Society of International Economic Law

The Society of International Economic Law has launched SIEL Conversations, a monthly webinar on international economic law.

The aim of SIEL Conversations is to bring together authors and commentators to give talks that are idea-focused so as to foster learning and inspiration, and provoke conversations that matter. Each SIEL Conversation will last approximately one hour and will include commentary from the speakers, with questions from the public.

What's On

The Outcomes of MC12 and the Future of the Multilateral Trading System

Iryna Polovets – *Moderator*
Advisor to Deputy Director-General Angela Ellard
World Trade Organization

Anabel González
Deputy Director-General
World Trade Organization

Bernard Hoekman
Professor and Director of Global Economics, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute

Victor do Prado
Brazilian Center for International Relations & Former Director, WTO Council and Trade Negotiations Committee Division

Peter Ungphakorn
Trade β Blog & former WTO Information Officer

When

Monday
27 June 2022

8 am	9 am	1 pm	2 pm	8 pm
New York	Sao Paulo	London	Brussels	Singapore

Register here for the event: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HIo21n6NQhGuh2WI2oAU7A

More information available at **www.sielnet.org**

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Description

The Outcomes of MC12 and the Future of the Multilateral Trading System

The WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference was perhaps the most successful in the organization's history. WTO Members have been able to agree on a package that, given gloomy prospects and the geopolitical context, was hailed as both meaningful in itself and indicative of a positive outlook for the multilateral trading system. The conclusion of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, in particular, represents a qualitative change for the WTO, now entrusted not only with addressing trade issues but also with enforcing an environmental agreement.

At the same time, many issues remain unresolved, including the persistent uncertainty in dispute settlement, long-standing disagreements over agriculture, and lack of clarity on what WTO reform should aim to achieve. The 'trade wars' era tariffs between US and China and on steel and aluminium trade remain in place. Agreements on some of the most challenging issues of the day, from digital trade and state-owned enterprises to environmental goods, remain elusive. Calls for resilience in supply chains, onshoring and 'friendshoring', which appear antithetical to the very spirit of a multilateral trading system, are unlikely to fade away. On some issues, WTO Members seem to have accepted that multilateral rules have given way to the 'coalition of the willing' format.

In this one-hour SIEL Conversation, four long-time participants in and observers of WTO negotiations will examine the outcomes of the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference, consider the likely evolution of global trade cooperation over the near future, and discuss the prospects for the newly revitalized institutionalized multilateral trading system. Speakers in this conversation are Anabel González (WTO Deputy Director General), Bernard Hoekman (Professor and Director, Global Economics, European University Institute), Victor do Prado (Brazilian Center for International Relations, former Director, WTO Council and Trade Negotiations Committee Division) and Peter Ungphakorn (Trade β Blog, former WTO Information Officer). The Conversation will be moderated by Iryna Polovets (Advisor to WTO Deputy Director-General Angela Ellard).

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Participant Bios

Anabel González has served as WTO Deputy Director-General since June 2021. Ms González is a renowned global expert on trade, investment and economic development with a proven managerial track record in international organizations and the public sector. In government, Ms Gonzalez served as Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica; Special Ambassador and Chief Negotiator; Vice-Minister of Trade and Director-General for Trade Negotiations. She also worked as Director-General of the Costa Rican Investment Promotion Agency (CINDE). Ms González also served at the World Bank as Senior Director of the Global Practice on Trade and Competitiveness, the WTO as Director of Agriculture and Commodities Division and as Senior Consultant with the Inter-American Development Bank. More recently, Ms González has worked as a Non-Resident Senior Fellow with the Peterson Institute for International Economics, where she hosted the virtual series Trade Winds, and as Senior Advisor to the Boston Consulting Group. Ms González obtained her master's degree from Georgetown University Law Center with the highest academic distinction and has published extensively and lectured across the world on trade, investment and economic development.

Victor do Prado is the former Director of Council and Trade Negotiations Committee at the WTO (2012-2022), responsible for the Governing Bodies of the Organization, namely the Ministerial Conference, the General Council, the Dispute Settlement Body and the Trade Negotiations Committee. He previously served as deputy Chief of Staff to WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy. He is a former diplomat and negotiator and member of the Brazilian negotiating team at the end of the Uruguay Round. Victor do Prado coordinated dispute settlement proceedings for Brazil and served as a WTO Dispute Settlement panellist in several cases. He was a senior trade and economic assistant to Brazil's foreign minister.

Victor do Prado holds a Degree in Law from the University of São Paulo and a Master's degree in International Relations from the Brazilian Diplomatic Academy (first of class, Rio Branco prize and award). He is currently a Senior Fellow at the Brazilian Center for International Relations – CEBRI. He is also a faculty and board member of the World Trade Institute – WTI (Bern University) and is a frequent guest lecturer in Universities in Europe, Asia and Latin America.

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Participant Bios

Bernard Hoekman is Professor and Director, Global Economics at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute in Florence, Italy. Prior positions include Director of the International Trade Department and Research Manager in the Development Research Group of the World Bank. He has been an economist in the GATT Secretariat and held visiting positions at SciencesPo, Paris. Recent publications include Trade in the 21st Century: Back to the Past? (Co-edited with Ernesto Zedillo), Washington DC: Brookings Institution 2021, Value Chain Approaches to Reducing Policy Spillovers on International Business (with Christopher Findlay), Journal of International Business Policy 2020, Rethinking International Subsidy Rules (with Douglas Nelson), The World Economy 2020, Foreign Participation in Public Procurement and Firm Performance: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa (with Marco Sanfilippo), Review of World Economics 2020, EU Services Trade Liberalization and Economic Regulation: Complements or Substitutes? (with Matteo Fiorini), Review of International Organizations 2020, Behind-the-Border Policies: Assessing and Addressing Non-Tariff Measures, (Co-edited with Joseph Francois), Cambridge University Press 2019.

Peter Ungphakorn has been reporting and commenting on trade and related issues such as Brexit — including the subjects that featured at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) — at https://tradebetablog.wordpress.com/. He worked in the Information and External Relations Division of the WTO Secretariat from 1996 to 2015, part of the team briefing journalists, writing material for the WTO website and preparing public information on the WTO. His beat included the agriculture negotiations, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and intellectual property, as well as broader activities such as the ministerial conferences. Before that he was a journalist mainly based in Bangkok, writing about economics, trade and the Uruguay Round negotiations, for The Nation and Bangkok Post, and freelancing for the Financial Times. Since retiring from the WTO, he has returned occasionally to freelance journalism, but now focuses principally on the blog.

Iryna Polovets is Advisor to WTO Deputy Director-General Angela Ellard. She worked as Dispute Settlement Lawyer both at the Appellate Body Secretariat and at the Legal Affairs Division of the WTO. Prior to joining the WTO, Iryna worked at the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) and in a Ukrainian law firm. Iryna holds a Master degree in Law from Kyiv National Economic University, as well as a Master in International Law and Economics (MILE) degree from the World Trade Institute (WTI), University of Bern (Switzerland) and an LLM in International Trade and Business Law from the University of Arizona (USA).