

## Mainland China Judges from the LLM Programme Attend an Academic Seminar at the World Trade Organization Headquarters

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14 Chinese judge students with Professor Wang (in the middle)

On 13 December 2010, **Professor Wang Guiguo**, Dean of the School of Law, **Assistant Professor Rajesh Sharma**, and fourteen Chinese judges travelled to Geneva, Switzerland to visit the headquarters of the World Trade Organization (WTO), located next to beautiful Lac Léman (Lake Geneva). The Mainland China junior judges are currently students of the School of Law's Master of Laws (LLM) programme, an innovative and pioneering collaboration between the School of Law and the National Judges College of the Supreme People's Court of China.

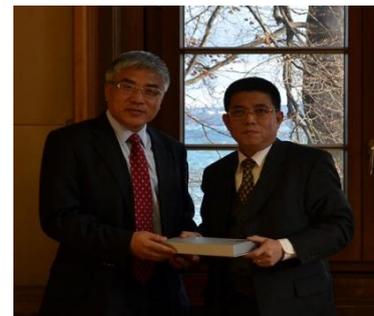
The Chinese judge students were warmly received by top WTO officials including **Mr Harsha Singh**, **Mr Tang Xiaobing**, **Mr Shish Priyardshi** and **Mr Ricardo Ramírez Hernández**. As part of a one-day academic visit to the WTO, the group had in-depth discussions on several important WTO topics, including the role and performance of China in the context of WTO laws.

**Mr Harsha Singh**, Deputy Director-General of the WTO, led a stimulating discussion on the "Current States of Doha Round of Negotiation". This topic is of increasing interest to both scholars and those involved in the WTO negotiations. Mr Singh provided a thorough introduction to the Doha Round of Negotiation including its background, development and current obstacles. One of these challenges is reconciling economic interests with political reality with respect to multilateral trade arrangement between WTO nations. Despite these challenges, Mr Singh expressed his belief that the next Doha Round will yield positive results.



Mr Harsha Singh and the Chinese judge students.

Following Mr Singh, **Mr. Tang Xiaobing**, Counsellor in Market Access Division, focused on “China in the WTO” by presenting the historical background and development of WTO, its contractual nature, and his personal experience on the subject. He discussed his own observations on the challenges and opportunities faced by the Chinese administration, legislation and judiciary in a multilateral trade system.



*Mr Tang Xiaobing (right) and Professor Wang*



*Mr Ricardo Ramirez Hernandez (right) and Professor Wang*

The Mainland China junior judges then participated in a round-table seminar with **Mr Ricardo Ramírez Hernández**, one of the seven judges of the Appellate Body of the WTO, which gives final judgment in WTO disputes. The round-table seminar, titled “Functioning of Appellate Body of the WTO from an Insider Perspective”, was an in-depth, interactive discussion of the selection process of the Appellate Body judges, the recognition of free trade agreements (FTAs), and how China handles the increasing number of WTO disputes.

Finally, **Mr Shish Priyardshi**, Director of the Development Division of the WTO, focused on the topic of “Development Dimension in the WTO Agreements in the Context of Doha Round of Negotiation”. He provided a comprehensive background on the Doha Round of negotiations, including his views on the difficulty of striking a balance between realizing trade liberalization for developed countries while also securing the legitimate interests of developing nations. He also discussed the Doha Round and their impact on international trade. He also examined the difficulties of attempting to strike a balance between the realization of free trade and economic interest for developing countries, subsidies for agricultural and textile products as well as protection of intellectual property rights for developed countries. Finally, Mr Priyardshi shared some of his insights on constructing a fair trade environment and resolving issues of fairness and equality in the existing trade system.



*Mr Shishir Priyardshi*

The judge students were attentive throughout the discussions and took initiative in asking questions of the WTO officials. Professor Wang commented “it is a fruitful and enlightening visit. The Chinese judge students, who are young and energetic, in addition to their acquired knowledge in Mainland law and common law jurisdictions, take a step forward to the frontier of globalized economics after the visit to the WTO headquarters. This ignites the Mainland judges and their colleagues to be much proactive in taking up new challenges posed by the contemporary and globalized world trade issues.”