



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the Regional Workshop for Central and South American
Parliamentarians: “Trade Liberalization: the WTO, the Doha
Round and Development Challenges”**

**Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum
of the Americas (FIPA)**

**San José, Costa Rica
November 7 and 8, 2008**

Report

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) was invited to send a parliamentarian to participate in the regional workshop for Central and South American Parliamentarians: “Trade Liberalization: the WTO, the Doha Round and Development Challenges”. More specifically, the parliamentarian was to speak on the Canadian experience regarding the role that parliamentarians play in setting trade policy and responding to issues related to international trade and investment. Mr. Mario Silva, M.P., Vice-Chair of the Canadian Section of FIPA travelled to San José, Costa Rica on November 7 and 8, 2008 to participate in this event.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP

The workshop was hosted by the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica and co-organized by FIPA and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The purpose of the activity was to increase the knowledge of parliamentarians on the multilateral trade system, the WTO and the negotiations of the Doha Development Agenda. The sessions were delivered by subject matter experts and academics in the area of trade policy and they offered many opportunities for participants to ask questions of the presenters, share their views on trade agreements and discuss their concerns in this area. The workshop was well attended and eleven countries¹ registered participants.

Topics covered during the workshop included basic principles of the Multilateral Trade System and of the WTO’s Doha Program for Development as well as presentations on trade liberalization and development challenges such as poverty reduction and gender issues (for further details on the workshop agenda see Appendix 1).

Mr. Mario Silva, M.P. participated as a guest speaker to the roundtable on the parliamentary dimension of trade. His presentation included a brief overview of trade negotiation agreements in Canada. He also spoke on the important role of parliamentarians in trade policy formation and implementation and in engaging citizens to ensure that their needs and preoccupations are addressed. More specifically, Mr. Silva explained how parliamentarians can be involved in consultations in advance of new policy initiatives, study the impact of existing policies, and act as a voice for their constituents. He described several mechanisms to that effect such as the work of parliamentary committees, the review of proposed legislation, meetings with various stakeholders and interparliamentary dialogue. He concluded his remarks by talking about the Canadian experience with trade liberalization in the manufacturing industries.

¹ Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

In addition to delivering his remarks, the Vice-Chair of the Canadian Section of FIPA observed the discussions on other topics and attended the reception offered by the Ambassador of Canada to Costa Rica. These two events provided the Canadian Section of FIPA with an opportunity to promote the interparliamentary Association as a forum for dialogue and learning and to discuss other matters of mutual interest with participants from several countries.

CONCLUSION

Following the visit to Costa Rica, the Canadian Section of FIPA concluded that its participation in activities similar to the one offered in Costa Rica was a productive experience. They provide an excellent opportunity for the Members of the Canadian Section of FIPA to promote the Parliamentary Association and encourage participation of countries in upcoming activities. They were also occasions to make contact with their counterparts in the Parliaments of the other countries of the Americas and to exchange ideas and perspectives on current issues at a multilateral or bilateral level.

The Canadian Section of FIPA would like to thank the Embassy of Canada to Costa Rica for its support during the visit.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C, Senator
Vice-Chair
Canadian Section
of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum
of the Americas (FIPA)

Mr. Mario Silva, M.P.
Vice-Chair
Canadian Section
of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum
of the Americas (FIPA)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Section of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA)
ACTIVITY	Meeting / Visit Name
DESTINATION	City, Country
DATES	November 7 and 8, 2008
DELEGATION	
SENATE	None
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Mario Silva
STAFF	None
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 2,430.36
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 319.77
HOSPITALITY	\$
PER DIEMS	\$ 85.21
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$
TOTAL	\$ 2,835.34

Appendix 1



WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU COMMERCE
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DEL COMERCIO

Legislative Assembly of the
Republic of Costa Rica

Standing Special Committee
on International Relations and
Foreign Trade

Foro Interparlamentario de las Américas
Fórum Interparlamentar das Américas



Forum interparlementaire des Amériques
Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas

Regional workshop for Central and South American parliamentarians

Trade liberalization: the WTO, the Doha Round and development challenges

San José, Costa Rica
6 to 8 November 2008

Current context and challenges for the multilateral trade system:

On 1 January 2008, the multilateral trade system celebrated its 60th birthday. At the same time, the Doha Round for Development, intended to ensure that the system enables developing countries to benefit more from trade liberalization, is going through a period of uncertainty about its immediate future.

