



For Immediate Release

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Global Services Coalition: WTO Services Report a Useful Start

The Global Services Coalition today welcomed the services report issued today by the chairman of the WTO Council for Trade in Services Special session as it affirmed that services are one of the pillars of the round. However, the Coalition said that the report is only a start, and that an intensive and sustained process of services negotiations must now follow.

"Agriculture, non-agricultural market access (NAMA), and services are the three pillars of market access in the Doha Round. The three are linked, and the Round will only be brought to a successful conclusion when there is substantial progress in all three," said Mike Ducker, President, FedEx Express International, and Chairman of the US Coalition of Service Industries.

The report, released by Mexican Ambassador to the WTO Fernando De Mateo, is a status report, not a negotiated document like its counterparts in agriculture and NAMA. While it noted areas of convergence among WTO members, it also drew attention to divergent views. Peter Bartlett, Vice-President of the Australian Services Roundtable said "Services industries will need early reassurance that this does not mean that Services is lagging progress in the other sectors."

The Global Services Coalition has said repeatedly that the Doha Round must not only make progress toward binding existing market access, but must also deliver new trade liberalization. It said that today's report is only a necessary first step in the process, which must include agreement on a statement of ambition for services, and a "signaling conference."

"A period of sustained and vigorous engagement, on both a bilateral and plurilateral basis, must now follow," said the Hon. Sergio Marchi, Chairman of the Canadian Services Coalition. "Texts are useful in providing guidance, but we must ultimately have good services offers. That is the end game," he said.

"To ensure that services take their proper place alongside agriculture and NAMA in the Doha Round, there needs to be an early signaling conference involving Ministers, preferably before the conference on modalities for agriculture and NAMA, to clarify and reinforce the commitments which WTO members will need to make on services," said Christopher Roberts, Chairman of the policy committee of the European Services Forum.

The Global Services Coalition is comprised of the leading service industry associations from Australia, Canada, EU, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Taiwan, the United States, and other countries.

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