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Civil Society Experts Outline What Is Needed to Protect the Development Mandate in Agriculture and Fisheries-Subsidies Negotiations in MC11

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA--- Civil society experts commented on the question of how developing and least-developed countries' interests are protected in these agricultural and fishery subsidies negotiations at MC11, as both these sectors are not only major economic activities for them, but are intrinsic to the social, environmental and cultural existence of their people.

Watch a facebook live video of December 11, 2017, 10:15-11:45 am panel:

<https://www.facebook.com/owinfs/videos/1867301633583154/>

Quotes from civil society experts on the key issues on the table at MC11 and why and how the development mandate needs to be protected and implemented:

Ranja Sangupta, Senior Researcher, Third World Network – India

"The agricultural negotiations in MC11 will maintain or even deepen the inequities in the subsidies rules. An effective and fair permanent solution is not in sight while the domestic subsidies discussion is repeatedly attempting to impose disciplines on developing countries while protecting the subsidies of the rich. The fisheries subsidies negotiations run the risk of falling into the same loophole; allowing continuation or even increase developed country subsidies which have continued for long while imposing disciplines on subsidies to small fisherfolk in developing countries."

Adam Wolfenden, Trade Justice Campaigner, Pacific Network on Globalisation

"Any outcome on fisheries subsidies negotiations must have special and differential treatment at its heart. This would mean that developing and least developed countries maintain their right to manage the resources within their Exclusive Economic Zones, maintain the policy space to develop their industries and receive funding to meet their capacity needs. What we are seeing from the rich industrial fishing nations undermines this and instead is an attempt to use sustainability as the rhetoric to take development away."

Timothy A. Wise, Small Planet Institute and Tufts University, USA

"With agricultural prices low, farmers are suffering. Developing country governments urgently need the right to protect their farmers with measures such as public stockholding, Special Safeguard Mechanism, and reductions in U.S. cotton subsidies. The U.S. is again dumping products below the costs of production - 12% below for maize, 10% for soybeans, 23% for cotton, 32% for wheat."

Sylvester Bagooro Programme Officer, Political Economy Third World Network-Africa, Ghana

"Africa faces a huge challenge today in terms of poverty, marginalization and high unemployment and the imperative to industrialize. Out of the about 420 million youth in Africa, a third are unemployed and discouraged and ready to do anything for survival. This is a recipe for disaster. Hence the MC11 must deliver

on the development aspects of the Doha Work Programme as tabled by the Africa Group. The so-called 21st century issues that are intrusive and a clamp on the regulatory capacities of African government have no grounds to be accepted in the midst of the dire need to have policy to improve the lives of the masses in Africa”.

Sachin Kumar Jain, Right to Food Campaign, India

“WTO should answer that on what basis 1986-88 period was accepted as period for calculation of food subsidies, what is the basis of setting 5% level for developed countries and 10% for developing countries, when US and EU are providing 100 to 200 % higher subsidies than developing countries? It's the time for WTO to be held answerable and accountable for hunger, inflation and farmers suicides here in MC11.”

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