



THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LABOUR COUNCIL
Est. 1995

MEDIA INVITE

MEDIA BRIEFING

WTO DOHA DEVELOPMENT ROUND WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO TRADE
IN INDUSTRIAL GOODS

09 March 2007

Members of the media are cordially invited to a media briefing on the WTO Doha Development Agenda to be addressed by Dr. Laurraine Lotter, the convener for Business, Tony Ehrenreich convener for Labour and Xavier Carim, representing Government. This is to take place at **11h00 to 12h00 on Tuesday, 13 March 2007, at Nedlac, 14 A, Jellicoe Avenue, Rosebank.** The briefing will be followed by a luncheon.

Background

Following the suspension of the Doha Development Round of the World Trade Organisation in July 2006, the negotiations have resumed in February 2007. The outcome of these negotiations will have a significant impact on South Africa's trading opportunities both in terms of opening our markets and providing access to global markets. We therefore must ensure that any final agreement is balanced and serves our economic and industrial objectives.

Although the agenda for the negotiations covers a wide range of issues, one of the most important for SA is the potential impact of a formula cut in customs duties on industrial products. Cutting industrial tariffs is intended to increase market access for industrial products in the global economy.

From a defensive point of view, the South African government has been consulting with business and labour in Nedlac on the potential impact of tariff cuts on different industrial sectors. To date consultations have focused on the formula and the level of the coefficient that will be used to calculate the cuts, as

¹ *Deepening social dialogue for social equity, growth, and maximum economic participation.*

well as a list of sensitive products that will be subject to only half of the full formula tariff cut.

In order to estimate the impact on different industrial sectors, Nedlac has undertaken a series of calculations using different coefficients.

Nedlac is aware that despite the attempts to ensure broad participation in the consultations to date, not all potentially affected industrial sectors have been involved and a broader consultation process may be appropriate before finalizing a national negotiating position.

The Convenors of Government, Business and Labour and other sector experts will be present to answer questions from the media.

Enquiries

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