

Edwini Kessie, Director of the Agriculture and Commodities Division at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

New Developments on Regional Integration

Wednesday, 15 May 2019

15.00-18.00

Silva Casa Auditorium, World Trade Institute, University of Bern
Hallerstrasse 6, 3012 Bern, Switzerland

More Info 

For PhD students: This lecture in law is eligible as part of the PhD seminar series.

Brief description

This seminar will focus on the law of regional integration both from a multilateral and regional perspective. It will cover the substantive rules of WTO relating to regional trade agreements, namely Article XXIV of the GATT 1994, Article V of the GATS and the Enabling Clause, and consider relevant WTO jurisprudence on the scope of these provisions as well as the interface between regionalism and multilateralism. Contemporary issues driving the initiation and conclusion of regional trade agreements such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the United States-Mexico-Canada Free Trade Agreement (USMCA), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) and the Continental Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) will be analysed. The WTO-plus and WTO-extra provisions in these agreements will be examined to determine whether they actually enhance market access and provide legitimate reasons for their conclusion. With the paralysis at the WTO, are we likely to see a surge in the initiation and conclusion of regional trade agreements? The seminar will also discuss what the response of the WTO should be with the proliferation of these regional trade agreements. Will they strengthen or undermine the multilateral trading system and make it difficult to resurrect the rule-making function of the WTO.

Biography

Edwini Kessie is the Director of the Agriculture and Commodities Division at the World Trade Organization (WTO). Previously, he was the Chief Trade Adviser to the Pacific Island Countries and Chief Executive Officer of the Office of the Chief Trade Adviser located in Port Villa, Vanuatu from June 2012 to May 2017. Prior to that, Kessie had been a staff member of the WTF since 1995, where worked in different Divisions including the Council and Trade Negotiations Committee Division, Development Division and the Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation. His principle areas of interest are regional integration, agriculture, trade and development, and dispute settlement. He holds a doctorate degree in Law from the University of Technology Sydney, a master's degree in Law from the University of Toronto and University of Brussels, as well as a bachelor's degree in Law from the University of Ghana.