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**Bargaining over the Doha Development Agenda:
Coalitions in the World Trade Organization**

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Bargaining over the Doha Development Agenda: Coalitions in the World Trade Organization

Informal coalitions in the World Trade Organization (WTO) – be they among developed countries or developing countries – go back to the days of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Today, however, far more countries are willing to invest diplomatic resources into the creation and maintenance of coalitions; additionally, at least some coalitions involving developing countries have acquired unprecedented influence and bargaining power that goes beyond the sum of resources of the individual members.

Coalitions in the GATT had formerly presented an area that received only limited academic attention.¹ This neglect lay partly in the fact that coalitions in the GATT were informal; their lack of institutionalization made them much harder to trace. And perhaps more importantly, few coalitions in the GATT had convincingly demonstrated that they made a significant difference to outcomes. Developing countries, even while operating in coalitions, had stood on the sidelines in the GATT, choosing to free-ride on the concessions that were exchanged and demanding exceptions for themselves in the form of special and differential (S&D) treatment. They managed to cause some minor, occasional irritation to the developed world in the process, but there were no major North-South battles in the GATT that compared to the North-South stalemate in the UNCTAD and the United Nations General Assembly. This situation has changed radically in recent times. Far too much is at stake in the WTO, and developing countries have emerged as major actors on its stage. As the participation of developing countries has increased in the WTO, so has the prominence of their coalitions and their effectiveness in trade negotiations. Any doubts that policy-makers or academics might have had about the utility of bargaining coalitions as a critical instrument for the weak were firmly demonstrated at the Cancun Ministerial Conference, September 2003, where the G20 and the G90 coalitions threatened to block consensus unless their collective concerns were addressed. Contrary to predictions that these coalitions would collapse in the endgame in the face of pressures and side-deals for their members, they held

¹ Exceptions to this were Diana Tussie, *The Less Developed Countries and the World Trading System: A Challenge to the GATT*, London: Francis Pinter, 1987; John Whalley ed., *Developing Countries and the World Trading System, Vols. 1 and 2*, London: Macmillan, 1989; Diana Tussie and David Glover eds., *Developing Countries in World Trade: Policies and Bargaining Strategies*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995; John Odell, *Negotiating the World Economy*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000; Amrita Narlikar, *International Trade and Developing Countries: Bargaining Coalitions in the GATT & WTO*, London: Routledge, 2003.

together. The Ministerial ended in stalemate. If such deadlocks are to be prevented in the future, and the Doha Development Agenda successfully negotiated, bargaining coalitions of developing countries will have to be taken seriously.

In this paper, I present an overview and analysis of bargaining coalitions in the WTO. The first section explains the reasons behind the formation of coalitions, and problems that countries encounter in this process. In the second section, I analyze the evolution of coalitions involving developing countries from the GATT to the WTO. The third section presents an overview of the coalitions that have been active in negotiating the DDA. The fourth and concluding section examines the influence of these coalitions and implications for the trade negotiation process.

1. Definition, Rationale, and Problems

Broadly defined, a coalition is “a set of governments that defend a common position in a negotiation through explicit coordination.”² The joint defence of a negotiating position is likely to enhance the legitimacy of a proposal in majoritarian and consensus-based institutions, which explains why even developed countries with large markets seek allies in the WTO. For developing countries with small markets and limited diplomatic resources, coalitions are often the only instrument that they have to improve their bargaining position. The three, and perhaps most important, of these benefits are outlined below.

First, small countries might fear reprisals should they attempt to block a proposal advanced by developed countries when acting on their own; through collective action, they can increase the costs of reprisals for developed countries and also emphasize the legitimacy of their claims. Second, and equally important, is the role of coalitions in facilitating division of labour and information exchange among developing countries. Many representatives from developing countries argue that it is very difficult for them to keep pace with the flurry of meetings in the WTO due to the small numbers of their staff and limited resources. Even mere attendance of these multiple meetings is challenging, let alone participation in an informed manner. Coalitions facilitate a research and information exchange among members, and sometimes even a division of labour as individual members attend particular meetings and are subsequently able to share information about the proceedings with other allies who were absent from the meeting.

