xinhua Sun (China). This session will be moderated by Erik Wijkström (Trade and Environment Division, WTO).
