TRADE POLICY EXCHANGE

Concept Note

Webinar on **Trade Meets AI: Navigating in a 'Digital New World'**

Aims and Objectives:

In tandem with the work of contemporaries like Alan Turing, John McCarthy coined the term 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) in 1955 as "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines". While AI has been developed and applied across domains ever since, the 2022 launch of OpenAI's ChatGPT caused a resurgence in interest. For trade, new visions of computer-assisted negotiations, legal drafting, contracting, analysis, operations-level decision support, and automation are being introduced in earnest.

Whether for facilitating cross-border 'paperless trade' in goods or enabling the generation, marketing, and delivery of 'digital products' and services, AI is altering traditional paradigms of knowledge, work/local productivity, competitiveness, global value chains, public service design, national security, and international relations. By 2030, AI is anticipated to contribute an astounding $15 trillion to global output.

Charting a course in a 'Digital New World', trade's transformation through AI may foster an inclusive/sustainable business environment by disrupting classical assumptions of market asymmetry and the capabilities of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). However, several issues remain, especially concerns related to the 'digital divide', various risks associated with the technology, aspects of Internet and data governance, and the protection of intellectual property rights. To predict the future interplay between trade and AI, it is important to consider the different ways technology can be understood:

- **Technical** – AI can be articulated in many ways and most broadly as 'narrow' application-specific AI *versus* artificial 'general' intelligence (AGI). Other definitions refer to 'soft' *versus* 'hard' AI, where the former is 'deterministic' symbolic (*i.e*., knowledge is represented so that outputs are expected based on known inputs) and the latter is 'non-deterministic' stochastic/probabilistic (*e.g.*, data-driven machine learning). Hybrids of techniques are common.

- **Legal** – AI is defined by evolving sources of law *for* its recognition and the regulation *of* its use. Public sources include existing and proposed AI-specific instruments/treaties (*e.g.*, UNESCO, Council of Europe, *etc.*); supranational laws (*e.g.*, European Union AI Act); and national laws (*e.g.*, United States AI Bill of Rights) as well as references in preferential trade agreements (PTAs) and digital economy agreements (DEAs). Private sources have focused on AI-related principles and contracting (*e.g.*, UNCITRAL Draft provisions on automated contracting).

- **Industrial** – AI itself is 'traded' and the US International Trade Administration describes two categories: (1) goods/services that enable AI systems (*e.g.*, algorithms, data, and computational power) and (2) AI-enabled products across market verticals (*e.g.*, autonomous vehicles).

Through a 1.5-hour webinar, a panel of experts will provide insights on key questions, including:

- What is artificial intelligence (AI) and how can the technology be framed?
- What are the opportunities *for* and risks *of* AI in international trade?
- What are some emergent sources of AI-related law and how are they evolving?
- What does 'trade in AI' look like in the future?

Panellists:

- Jason Grant Allen, Director, Singapore Management University – Centre for AI and Data Governance (CAIDG)

- Craig Atkinson, Trade Development Specialist, United Nations/World Trade Organization – International Trade Centre (ITC)

- Martina Ferracane, Associate Professor, Teesside University – School of Computing, Engineering and Digital Technologies *and* Academic Manager, Digital Trade Integration Project, European University Institute – Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies

- Johannes Fritz, Chief Executive Officer, St. Gallen Endowment for Prosperity for Through Trade – Global Trade Alert/Digital Policy Alert

- Kholofelo Kugler, Counsel, Advisory Centre on WTO Law *and* Doctoral Fellow, Trade Law 4.0 Project (Trade Policy Exchange Co-founder)

- Marília Maciel, Head of Digital Commerce and Internet Policy, DiploFoundation

Moderator:

- Mira Burri, Professor of International Economic Law/Internet Law, University of Lucerne – Faculty of Law *and* Principal Investigator, Trade Law 4.0 Project

Convener:

- Nicolas Köhler-Suzuki, Associate Researcher, Jacques Delors Institute *and* Trade Policy Advisor, International Trade Intelligence (Trade Policy Exchange Co-founder)

When:

Friday, April 19, 2024

Greenwich Mean Time (08h00) | Central European Time (09h00) | Singapore Standard Time (15h00)

Where:

Zoom webinar (maximum 500 participants), additional YouTube live stream if more than 500 participants. The event will be archived on the Trade Policy Exchange YouTube account.

Target Audience:

A global audience of policymakers, business associations, think tanks, academics, and non-governmental organisations.