² John Odell, *Developing Countries and the Trade Negotiation Process*, forthcoming in John Odell ed., *Negotiating Trade: Developing Countries in the WTO and NAFTA*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

This sharing of information is particularly important in a member-driven organization like the WTO, where the onus of effective participation and negotiation falls on the members themselves. Given how high the stakes are in the Doha Development Agenda, it is unsurprising that developing countries have begun to take coalitions more seriously than ever before. Finally, by cultivating allies alternative to their chief opponents in the multilateral trade negotiation process, developing countries improve their BATNA, that is the Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement, and can thereby pose at least some credible threats to block.³

While the gains from belonging to a coalition are fairly obvious today, the costs of coalition formation and maintenance continue to be high. Collective action – seldom easy to organize – is rendered even more difficult given that free trade is a “near-public good”;⁴ free-riders cannot be easily denied the hard-won gains that other countries have negotiated under the Most Favoured nation rule. Once formed, the risk of defection from a coalition persists. In the case of developing countries, this risk is especially high given their individual vulnerabilities to pressures from developed countries across issue areas. This idea is neatly captured in Robert Jervis’s representation of Rousseau’s Stag Hunt:

“If the failure to eat that day – be it venison or rabbit – means that he will starve, a person is likely to defect in the Stag Hunt even if he has a high level of trust in his colleagues. Defection is especially likely if the others are also starving or they know that he is.”⁵

Even within the sub-set of coalitions involving developing countries, some are more easy to fragment than others. Coalitions that logroll a very broad range of demands and priorities risk having their members bought off through side-deals. Coalitions that use a strict distributive strategy also tend to attract more divide-and-rule tactics from the outside party.⁶ The obvious solution to this problem of fragmentation would appear to be twofold: build coalitions that have internal coherence (e.g. through an issue-specific focus that is shared by all members) and use an integrative or mixed strategy rather than

³ Note that this same idea underlay attempts at South-South cooperation in the 1970s, and provides at least one of the motivations behind new alliances like the IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa initiative) and other regional agreements.

⁴ Joseph Stiglitz, quoted in Valeria Constantini, Ricardo Crescenzi, Fabrizio de Filippis, and Luca Salvatici, *Bargaining Coalitions in the Agricultural Negotiations of the Doha Round*, Working Paper CTN 99.2005, Fondazione eni Enrico Mattei, July 2005, downloaded from <http://www.feem.it/NR/rdonlyres/9F72ADA9-FC3F-4574-83E8-9998AD046670/1665/9905.pdf>; viewed on 3 October 2005.

⁵ Robert Jervis, *Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma*, *World Politics*, 30 (20), pp. 167-214.

⁶ Amrita Narlikar and John Odell, *The Strict Distributive Strategy for a Bargaining Coalition: The Like-Minded Group in the World Trade Organization*, in John Odell ed., *Negotiating Trade*, 2006.

a distributive one. However, this solution generates another set of problems that is specific to issue-based coalitions.

Coalitions that enjoy internal coherence by focusing on a very specific issue area can be torn apart by other sectoral interests within the country that pull the negotiating government in another direction to gain concessions on a different issue-area. Spotting this problem in the 1980s, Colleen Hamilton and John Whalley wrote:

“...since countries typically wish to balance their positions across all the issues that are of interest to them, they need to reserve some degree of flexibility to allow for changes of positions on various issues as part of the negotiation process. Such changes may well be inconsistent with agreements that countries have entered into in order to join the coalition. These coalitions are, therefore, very difficult to maintain.”⁷

A part of this problem can be countered by including only those countries in the group which have economies with minimal diversification, so that the issue addressed by the coalition overwhelmingly dominates all other sectors of the country's economy. However, single issue-focused economies are often also small ones (e.g. banana and tourism exports, to somewhat caricature the Caribbean), leading to a new difficulty. Coalitions involving such economies may be less prone to fragmentation due to diverse interests pulling in different directions, but they also often lack sufficient external weight.

What we have then is a circular problem. Coalitions of developing countries are especially prone to fragmentation. To correct this, developing countries could build more issue-focused coalitions, but very issue-specific coalitions lack sufficient weight. To improve their collective weight, they could involve other larger countries. But larger countries often have diversified economies and multiple interest groups pulling in different directions, rendering the issue-based coalition difficult to sustain, and prone to fragmentation, bringing us back to the original problem. The next section shows how, through adaptation and learning within the institution,⁸ many developing countries have learnt to grapple with this problem.

