

HIGH LEVEL ADVISORY GROUP CONSTITUTED FOR TRADE

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Ministry of Commerce & Industry

High Level Advisory Group Constituted for Trade

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The Minister of Commerce & Industry, Suresh Prabhu, has approved the constitution of a High Level Advisory Group (HLAG) to make recommendations for identifying and pursuing opportunities and for addressing challenges in order to find a way forward in the contemporary global trade scenario.

The HLAG will consider ways for boosting India's share and importance in global merchandise and services trade, managing pressing bilateral trade relations and mainstreaming new age policy making.

The terms of reference (ToR) of the HLAG are to examine the prevailing international trade dynamics, including, but not confined to, the rising protectionist tendencies, especially on the part of major economies, non-engagement by some countries on outstanding trade negotiation issues and commitments, including the Doha Development Agenda, and their insistence on pursuing negotiating mandates, in many cases prematurely and without efforts, to build consensus and common understanding.

On new issues and in light of this examination, the HLAG will suggest a way forward for India, taking into account its interests and sensitivities, and provide options for a balanced approach for the global community to build on achievements thus far, in creating a conducive global trade framework and move forward in a harmonious and consensual manner that is acceptable to the larger global community.

The Group may consider possible approaches and suggest a pragmatic framework for India's future engagement in international trade, and the manner in which it can play a proactive and constructive role in working with the community of Nations in exploring and building consensus on resolving emergent trade related issues.

Dr. Surjit S. Bhalla, Director of Oxus Research and Investments will chair the HLAG. The other members of the Group are S. Jaishankar, former Foreign Secretary, Rajeev Kher, former Commerce Secretary and Member, Competition Appellate Tribunal, Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Advisor, Government of India, Adil Zainulbhai, Chairman, Quality Council of India, Dr. Harsha Vardhana Singh, former DDG, WTO, Dr. Shekhar Shah, DG, NCAER, Dr. Vijay Chauthaiwale, Foreign Policy Advisor, Dr. Pulok Ghosh, IIM Bangalore, Jayant Dasgupta, former Ambassador of India to the WTO, Rajiv K Luthra of Luthra & Luthra and Chandrajit Banerjee, DG, CII.

The HLAG will meet regularly over the next two months and make specific implementable recommendations in light of the ToR, including on each of the areas, to facilitate the formulation of future trade policies. The HLAG may invite special invitees whose inputs may be considered

necessary. Centre for WTO Studies (CWTOS), New Delhi shall provide the secretariat to the HLAG.

MM/ SB

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