

CUTS International and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung are pleased to invite you to a Side Event at the 10th Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Nairobi, Kenya

MEGA-REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS AND THEIR IMPACTS ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THE MULTILATERAL TRADING REGIME

held on 16.12.2015, 11.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., at the NGO Centre, Room NGO3

Countries across Asia-Pacific, the Americas and Europe are crafting trade agreements outside the auspices of the WTO. Agreements which intend to emphasize greater trade openness, high '21st century standards, and regulatory harmonization for their members.

As most developing countries, particularly those from Africa, are excluded from these mega RTAs, their position in the international trading system could face daunting challenges; losing market share due to reduced tariff rates, trade diversion and the erosion of their own trade preferences. Granting the possibility that exporters from developing countries may benefit from common standards in enlarged markets or flexible rules of origin, new regulations and higher standards beyond the status quo in a mega RTA zone might raise production costs for outsiders and reduce their competitiveness.

As policy-makers in developing countries might be at great pains to keep domestic producers competitive through regulatory reform, it is an imperative for those excluded to take a close look at the potential implications of mega RTAs in order to adopt appropriate measures at the domestic, regional, and multilateral levels.

This event will deliberate the possible challenges developing countries may face from the emergence of mega RTAs and the necessary policy options. It will give a space to various stakeholders to provide inputs on the multiple avenues of possible response, including domestic policy reforms, expanding bilateral and regional trade, and greater engagement at the multilateral level.

Welcome and Introduction

- ❖ **Hubert René Schillinger**, Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Geneva Office

Speakers

- ❖ **Bipul Chatterjee**, Executive Director, Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) International
- ❖ **Eveline Herfkens**, Visiting Scholar at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies and Senior Fellow at the Center for Transatlantic relations, John Hopkins University, former Minister for Development Cooperation, the Netherlands
- ❖ **Heribert Dieter**, Senior Associate, Global Issues, German Institute for International and Security Affairs and Visiting Professor for International Political Economy at the Zeppelin University, Lake Constance

Moderation

- ❖ **Rashid S. Kaukab**, Executive Director, CUTS International Geneva Office