2. The Process of Adaptation

⁷ Colleen Hamilton and John Whalley, Coalitions in the Uruguay Round, *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, 125 (3), 1989, pp. 547-56.

⁸ On learning and adaptation, see Breslauer, George W. and Philip E. Tetlock (1991). *Learning in US and Soviet Foreign Policy*, Boulder: Westview Press; for an application of these ideas to developing countries in the GATT and the WTO, Andrew Hurrell and Amrita Narlikar, *The New Politics of Confrontation: Developing Countries at Cancun and Beyond*, work in progress, 2005.

Bargaining coalitions can be classified along two ends of a spectrum: bloc-type coalitions and issue-based alliances. The two differ from each other in two significant ways. First, the cement binding the bloc-type coalitions is a set of ideas and identity that go beyond the immediately instrumental; the latter, as the name suggests, are bound together by a more focused and instrumental aim. Second, blocs usually bring together like-minded countries, which adopt joint positions across issues and over time; issue-based alliances, in contrast, often dissipate after the specific goal is achieved. Bloc-type coalitions successfully address the problem of minimal external weight (discussed in the previous section), but also run the risk of fragmentation as they lack internal coherence. In contrast, issue-specific coalitions enjoy internal coherence, but are difficult to sustain when large diversified economies with multiple sectoral interest groups are involved; when they are restricted to smaller economies sharing the same interest, they end up sacrificing external weight.⁹

Most coalitions of developing countries, in the GATT as well as other organizations like the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, took the form of blocs until the 1980s. Behind these blocs lay the idea of the Third World, a shared history in colonialism, and a new ideology of development that looked towards Import Substituted Industrialization and self-sufficiency rather than export-oriented growth and free markets. These groupings – such as the Informal Group of Developing Countries in the GATT and the G77 in the UNCTAD – combined a range of developing countries of different sizes and from different regions, took defensive negotiating positions and sought Special and Differential Treatment. The G10 coalition, which emerged in the GATT in the pre-negotiation phase of the Uruguay Round, typified this traditional, Third World-ist bloc-type diplomacy. The coalition, led by Brazil and India, opposed the launch of a new trade round, and was even more vociferous in its opposition to the inclusion of services in any trade negotiations within the GATT. It was equally opposed to the inclusion of the other “new issues” of TRIPs and TRIMs, and refused to make a compromise on any of these issues until its demands of standstill and rollback of non-tariff barriers were met. Amidst this grand-standing, the coalition also refused to engage with any other coalitions, and turned down overtures from other developing countries to engage in shared research initiatives or draft joint proposals. The successes of the group were limited. Not only was a new round launched, but services

⁹ Amrita Narlikar, *International Trade and Developing Countries: Bargaining Coalitions in the GATT & WTO*, London: Routledge, 2003.

were included within the negotiating mandate (initially placed on a dual-track, but subsequently included as part of the Single Undertaking).

In contrast to the G10, and working almost simultaneously with it, was the much more successful informal grouping of Café au Lait. The Café au Lait began as a modest research initiative led by Ambassador Felipe Jaramillo of Colombia that came to encompass developed and developing countries. Its focus was explicitly on services. After some initial meetings of the G10 and the Jaramillo group, the two groupings parted ways. Eventually the Café au Lait came to include over 48 countries, and the draft proposal by this group provided the basis for the Punta del Este declaration that launched the Uruguay Round with services within it.

Taking heed of these contrasting experiences, as well as other international economic pressures at the time and conversion to economic liberalization, developing countries began to experiment with issue-based coalitions from the mid-1980s with a more proactive agenda. The successes of the Cairns Group seemed to vindicate the swing towards issue-based coalitions even further. Some of these coalitions included both developed and developing countries, recognized the importance of research, showed willingness to use more mixed strategies rather than hard-line distributive ones, and were above all marked by internal coherence deriving from their issue-specific focus. But the results that these coalitions yielded were mixed.

