

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2496
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2014
TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT
Devi Smt. Veena;Rao Shri Rayapati Sambasiva

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations held recently at Geneva including the Trade Facilitation were in favour of the developed countries and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the WTO has been able to work out a consensus on the Trade Facilitation Agreement and the Government has also agreed to a conditional support to it;
- (c) if so, the details thereof indicating the conditions put forward by the Government for ratifying the agreement;
- (d) whether the WTO had earlier assured the developing nations to rectify the faulty subsidy rules during the Doha round; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken to ensure that the said assurance is fulfilled?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

(a) to (c) During the Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) held in Bali, Indonesia in December 2013, WTO members, including India, agreed on a Bali Package comprising an agreement on Trade Facilitation and issues relating to agriculture and development. The Trade Facilitation Agreement is proposed to be ratified by member countries by 31st July, 2015. At present, the Preparatory Committee on Trade Facilitation is working on the draft Protocol of Amendment amending the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the WTO.

However, following the Bali Ministerial meeting while there has been progress on the Trade Facilitation Agreement, other decisions including a decision on public stockholding for food security purposes and other development issues have been sidelined. India has, therefore, taken the stand that till there is an assurance and visible outcomes which convince developing countries that WTO Members will engage in negotiations with commitment to find a permanent solution on public stockholding and all other Bali deliverables, especially those for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), India would find it difficult to join the consensus on the Protocol of Amendment.

(d) & (e) The Doha Round of trade negotiations was launched in the WTO with 'development' at its core. The reduction and disciplining of agriculture subsidies is part of the agenda of this Round. India has urged the WTO to take this agenda forward as it is of special interest to developing countries.