One of the main goals of the current WTO talks in the framework of the Doha Program for Development is to create new trading opportunities as well as ensure more balance between the standards of the multilateral trade system in favour of developing countries. These talks are at a decisive stage. Despite the progress made recently in the talks, the basic conflicts between the main players are still present. The closer we get to the end of the Round, the more profound the differences in interpretation about the level of ambition and what each member has to offer.

The goal of the workshop is to promote better understanding of the multilateral trade system and encourage interest in it: inform parliamentarians about the basic operation of the WTO, the fundamental questions on the multilateral and regional trade agenda, and the status of talks on the Doha Agenda for Development. This activity will also provide a forum where participants can discuss and exchange ideas and views about the contents of the talks and their possible effects on countries in the region, as well as other topics of regional interest. It will also encourage a discussion of the potential role of parliaments, international organizations and trade in promoting development.

Given that, in most countries, parliaments play a decisive role in creating the legal framework related to trade and in ratifying international agreements, another goal will be to enhance the transparency of the WTO and give legislators, as representatives of their citizenry, opportunities to obtain information firsthand on the latest developments seen in the WTO talks, exchange opinions and experiences with colleagues from other

parliaments and interact with officials from the WTO and the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA), in order to form a clearer idea of the challenges and opportunities at stake in the Doha talks.

In the light of the preceding, the WTO and FIPA are jointly organizing a Regional Workshop for Central and South American Parliamentarians on the topic "Trade liberalization: the WTO, the Doha Round and development challenges", to be held in San José, Costa Rica, 6 to 8 November 2008.

Conference site:

Radisson Europa Hotel and Conference Center

P.O. Box 538 Calle Blancos
Calle Blancos 2120
San José, Costa Rica

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Republic
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Trade

Foro Interparlamentario de las Américas
Fórum Interparlamentar das Américas



Forum interparlementaire des Amériques
Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas

Regional workshop for Central and South American parliamentarians

Trade liberalization: the WTO, the Doha Round and development challenges

**San José, Costa Rica
6 to 8 November 2008**

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

FIRST DAY OF ACTIVITIES

8:00 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	Opening ceremony Marco Vinicio Ruiz, Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica, or another representative of the government of Costa Rica <i>Representative of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica</i> <i>Representative of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas</i> <i>Representative of the WTO Secretariat</i>
9:00 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	Group photo, coffee break
9:30 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	Session 1: Basic principles of the Multilateral Trade System and Introduction to the WTO's Doha Program for Development WTO Secretariat
10:30 a.m.	12:30 p.m.	Session 2: The Doha Program for Development: Current status of the talks - Agriculture WTO Secretariat <i>Discussion</i>
12:30 p.m.	2:00 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	Session 3: The Doha Program for Development: Current status of the talks - Non-agricultural market access (NAMA)

WTO Secretariat
Discussion

3:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m. Coffee break

4:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. **Roundtable between parliamentarians concerning the topics raised**

Moderator: Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica

SECOND DAY OF ACTIVITIES

8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. **Session 4: The Doha Program for Development: Current status of the talks - Other topics included: trade in services, rules, trade facilitation, etc.**

WTO Secretariat
Discussion

10:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m. Coffee break

10:30 a.m. 12:30 p.m. **Session 5: The development dimension of the Doha Program: Aid for trade, etc.**

WTO Secretariat
Regional expert
Discussion

12:30 p.m. 2:00 p.m. Lunch

2:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m. **Session 6: The multilateral system and the new regional trade agreements**

Regional expert
Discussion

3:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m. Coffee break

4:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. **Roundtable between parliamentarians concerning the topics raised**

Moderator: Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica

THIRD DAY OF ACTIVITIES

8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. **Session 7: Development challenges and trade liberalization: Poverty reduction**

		Regional expert <i>Discussion</i>
10:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m.	Coffee break
11:00 a.m.	12:00 p.m.	Session 8: Development challenges and trade liberalization: Gender issues
		Regional expert <i>Discussion</i>
12:00 p.m.	1:30 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	Roundtable: Trade's parliamentary dimension
		WTO representative Regional expert or FIPA representative Moderator: Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica
3:30 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	Evaluation of the workshop and recommendations for future activities
4:00 p.m.	4:30 p.m.	Final remarks and closing
		WTO Secretariat <i>FIPA representative</i>