Most issue-based coalitions displayed minimal influence and short lives, and typified the problems that were highlighted earlier. Countries would join multiple issue-based coalitions, producing a spaghetti bowl of cross-cutting loyalties and frequent defections. Those that were able to overcome this problem turned out to be very small groups of small countries with minimal impact, and also eventually collapsed without achieving their intended goals. Developing countries had paid a high price for their knee-jerk infatuation with issue-based coalitions that soon became evident in the imbalances of the Uruguay Round agreements negotiated under their auspices.

Based on the limited successes of both pure blocs and pure issue-based coalitions, and adapting to them, developing countries began to mix their coalition strategies by the time of the Doha Ministerial. By the time of the Cancun Ministerial, the new coalition type had fully emerged.

Five new features typify these coalitions. First, learning from the failures of the issue-based coalitions of the late 1980s-early 1990s, developing countries began to realize that often something more than a very narrow issue-specific interest would be needed to

unite members and to facilitate the sustainability of the coalition. Additionally, disillusionment with Uruguay Round agreements was high, and many developing countries felt that they had been short-changed. As a result, many developing countries came together in coalitions that were reminiscent of the old bloc-type. Often membership was restricted to developing countries,¹⁰ and coalitions were united by either a regional identity (e.g. African Group, Africa-Caribbean-Pacific or the ACP group, and Caricom), or a shared grievance deriving from lower levels of development (e.g. the Least Developed Countries or LDC group; and the group of Small and Vulnerable Economies) or shared dissatisfaction with some of the provisions of the Uruguay Round agreements (e.g. the Like-Minded Group or LMG on the problems of implementation for developing countries, the TRIPs and Public Health Coalition in the inadequacies of the provisions of TRIPs on access to medicine in developing countries; the G20 and G33 on agriculture; the G90 which brought together the African, ACP, and the LDC groupings on a broad range of concerns including Special and Differential Treatment). Most of these coalitions successfully addressed the problem of sustainability as they were united by ideas that went beyond the immediate, narrow, sector-specific interest; they were also able to address the problem of minimal external weight.

Second, deriving from the advantages learnt by the Café au Lait and the Cairns Group, these coalitions often concentrated on a specific grievance, even while being united by a bigger idea and changing the focus once the particular grievance had been addressed. For instance, the LMG emerged as a coalition at the 1996 Singapore Ministerial and focused on opposing an inclusion of the four “Singapore issues” (transparency in government procurement, competition policy, trade facilitation, and trade and investment), but focused on the problems of implementation in the run-up to the Doha Ministerial of 2001. Similarly, the ACP grouping at the Doha Ministerial invested its energies into lobbying for the waiver that was required for its trade preferences from the EU under the Cotonou Agreement to continue; by the time of the Cancun Ministerial, the ACP had become a proactive constituent of the G90 highlighting the broader problems of under-development and poverty that its members faced. The deliberate focus on a particular issue-area at a particular time lent greater coherence to these coalitions than ever enjoyed by their bloc-type predecessors.

¹⁰ The Friends of Fish group at the Doha Ministerial was one of the few exceptions to this; the Cairns Group continues to be another although it has been far less active or influential in comparison to its days in the Uruguay Round.

Third, learning from their experiences in the Uruguay Round, most coalitions of developing countries invest considerable effort in research and information exchange among members. Representatives from developing countries stress such an information exchange as a primary benefit of belonging to a coalition. And true to these claims, draft proposals from coalitions usually show a qualitative change from the rhetorical positions and laundry-list of demands that their predecessors had made prior to the Uruguay Round.

Fourth, while the coalitions in themselves have recorded a change in recent times, equally interesting is the relationship among these coalitions. In the drama that had surrounded the G10 and the Café au Lait in the Uruguay Round, the relationship among coalitions (even those involving developing countries) was conflictual. In remarkable contrast to this were the coalitions at Cancun, in which an explicit effort was made to coordinate the positions among the different coalitions involving developing countries. “Alliances of Sympathy” emerged; when coalitions found that they could not support the position of their counterparts, they made an effort to at least not openly contradict and oppose each other.

