



Bharti chairman and ICC founder and chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal speaks at the 'WTO Trade Dialogue with Business' in Geneva.

Bharti Group's chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal represented the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) delegation at the WTO 'Trade Dialogues' and led the discussion round on e-commerce at the multilateral trade policy platform.

Mittal, who is the chairman of ICC, was accompanied by incoming ICC chairman Paul Polman and new ICC secretary-general John WH Denton. The dialogues are part of the "Trade Dialogues" process, which was launched in 2016 with the support of ICC and the B20. Over 60 business leaders and policymakers from across the globe participated in the dialogues at the WTO headquarters in Geneva.

At this year's Trade Dialogues, ICC chaired discussions on e-commerce, trade and sustainable development and investment facilitation. Mittal led the discussion round on e-commerce. Following the WTO's 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires last year, groups of members have banded together in 'joint initiatives' to further global rules on these and other topics, ICC said in a statement.

"With the size of e-commerce, touching \$25 trillion, digital infrastructure is a key determinant required by SMEs in developing countries to be a part of the global value chain.

There is a need to focus on bridging the digital divide in a meaningful manner to initiate the negotiations. Without addressing the problems of SMEs in a digital environment, it will further marginalise them,” Mittal said.

Digital economy is changing the composition, nature and speed of global trade leading to policy friction and today’s trade rules reflect 20th century patterns of trade, he added. ICC served as the co-organiser of the Trade Dialogues event.

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