

## Press Release – 6 March 2012

### **SECO and WTI welcome two new partners to their joint project on Regional Competence Centres for Trade Law and Policy**

***SECO funds the creation of two further regional knowledge hubs on trade regulation and policy with an additional 1 million CHF grant to strengthen institutional, research and teaching capacity in Indonesia and Chile***

The **Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)** and the **World Trade Institute (WTI)** of the **University of Bern** are delighted to announce the expansion of their cutting-edge academic cooperation project with leading institutions in developing countries. The comprehensive, four-year trade capacity building project, entitled *Institutional and Capacity Building for Academic Training and Research Centres on Trade Law and Policy in Developing Countries: Peru, South Africa, Vietnam*, was launched in early summer of 2010. The project aims at creating a global network of regional knowledge hubs and competence centres in the field of international trade regulation in developing countries. The project does so by better connecting each of the now five research communities in the project, promoting trans-regional research and mutual learning in areas of common policy interest. The project's founding partners are the Mandela Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg, South Africa), the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (Lima, Peru), and the Foreign Trade University (Hanoi, Vietnam).

The **University of Pelita Harapan (UPH)**, Indonesia's leading private university located in Jakarta joins the project as a full member, with cooperation foreseen across the full range of capacity-strengthening outputs pursued under the project (e.g. curriculum development, promotion of the mobility of students and faculty/researchers, institutional strengthening, joint research). Anchored in the university's law faculty, the integration of UPH and its proximity to the seat of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) should strengthen the regional orientation of project delivery in South-East Asia. It also offers an excellent platform with which to build strong academic and research links with Vietnam's Foreign Trade University.

The project also welcomes the **University of Chile**, one of Latin America's leading institutions of higher learning and Chile's top-ranked public university, as an associate member. A current holder of a WTO Academic Chair with a highly regarded existing Masters program on trade policy and international strategies, the University's Institute of International Studies will anchor collaborative efforts in Chile, with primary emphasis placed on a range of research outputs, including through joint activities with the Santiago-based United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). As with UPH in South-East Asia, the addition of a leading partner in Latin America should allow important regional synergies to be reaped between the University of Chile and the project's full partner in the region, the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru.

### **New Project Partners**

**Indonesia:** Universitas Perita Harapan, Tangerang, Jakarta. See <http://www.uph.edu/>

**Chile:** Universidad de Chile , Santiago de Chile, See <http://www.iei.uchile.cl>

### **Existing Project Partners**

**Peru:** Pontifica Universidad Catolica del Peru, in Lima. See <http://www.pucp.edu.pe>

**South Africa:** The Mandela Institute, School of Law, University of the Witwatersrand, in Johannesburg. See <http://www.wits.ac.za/mandelainstitute/11052/mandelainstitute.html>

**Vietnam:** Foreign Trade University, in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. See <http://en.ftu.edu.vn>

### **World Trade Institute, University of Bern**

Founded in 1999, the World Trade Institute (WTI) at the University of Bern is one of the world's leading institutions of advanced learning in the field of trade regulation. It is involved in graduate training, research and advisory services. Its flagship programme is the Master of International Law and Economics (MILE). The WTI also offers Summer Academy programs in Bern and Honk Kong (on Intellectual Property-related matters in association with the Chinese University of Hong Kong), Distance Learning Programmes in cooperation with the United Nations Institute on Training and Research (UNITAR), and tailor-made courses. Since 2005, the WTI hosts the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) on Trade Regulation, a 12 year project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, involving more than 50 projects and a global network of 80 researchers. For further information, please contact Pierre Sauvé, Deputy Managing Director and Director of Studies, at [pierre.sauve@wti.org](mailto:pierre.sauve@wti.org) or visit the following websites: [www.wti.org](http://www.wti.org) and [www.nccr-trade.org](http://www.nccr-trade.org)

### **State Secretariat for Economic Affairs / SECO**

SECO is the Swiss Federal Government's centre of expertise for all core issues relating to economic policy. Its aim is to ensure sustainable economic growth by putting in place the necessary regulatory and economic policy conditions. The Economic Cooperation and Development Division of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO, together with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), is responsible for planning and implementing cooperation with developing countries, Eastern European and Central Asian states

(transition assistance) and the ten new EU states (enlargement contribution). The aim of this cooperation is to improve the living conditions of the population and to reduce disparities between countries. SECO is focusing its projects on the promotion of sustainable economic growth based on a market economy and on the integration of partner countries into the world economy. For further information, please contact Martin Peter ([martin.peter@seco.admin.ch](mailto:martin.peter@seco.admin.ch)).