

NEWS RELEASE



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July 30, 2008

IPC Voices Deep Regret over Collapse of DDA Negotiations

IPC members received Director-General Lamy's announcement that the trade talks collapsed on July 29 with much regret. "It is really a shame that the talks floundered on one specific issue within the agricultural negotiations when a considerable deal both within and beyond agriculture was at hand," stated Carlo Trojan, incoming Chairperson of IPC. The breakdown of talks undoubtedly represents a missed opportunity, not least because of their potential to give a long-term boost to some of the world's poorest countries through trade.

Looking forward, IPC stresses the importance of the multilateral trading system, particularly during a global economic downturn, which so easily brings out protectionist tendencies. "During these times of high food prices, we must be especially vigilant about maintaining liberalized trade," warned IPC Chairperson Piet Bukman; "an open and equitable global food and agricultural trade system is crucial for food security."

IPC therefore encourages policymakers and stakeholders in developed and developing countries not to lose sight of the fact that trade liberalization, especially in agriculture, is best achieved through multilateral agreements. "Negotiators will surely need to take a break and regroup, but they should insist that future negotiations pick up where they left off," advised IPC Vice Chairperson Marcelo Regunaga, "so that the positive outcomes for both the world's agricultural producers and consumers are not lost."

For a good overview of the agricultural trade issues at stake in the DDA negotiations compared with the Uruguay Round, see IPC, ICTSD and IFPRI's recent paper, *An Overview Assessment of the Revised Draft WTO Modalities for Agriculture*, by Mike Gifford and Raul Montemayor. The paper is available at <http://www.agritrade.org/Publications/index.html#policyfocus>.

About IPC The International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC) promotes a more open and equitable global food system by pursuing pragmatic trade and development policies in food and agriculture to meet the world's growing needs. IPC convenes influential policymakers, agribusiness executives, farm leaders, and academics from developed and developing countries to clarify complex issues, build consensus, and advocate policies to decision-makers. More information on the organization and its membership can be found on our website: www.agritrade.org.