



Multilateralism, Regionalism and Developing Countries: Some Issues and Challenges

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Trade, multilateralism and development

- Role of trade in improving efficiency
 - trade can be an engine of growth
- GATT provided a rule-based multilateral framework for
 - conducting international trade,
 - settling trade disputes, and
 - Process of trade liberalization for reaping efficiency gains since 1947
- Succeeded by World Trade Organization in 1995

Trade, multilateralism and development

- Key principles of multilateralism
 - Non-discrimination or MFN
 - Reciprocity
 - Binding and enforceable commitments
 - Transparency
 - Safeguards
- Exceptions allowed for preferences in favour of developing countries and for regional trading arrangements
- Recognition of different levels in development and capacities of countries
- Concept of special and differential treatment (S&DT) incorporated way back in the 1960s

Rounds of Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Year	Round	Action
1947	Geneva	45,000 reductions in bilateral tariffs covering 20% of world trade.
1949	Annency, France	5,000 reductions in bilateral tariffs.
1951	Torquay, England	8,700 reductions in bilateral tariffs covering a new range of goods.
1955-56	Geneva	Reductions in bilateral tariffs.
1960-62	Dillon Round	Reductions in bilateral tariffs. EEC talks begin.
1964-67	Kennedy Round	Reductions in bilateral tariffs. Negotiation rules established.
1973-79	Tokyo Round	Reductions in bilateral tariffs. Procedures on dispute resolution, dumping and licensing.
1986-93	Uruguay Round	Additional tariff reductions. Stalemate for agricultural tariffs.
1995	WTO established	WTO replaces the GATT.
2001-	Doha Round	Christened as Doha Development Agenda; yet to be concluded.

Trade, multilateralism and development

- As a multilateral rule-based system, should be favoured by developing countries
 - Yet an uneasy relationship prevails
- Uruguay Round was a turning point
- Developing countries were required to make major commitments in trade liberalization
- Substantial obligations were placed on developing countries in new areas:
 - TRIPs, TRIMs and GATS
- Promise of market access in agriculture, textiles and clothing and GATS mode 4
 - These promises not coming through

Trade Liberalization in Developed Countries: Growing Asymmetries

- High Peak Tariffs, Tariff Escalation and Specific Duties
 - Specifically on goods exported by poor countries
- Missed opportunities for exercising comparative advantage in exporting agricultural and labour intensive industrial goods
 - EU and Sugar; IMF's study of 48% addl. Exports; USDA: \$ 60bn gain for DCs
 - Cotton
 - Textiles, clothing and leather goods: high peak tariffs and NTBs
- Resistance to open up Mode 4 under GATS
- Quotas and Non-tariff barriers, stringent environmental requirements
- Contingent Protection: Anti-dumping
- Proliferation of RTAs/FTAs

Post-UR Tariffs in Quad Countries on Select Items of Exports from Developing Countries

Product description	EU	Japan	USA	Canada
Agricultural products				
Milk (>3% fat)	113	220 ¹	66 ²	241
Milk in powder, with or without sugar	55-66	160-280 ¹	55-85 ²	243-243
Yogurt and Butter	69	300-620 ¹	63-80 ²	238-300
Cereals and Preparation	32-84	70-900	0-2	1-77
Groundnuts, shelled	0	470	132 ²	0
Cane sugar, raw and white	71-73	85-100 ¹	77-90 ²	7
Grape juice	215	30	14	10
Coffee preparations	8	130	27 ²	0
Tea preparations, essences	0	100	91 ²	0
Industrial Products				
Woven fabrics of >80% combed wool	12	8	25	14
Babies garments, knitted or croch synthetic fibres	11	22	16	18
Women's blouses and trousers knitted or croch., man-made fibres	11	9-11	32	18
Men's shirts, woven, of cotton and man made fibres	11	7	20-28	17-18
Footwear with leather uppers	6	140	10	18
Ceramic tableware, Drinking glasses etc.	8-9	0	28-29	0
<i>Source:</i> based on UNCTAD/WTO, 2000.				

Doha Development Agenda

- A new round launched in 2001 in Doha with a promise to address developmental concerns
 - Phase-out of all export subsidies on agricultural products and substantial reduction of domestic support
 - Elimination of high peak tariffs, specific duties, tariff escalation and NTBs on products of export interest to developing countries; modality for tariff reduction based on less-than-full-reciprocity

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