The WTO and the Doha Round

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Agenda

• What is WTO?
• WTO: a brief history
• WTO: principles, functions and structure
• Doha Development Agenda
What is WTO
WTO is…

- A **rules-based** organization set up by **governments** to administer **multilateral trade agreements** (MTAs) and perform a number of other important functions

- Members: 160 Members and 24 acceding countries
- Secretariat staff: around 700 people
- Director-General: Mr. Roberto Azevêdo (Brazil)
- Location: Geneva, Switzerland
WTO is a platform to negotiate trade deals
WTO is a “court” to resolve trade disputes
WTO is a forum for trade and development
WTO membership
Agenda

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WTO: A brief history

- From 1948 to 1994: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)
  - 23 contracting parties
  - Rules with a “provisional” character
  - Negotiations were organized under “Rounds” (8 during the GATT)

- 1995: **World Trade Organization** (WTO)
## WTO: A brief history

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WTO: A brief history

Establishment of WTO

- GATT: on a provisional basis, no institutional framework
- WTO: legal framework, permanent organization
WTO: A brief history

Larger scope

- GATT: trade in goods
- WTO: trade in **goods** and **services** and TRIPS (intellectual property)

Enhanced rules

- Dispute settlement
- Trade Policy Review
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WTO Principles

No discrimination

– Most Favoured Nation (MFN)
– National Treatment (NT)
WTO Principles

Stability & Predictability
– Through binding commitments
WTO Principles

Transparency

– National trade policy reviewed regularly
– Monitoring of protectionist measures
– Specific measures and laws notified
WTO Principles

Encourage development
– Assisting developing countries to increase their participation in the multilateral trading system
WTO main functions

• Administering and implementing **trade agreements**
• Forum for multilateral **trade negotiations**
• **Dispute settlement**
• Monitoring national **trade policy**
• **Co-operation** with the IMF and the World Bank to ensure coherence in global economic policy-making
WTO Structure

Ministerial Conference – every 2 years

General Council
  – Dispute Settlement Body
  – Trade Policy Review Body

Councils
  – Council for Trade in Goods
  – Council for Trade in Services
  – Council for TRIPS

Committees and other subsidiary bodies
Ministerial Conferences

- **Singapore** December 1996
- **Geneva** May 1998
- **Seattle** November - December 1999
- **Doha** November 2001 - Doha Development Agenda
- **Cancun** September 2003
- **Hong Kong, China** December 2005
- **Geneva** November – December 2009
- **Geneva** December 2011
- **Bali** December 2013
Agenda

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Doha Development Agenda

• The 9th WTO Trade Round launched in Doha, Qatar in November 2001
• Officially the longest round of multilateral trade negotiations – 13 years and probably counting
• Development at its core – needs & interests of developing countries at the centre
• Members converged on the potential of the Round to deliver on growth and development
The Bali package

- Agreement on Trade Facilitation
- Agriculture
- Cotton
- Development and LDC issues
Thank you!

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