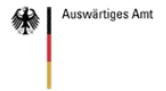


## International Conference



**30 – 31**  
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### **With A Little Help From My Friends**

### **How a Human Rights Approach Can Advance the Public Interest Agenda in the WTO**

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Switzerland**

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The human rights framework provides a useful, but under-used tool for advancing the public interest agenda in the WTO.

This paper will describe how an approach based on human rights brings with it the experience gained from years of policy-work by articulate human rights groups worldwide, rules and procedures for holding those responsible for adverse discriminatory social impacts of trade liberalization accountable. It will detail the legal and conceptual tools that have emerged in the human rights field, that applied in the trade field can help clarify and advance the agenda of public interest groups, including environmental groups. It will also describe how a human rights approach can help promote the much-needed broader definition of economic growth than that currently applied in the WTO and IFI context, a definition that explicitly counts the costs of adverse social and environmental impacts.

The paper will draw on developments in the WTO before and during the Cancún Ministerial Conference to illustrate the points it makes. Finally, it will flag some of the human rights tools that might usefully be drawn on by those working on trade and the environment, and will flag some areas that merit further research and exploration.