The conference brought together some of the leading experts in the world. . . . The contributors to this special issue are sharply divided on whether the WTO will successfully conclude the Doha Development Round.
**DOHA: THE DEAL-MAKING ELEMENTS**

Doha contained these major elements:

- **General**: embedding development issues at the heart of WTO negotiations, including implementation issues, technical assistance, and capacity building.

- **Non-agricultural products**: improved market access, with agreement on modalities on tariffs and non-tariff measures (to the extent possible) targeted for end—March 2003.

- **Agriculture**: modalities for further commitments on the three pillars of the Agreement on Agriculture (domestic support, disciplines on export subsidies, and market access) to be established by end—March 2003.

- **Services**: a firm timetable has been set for services negotiations with tabling of initial requests by end-June, 2002, and initial offers by end—March 2003.

- **Trade-related intellectual property**: over and above the political declaration on TRIPS and public health, negotiations will be held on a limited number of technical issues (in particular, on a wines and spirits registry).

- **Rules negotiations**: negotiations are to address disciplines on subsidies, anti-dumping, and countervailing duties, as well as regional trade agreements.

- **Systemic issues**: improvements to the dispute settlement system, and consideration of the interaction between the WTO and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

Developing countries constituted the vast majority of the WTO’s 142 members at the time of the Doha meetings. Many developing countries remain convinced that the Uruguay Round had been a one-sided deal, involving commitments for major structural reforms on their part in return for market access. Developing countries are angry that they have not benefited from the new world trading order and that the promises made by northern countries have not been kept. At the same time, at Doha, they were prepared to exercise their new-found clout.

**MANY UNRESOLVED ISSUES**

As readers of this special issue will discover, it is very unclear what a development round could mean that will meet the expectations of southern countries. At the Uruguay Round, the developed world had promised southern countries access for their agricultural and textile industries but they never got the access. Tariffs against the South remain four times higher than those against the rich northern countries. With respect to governance issues, the WTO proposes to reduce the buffer zone between domestic and international policy space. This prospect is troubling, because it will lead to greater instability and insecurity for many countries.

Finally, even if the Doha Round is successfully concluded there is little assurance that the larger issue of international coherence both within the trading system and also the international financial regime of exchange rates and capital flows will be improved. The WTO and Bretton Woods institutions have not caught up to the fast-paced accelerating change of the global economy. Global governance is more contested than ever and no one can be certain that the WTO with all its muscle and resources has the political will and capacity to successfully negotiate a new deal for the world trading order. The jury is out and the balance seems to have shifted for the time being in favour of the WTO skeptics. No one knows the answer to what a development round consists of? Are there better rules for global governance? Which rules would produce better outcomes for the unstable global trading system? What are the chances of a consensus on investment, agriculture, and public services? These are tough questions for which no one has answers.

**AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE**

Southern countries are not one trading bloc, but the powerful controlling Quad composed of the European Union, United States, Canada, and Japan has successfully divided the South by splitting off Africa from the other southern countries with NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development) to rescue that region from grinding poverty, war, and corruption (see www.nepad.org). The Doha declaration is compellingly ambiguous and any country can read anything that it wants into it. The current round may not fail but the atmosphere has been badly damaged, if not poisoned. So far the ducks are not lining up the way the once supremely confident global free traders predicted. 

_Caveat emptor._

— Daniel Drache

Editor-in-chief