



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

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26 March 2019

CUSTOMS MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

NO. 96 - 2019

To: All Deputy Commissioners
All Directors and Division Chiefs
All District/Port Collectors
And Others Concerned

SUBJECT: International Women's Day Celebration at the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Attached is the facsimile copy of the message sent on behalf of Atty. Ann Claire Credo-Cabochan, Director, Bureau of International Trade Relations, DTI regarding the International Women's Day event held at the WTO on 08 March 2019 entitled: **"UNLOCKING TRADE FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY."**

For your information and guidance.

For record purposes, please confirm the dissemination of this circular throughout your offices within fifteen (15) days from receipt hereof.

Handwritten signature
REY LEONARDO B. GUERRERO
Commissioner

MAR 29 2019

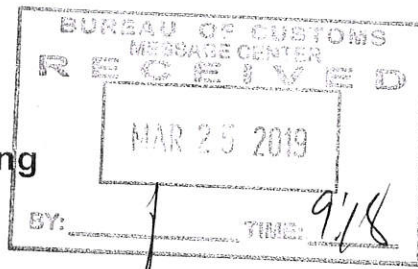


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Time: 2019-180

International Women's Day Event 2019 – “Unlocking Trade for Women's Empowerment through Innovation and Sustainability”

Maria Anne Lorraine S. Doong



BOC-09-00485

Mar 22, 2019, 4:58 PM (3 days ago)

Message sent on behalf of Atty. Ann Claire Credo-Cabochan, DTI-BITR Director

Kindly find attached, for your reference and information, copy of the self-explanatory report of the Philippine Mission to the WTO in Geneva regarding the International Women's Day Event 2019 (ZWTO-PM-081-2019 dated 18 March 2019).

The International Women's Day event was held at the WTO on 08 March 2019, which was entitled “*Unlocking Trade for Women's Empowerment through Innovation and Sustainability.*” During this event, the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) launched a new initiative entitled “*Empower Women, Power Trade.*” It may be recalled that the Philippines was one of the 121 WTO Members and observers who supported the *Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment* at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11) in 2017 and committed to work together to remove barriers for women's economic empowerment and increase their participation in trade.

The WTO has initiated next steps in the work on trade and gender such as working on a report on its implementation; partnering with the World Bank to generate new data on how trade impacts women; launching a new research project looking at the intersection among trade, gender, and environment; and incorporating trade and gender into the Technical Assistance Plan.

The PM-WTO recognizes the significant contribution of women in the Philippine economy and the importance given by the Philippines on the role of women's economic empowerment in attaining inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The Mission also recommends the continued participation of the Philippines in succeeding seminars/workshops conducted by the champions of the initiative.

Thank you.

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To: SFA
Fr: Geneva WTO-PM
Dt: 18 March 2019
Re: **International Women's Day Event 2019 – “Unlocking Trade for Women's Empowerment through Innovation and Sustainability”**
Rt: OUIER, UNIO
Cc: DTI Secretary Ramon M. Lopez
DA Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol
NEDA Secretary Ernesto M. Pernia
TCWM Chair and DTI Undersecretary Ceferino S. Rodolfo
Cn: ZWTO-PM- *021* -2019
Pgs: *2* including this page

Unless otherwise attached to this report, any document cited is available for downloading in the WTO Members' website.

Mission wishes to inform the Department and TCWM about the key take-aways from the International Women's Day event held at the WTO on 08 March 2019, entitled *Unlocking Trade for Women's Empowerment through Innovation and Sustainability*.

Mission recalls that the Philippines was one of the 121 WTO Members and observers who supported the *Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment* at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11) in 2017 and committed to work together to remove barriers for women's economic empowerment and increase their participation in trade.

Remarks of Director General Roberto Azevêdo

In his opening remarks, Director General Roberto Azevêdo reviewed the WTO's current work in trade and gender, and announced future work and initiatives. He highlighted that “trade and gender issues are on the WTO agenda like never before,” citing that the Buenos Aires Declaration is providing a platform to better understand the links between trade and women's empowerment.

DG Azevêdo noted that thus far, three workshops have been conducted, where Members (1) outlined the importance of improving gender-based analysis in trade; (2) looked at government procurement markets and their importance for inclusive economic development; and (3) explored how global value chains can foster women's economic empowerment. At these workshops, Members shared their national experiences and best practices, and private sector representatives also shared relevant cases. Three more workshops are being planned, to examine (1) the gender aspects of trade agreements, (2) financial inclusion, and (3) new technologies.

Furthermore, DG Azevêdo recalled that the Buenos Aires Declaration identified the WTO Trade Policy Review (TPR) process as one of the tools that could be used by Members to share information. He reported that since January 2018, six countries have voluntarily reported trade policies targeting women's empowerment during their TPR.

The Director-General also described the WTO's progress as an institution in addressing gender balance and inclusivity, and welcomed future initiatives on the issue. A transcript of his remarks can be accessed at: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/spra_e/spra251_e.htm.

Next Steps in the Work on Trade and Gender

- The proponents of the Buenos Aires Declaration are currently working on a report on its implementation, which will be presented to Ministers at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) in June 2020.

- The WTO is partnering with the World Bank to generate new data on how trade impacts women. The two institutions shared their preliminary results at a conference in December 2018, and plan to release the joint report in autumn of 2019.
- The WTO is launching a new research project looking at the intersections between trade, gender and the environment. A representative from the WTO Trade and Environment Division noted that women traditionally play a key role in environmental aspects—women are the first ones to be affected whenever there is an environmental issue. Women are also part of the solution for environmental degradation and pollution.
- The WTO has incorporated trade and gender into the Technical Assistance Plan. As such, the first training module on trade and gender for officials of WTO Members and observers will be included as part of the courses delivered by the Institute of Training and Technical Cooperation. The said module will explain the interaction between trade and women's economic empowerment, and will examine this question in the context of WTO rules and the different perspectives of Members as to how they can be translated into trade policies. The first training based on this module will take place as part of the LDCs' introduction course scheduled in May 2019.
- During this event, the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) launched a new initiative entitled *Empower Women, Power Trade*, which exclusively targets women traders in the LDCs with the aim of achieving gender parity in LDC trade. Under this initiative, the EIF will be supporting LDC governments to formulate and adopt gender-inclusive policies. In order to implement projects focused on women's economic empowerment, financial support of up to USD 10 Million will be made available from the EIF Trust Fund. The initiative's target by 2022 is to be able to directly empower 50,000 women by helping them secure access to markets.

Mission's Comments and Recommendation

Mission recalls that the Philippines' impetus for supporting the *Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment* at MC11 is the significant contribution of women in the Philippine economy and the importance given by the Philippines on the role of women's economic empowerment in attaining inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Even though non-supporters of the initiative are cautious about including the issue of gender in the WTO as they may give way to premature negotiations on the topic, Mission recommends the continued participation of the Philippines in succeeding seminars/workshops conducted by champions of the initiative. These seminars/workshops foster information exchange on best practices and are learning sessions on how to mainstream the concept of gender into trade, which would ultimately expand the economic benefits for society as a whole.

For the Department and TCWM's consideration.



AMB. MANUEL A.J. TEEHANKEE
Permanent Representative
/AKS