Finally, the blocs and issue-based alliances of the pre-Uruguay and Uruguay Round were entirely inter-state coalitions. In some issue areas, especially in the developed countries, particular interest groups would try to influence the positions of their governments. These positions in turn would eventually permeate into the negotiation process as well as coalition alignments. But the role of civil society in all these developments was minimal. Developing countries remained largely suspicious of any civil society involvement until the mid-late 1990s. However, by the time of the Doha Ministerial, they had recognized that they could find influential allies in Northern NGOs over some issues. The TRIPs and public health coalition at Doha demonstrated the utility of such alliances most visibly.¹¹ At Cancun too, several NGOs came out with drafts supporting the positions of the G20. Additionally, in coalitions as well as individually, many developing countries began to consult more frequently with NGOs as well as international organizations and think-tanks, making use of their research initiatives in particular areas as well as relying on them for enhancing the legitimacy and public support for their position.

¹¹ John Odell and Susan Sell, *Reframing the Issue: The WTO Coalition on Intellectual Property and Public Health*, 2001, in Odell ed., *Negotiating Trade*, 2006.

3. Negotiating the Doha Development Agenda

The coalitions that began negotiating the DDA have shared most or all of the features discussed in the previous section. The coalitions themselves are too numerous to allow a full and detailed discussion in this paper. However, in this section I discuss some of the prominent coalitions involving developing countries in the context of the DDA. I have divided the discussion into three sections to correspond with the three phases of the DDA so far.

Phase 1: Doha Ministerial Conference, 2001

It is noteworthy that in the run-up to the Doha Ministerial Conference, hoping to influence the agenda-setting process, many new coalitions of developing countries emerged. Many developing countries had, in fact, opposed the launch of a new round; through a new round, it was feared that the developed countries would end up making developing countries pay twice over for the concessions that they had already paid for through the Uruguay Round bargain (from which they had still not accrued the promised benefits due to the problems of implementation). Some accounts present considerable anecdotal evidence of the coercive tactics that were used to bring dissidents in line with the “consensus” on the launch of the Doha Development agenda;¹² interviews conducted by this author also reveal some evidence of such pressures. That said, however, within the (significant) constraints of the pressure to the launch a new trade round, developing countries were able to exercise considerable influence in the making of the DDA.

The impact of coalitions of developing countries is evident in several sections of the Doha Declarations. The attention that the main declaration pays to the concerns of the small economies (paragraph 35, 36) and the LDCs (paragraphs 42, 43, and references throughout) is a product of the lobbying efforts of the Small and Vulnerable Economies Group and the LDC group respectively. The Decision on the waiver for the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement was a direct result of the efforts of the ACP and African groups, while the breakthrough Declaration on TRIPs and Public Health would not have been agreed to had it not been for the TRIPs and public health coalition. Even the LMG, though it had lost on its signature issue of preventing the launch of a new round until its concerns were met, got paragraph 12 in the main declaration as well as the Decision on Implementation Related Issues and Concerns. Further, through the collective of many of

¹² Fatoumata Jawara and Aileen Kwa, *Behind the scenes at the WTO: The Real World of International Trade Negotiations*, London: Zed Books, 2003.

these coalitions, S&D finds frequent occurrence through the declaration. Mention of development occurs not just in the name of the new round, but as a quick word check suggests, variations of the word “develop” (including development, developing, develop) appear 206 times through the declarations. These are no insignificant gains.

It is important however to bear in mind that the declarations do little more than define the mandate and suggest best endeavour practices to facilitate development. What modalities are adopted, how the negotiations actually proceed, and what developing countries actually end up with in the process is still up for grabs.

Phase II: Cancun Ministerial, 2003

At least some of the coalitions that were active at the Cancun Ministerial had already appeared at the Doha, if not before. These included the LMG, the African Group, the ACP, the LDC, and the Small and Vulnerable Economies. All these coalitions opposed the inclusion of the Singapore issues, emphasized the importance of S&D; the ACP, LDC, and African groups were additionally concerned about the erosion of preferences. The Cotton Group emerged at Cancun itself, and found support in the other coalitions as well as NGOs; the Core Group emerged at the same time to resist the inclusion of the Singapore issues. However, agriculture was the issue over which swords were drawn between the North and the South. Leading developing countries on agriculture was the G20.

