

Lothar Ehring, Senior Expert in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Trade

## WTO dispute settlement: from a Zenith into the Abyss?

Friday, 13 December 2019

15.00-18.00

Silva Casa Auditorium, World Trade Institute, University of Bern  
Hallerstrasse 6, 3012 Bern, Switzerland[More Info](#) 

### Brief description

11 December 2019 will enter into the history of the multilateral trading system as the fracture point marking the end of binding WTO dispute settlement as we have known it since 1 January 1995. What will happen, as the Appellate Body will no longer be able to hear new appeals and all new and many pending WTO disputes will henceforth be in limbo? Ironically, the recent past and the present feature many WTO disputes on most fundamental questions of trade law and in part have already generated outstanding and important rulings. The three-hour seminar will address a selection of these questions, with an opportunity also for participants to raise their own points of interest. Among the issues covered are also: the national security exception (GATT Article XXI), the US-China trade war and dispute (DS543), with fundamental questions on jurisdiction and the scope of GATT Article XX, non-discrimination at regional level (Canada - Wine DS537), and the rise of bilateral dispute settlement.

### Biography

Lothar Ehring is an official of the Directorate-General for Trade of the European Commission, where he currently serves in the Legal Unit, after returning from the European Commission's Support Group for Ukraine to which he was seconded 2014-2016. Before that, he served as the Assistant to the Deputy Director-General responsible for multilateral trade affairs, legal affairs, as well as trade defence instruments and bilateral trade relations with North America, Europe and its neighbours and Central Asia. Until 2009, Lothar Ehring served in the Unit that is responsible for Legal Aspects of Trade Policy where he advised on WTO legal matters, handled a number of WTO disputes and negotiated the reform of the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding for the European Union. Prior to his appointment to the European Commission, Lothar Ehring briefly worked as Legal Affairs Officer in the Legal Affairs Division and the Appellate Body Secretariat of the World Trade Organization in Geneva on dispute settlement cases. He graduated in law from the University of Passau in Germany, holds the German qualification for the judicial office and a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University.