



The South African Institute of International Affairs and Oxfam GB in South Africa cordially invite you to a Roundtable discussion on:

***Prospects for Developing Country Coalitions in the WTO***

**Date:** 07 December 2005

**Time:** 09h30 for 10h00 – 12h30 (A light finger lunch will follow)

**Venue:** Jan Smuts House  
East Campus, University of Witwatersrand.

**RSVP:** by 03 December to Ms Katy de Villiers

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The success of the Doha Round of negotiations is critical if confidence in the WTO is to be restored. The current round was launched in 2001 and was meant to conclude by 1 January 2005. However the negotiations have suffered serious setbacks, including the failed Cancun Ministerial Conference in 2003. The process since then has more or less stalled, with deadlocked negotiations over agricultural trade liberalization topping the long list of obstacles. The 6<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference, to be held from 13-18 December 2005 in Hong Kong, will be a critical determinant of whether this round can be successfully concluded at the end of 2006.

The last two roundtable discussions (14<sup>th</sup> October and 16<sup>th</sup> November) have given us a sense of what we might expect from Hong Kong based on substantive negotiating issues in general and agriculture in particular. However, WTO negotiations also have a strong political or power relations dimension that must be factored into the broader equation in order to give a clearer picture of what might transpire in Hong Kong.

Accordingly, the last pre-Hong Kong roundtable discussion will focus on the effectiveness of developing country coalitions in the WTO. The critical question is whether these coalitions (ranging from the Africa Group to the G20) could really make a meaningful difference in promoting Africa's interests.

You are kindly invited to participate in the final of our series of roundtable discussions scheduled as follows:

## **Programme**

<u>Chair:</u>	<i>Mills Soko (Mthente Research and Consulting Services)</i>
10h00 – 10h10	Opening and welcome
10h10 - 10h35	“Developing Country Coalitions in the WTO: Aligning the Majors?” <i>Peter Draper, SAIIA</i>
10h35 - 11h00	“Is Anyone Listening to Africa?” <i>Muthoni Muriu, Oxfam</i>
11h00 - 11h20	Panel Responses  1. <i>Rashad Cassim, School of Economics and Business Sciences, Wits University</i> 2. <i>Mzukisi Qobo, SAIIA Research Associate</i>
11h20- 11h40	Tea
11h40 - 12h30	Open Discussion
12h30-13h00	Lunch