

WTO gives Pascal Lamy another 4 years as boss

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The World Trade Organization's 153 members approved on Thursday another four-year term for Director-General Pascal Lamy, who ran unopposed for the top job.

Lamy, a 62-year-old member of the French Socialist Party, has headed the WTO since 2005. His second term will start Sept. 1.

At a question-and-answer session with Lamy and the full membership on Wednesday, no delegate expressed an objection to Lamy's reappointment. Countries in effect gave Lamy their approval in December when they proposed no other candidate by a year-end deadline.

Lamy's leadership of the body setting the rules for global commerce has been dogged by members' failure to conclude a new global trade pact. The talks were launched in Doha, Qatar, more than seven years ago with the goal of wrapping up a deal by December 2004.

With no end in sight, the trade round will soon become the longest ever, surpassing the 1986-1994 Uruguay Round. The WTO was created in 1995 to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Before becoming WTO chief, Lamy was the European Union's trade commissioner for five years, leading the EU's efforts in several high-profile disputes against the United States and developing countries.