The G20 arose as a reaction to the EU-US text on agriculture, which was seen as highly inadequate by developing countries with an aggressive and proactive liberalizing interest in agriculture as well as those with a defensive, protective interest.¹³ Brazil and India drafted the initial text together, and were joined in their counter-proposal by Argentina, China, South Africa and a large group of other developing countries. By the time of the Cancun Ministerial, the group included 22 countries. The mix of countries that had come together in this group was not obvious. The most obvious fracture line in the group lay between those members which were also Cairns Group members and sought agricultural liberalization, vs. defensive members led by India that were still not in a position to open up their domestic markets or cut their domestic subsidies. Despite these differences, though, the two sets of countries came together in the G20. In keeping with the agenda of the Cairns Group members, they proposed radical cuts in the

¹³ Amrita Narlikar and Diana Tussie, The G20 at the Cancun Ministerial: Developing Countries and their Evolving Coalitions, *World Economy*, 27 (7) July 2004, pp. 947-966.

domestic and export subsidies of the developed countries as well as greater market access. To meet the demands of their more defensive coalition allies, however, they argued for a differentiated formula on market access for developing countries depending on their ability to contribute to the process of improved market access, and proposed S&D measures for developing countries in all three pillars.

The other new coalition on agriculture, also involving developing countries, was the G33 on Strategic Products and Special Safeguard Mechanism. Unlike the G20, the G33 comprised a membership of countries that had an overall defensive interest in agriculture, and whose agricultural sectors were reliant on a small set of specialized products. Led by Indonesia and the Philippines, the group proposed that developing countries be allowed to self-designate certain “strategic products”, which would not be subject to any new commitments or obligatory tariff reductions. The group also proposed a “special safeguard mechanism” that could be used by developing countries to protect their domestic markets against import surges.

These coalitions stood firm throughout the ministerial, cementing their own positions and also supporting each other, defying predictions that they would collapse before the ministerial ended. The immediate cause for the collapse of the ministerial process was the showdown over the Singapore issues on the final day of the conference. The coalitions of the LDCs, the ACP, and the African Group came together into the G90, and threatened to walk out if any of the Singapore issues were included in the negotiating process. In voicing this threat, they had the backing of the other coalitions of developing countries. The ministerial had ended in deadlock.

Phase III: Post Cancun

The lines of confrontation that had emerged at Cancun have persisted after it as the problems with agriculture have continued,¹⁴ and new ones are also beginning to emerge. After protracted negotiation, the July Package was finally arrived at in 2004, in which three of the Singapore issues were finally taken off the agenda. Trade facilitation was retained, but even here it has been agreed that developing countries will not be required to implement the final agreement if they lack essential infrastructure or capacity for implementation. Cotton has been placed on a separate fast track. The annex on agriculture, also a part of the July Package, presents a “tiered formula” on domestic

¹⁴ Agriculture Negotiations at the WTO: Post-Cancun Outlook Report, Geneva: ICTSD, November 2003; also see www.wto.org for a full update.

support (while allowing developing countries lower tariff reduction coefficients as well as longer implementation periods). The draft makes the right noises on reduction of export subsidies, and also allows both developed and developing countries to designate certain “sensitive” products which will be subject to lower tariff reductions. Much has been made of the promise of a 20% cut in export subsidies by developed countries as “down payment”.

But problems in agriculture persist, as do the dividing lines between the North and South and their respective coalitions. Given that bound tariff levels are much higher than applied levels, the down payment might amount to nothing; improved market access will depend critically on which products are designated as sensitive products. Details of formulae and dates still have to be decided, and much can still go wrong. Confrontational coalitions have become even stronger. The G20 for instance, contrary to the predictions at Cancun has persisted despite the defection of a few smaller members, has held ministerial level meetings in the capitals of some member countries, and is attempting to expand its agenda beyond agriculture by drawing direct linkages with Non-Agricultural Market Access. It faces opposition not only from the EU and the US, but also the G10 – a coalition of other developed countries and some transition economies – with its defensive non-trade concerns.

