

The World Trade Organization (WTO) said Thursday that its latest economic indicators suggest that growth in commodity trade may slow further in the third quarter.

Its quarterly trade growth index was 95.7, indicating that global merchandise trade growth may slow down. In the last quarterly report released in May this year, the trade growth index was 96.3, and the WTO said that trade growth may still be weak.

The index is a comprehensive measure of seven trade drivers. A reading below 100 indicates that trade growth is below trend growth.

Referring to the mid-year report released in July this year, the WTO said that trade flows were hit by new restrictions at historic highs. "Tensions that lead to increased trade barriers and uncertainties pose significant downside risks to trade growth expectations," the WTO added.

The agency said the latest index continued to weaken because all sub-indices were below trend levels.

According to the WTO, the current reading of the sub-index of international air cargo and electronic components is far below the previous level, while the sub-index of automobile production and sales and agricultural raw materials seems to have rebounded at the bottom.