Further, the July Package was arrived at through consultation among the “Five Interested Parties” -- Australia, Brazil, EU, India, and US. Brazil and India had attempted to keep their G20 allies informed about the consultations, but many non-members felt that they had been marginalized in the process. Differences are also simmering over S&D, with the larger developing countries resisting the creation of a new category of more advanced developing countries that will not enjoy S&D provisions. While developing countries have made a special effort to avoid overt rifts so far, it is to be expected that differences will emerge among and within coalitions as the DDA moves from its agenda-setting and modalities stages to the actual negotiation process. New alignments are likely to emerge once negotiators are able to devote issues other than agriculture, including non-agricultural market access.

4. Conclusion and Implications

In this paper, I have analyzed the origins and evolution of bargaining coalitions involving developing countries in the GATT and the WTO. I have argued that based on a long process of institutional adaptation, the coalitions of today are considerably

different from their predecessors and better able to handle the problems of internal coherence and external weight. They have proven to be more sustainable than their issue-based predecessors, and more focused and coherent than the old bloc-type coalitions. As their performance in the Doha process shows, they have also been relatively more successful than their predecessors. The fact this new round is a *development* round provides testimony to their influence; they have also been reasonably successful in setting the agenda of the new round. However, these new coalitions also suffer from two potential risks.

First, while the recent successes of developing country coalitions have been unprecedented – both in terms of holding together as well as influencing agenda-setting – they have encountered what might be considered to be the easier stage of the negotiation process. It remains to be seen if they will be as successful when the actual negotiation process begins. For instance, it has been easy for the middle-income developing countries to express their support of the S&D principle; but now that discussions on how the benefits of S&D will be distributed, rifts are beginning to emerge. Similarly, though the G90 and the G20 have so far worked in harmony, even the moderated liberalization of the G20 that is seeking radical export cuts from the developed countries is likely to have been contradictory to the agenda of food-importing economies. Further, much of the drama that has surrounded the Doha process so far has been over agriculture. Even if agriculture is resolved reasonably amicably, other issues areas will throw up new priorities. Considerable advance planning on the part of developing countries will be necessary to pre-empt potential defections from these coalitions.

Second, it is true that recent years have shown the bargaining strength of developing country coalitions. But these coalitions operate in an institutional context that is torn by North-South antagonism and high levels of distrust. A strong South dealing with a strong North may be able to extract symmetric, mutually beneficial agreements. But a strong South dealing with a strong North can also be the perfect recipe for recurrent deadlock. To ensure that the negotiations do not stall, both the North and South will need to devise new mechanisms. These could involve a more careful use of distributive tactics, willingness to mix strategies depending on the stage of the negotiations, issuing threats only when they are likely to be seen as credible ones, and

greater communication and signalling.¹⁵ For developing countries, now fully involved in the negotiation processes of the WTO, the stakes are too high to lose.

¹⁵ Amrita Narlikar, *Breaking the Deadlock: Signalling Mechanisms in North-South Trade Negotiations*, paper under review.

Coalitions and their Memberships

Table 1

Punta del Este Ministerial, 1986 (Uruguay Round)	G10	Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Egypt, India, Nigeria, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Peru, Yugoslavia
	Café au Lait (initially the Jaramillo track/G20, joined subsequently by the G9)	G20 = Bangladesh, Chile, Colombia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Singapore, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Uruguay, Zambia, Zaire G9 = Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland
	Cairns Group*	Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Paraguay, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Uruguay (as it exists today)
Doha Ministerial, 2001 (DDA)	Like Minded Group	Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe + Jamaica and Kenya as observers
	TRIPs and Public Health	African Group + Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Venezuela
	ACP*	Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Tanzania, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
	LDC*	Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia.
	African Group*	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte

		d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
	Small and Vulnerable Economies*	Barbados, Dominica, Fiji, Grenada, Jamaica, Lesotho, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, St Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago
	Caricom*	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname
Cancun Ministerial, 2003 (DDA)	G20	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Venezuela (original signatories also included Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru)
	G33	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Botswana, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Korea, Mauritius, Madagascar, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe (actually 42 members)
	G90	ACP + African Group + LDCs (actually 64 members)
	Cotton Initiative	Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali
	G10	Bulgaria, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Mauritius, Norway, Switzerland, Chinese Taipei

Source: www.wto.org and Amrita Narlikar, *International Trade and Developing Countries: Bargaining Coalitions in the GATT & WTO*, London: Routledge, 2003.

* = Coalitions that were also active at the Cancun Ministerial