



**From Doha to Bali:**  
Assessing the “Bali Deliverables” and evaluating their  
impact in the context of 12 long years of multilateral trade  
negotiations

**Center for International Trade and Investment**  
**Jakarta, 2016**

# Structure of the present lecture

1. Recalling the World Right Before Doha
2. Remembering the Doha Work Program
3. The Cancun Ministerial Conference | MC 5
4. The July 2004 Rescue
5. The Hong Kong Ministerial Conference | MC 6
6. The July 2008 Impasse
7. Developments since 2008
8. Anticipating Bali
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10. Want to Know More?

# Recalling the World Right Before Doha



- Uruguay Round “Grand Bargain” and in-built agendas in Agriculture Agreement and GATS
- Singapore Ministerial (MC1) and the “new issues”
- MC 3 “the Debacle of Seattle”
- 9/11 and its economic fallout

# Recalling the World Right Before Doha

## Uruguay Round “Grand Bargain” and in-built agendas in Agriculture Agreement and GATS

- Inherent to the UR was the Grand Bargain under which developing countries got the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) and the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), whereas developed countries got the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the Agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)
- However both the AoA and the GATS represented less of a significant step towards liberalization of these two sectors and more of a road map to achieving future liberalization. For this reason, both texts included built-in agendas



# Recalling the World Right Before Doha

## Singapore Ministerial (MC1) and the “new issues”

- First Ministerial Conference
- Results:
  - Consolidated Action Plan (LDCs)
  - Tariff elimination for IT products and Pharmaceuticals
  - “New issues”
    1. Investment
    2. Competition
    3. Trade facilitation
    4. Transparency in Government Procurement





# Recalling the World Right Before Doha

## MC 3 “the Debacle of Seattle”

- Street protests threatened to close the meeting down completely
- Strong disagreements between WTO Members about a range of issues, the most important of which was arguably whether or not to launch the Millennium Round.
- The spectacular failure of Seattle prompted the WTO Director General and the Organization as a whole to do some soul searching.



- Raised the stakes on the next Ministerial being able to successfully launch a new Round.
- One often overlooked positive thing that came out of the meeting was that a handful of Members agreed on a proposal championed by the Dutch to establish a WTO Advisory Center on WTO Law

# Recalling the World Right Before Doha

## 9/11 and its economic fallout



- The economic impact of the attacks went beyond those sectors most directly affected, (insurance, civil aviation, and tourism), resulting in a widely-felt loss of overall consumer confidence, particularly in the United States, but also globally.
- Launching a new trade round seemed to many to be a powerful and obvious gesture of international economic cooperation and solidarity needed to restore confidence and get the global economy humming again.

# Remembering the Doha Work Program

- Agriculture
- Services
- Non-agricultural market access
- Relationship between trade and investment
- Interaction between trade and competition policy
- Transparency in government procurement
- Trade facilitation
- WTO rules
- Dispute Settlement Understanding
- Least-developed countries





# Remembering the Doha Work Program

## Agriculture (para. 13, 14)

- Negotiations on agriculture began in early 2000, under Article 20 of the WTO Agriculture Agreement.
- The declaration reconfirms the long-term objective already agreed in the present WTO Agreement: to establish a fair and market-oriented trading system through a program of fundamental reform.
- Without prejudging the outcome, member governments commit themselves to comprehensive negotiations aimed at:
  - Market access: substantial reductions to tariffs
  - Exports subsidies: reductions of, with a view to phasing out, all forms of these
  - Domestic support: substantial reductions for supports that distort trade

# Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

## Agriculture (para. 13, 14) - cont.

- The declaration makes special and differential treatment for developing countries integral throughout the negotiations, both in countries' new commitments and in any relevant new or revised rules and disciplines. It says the outcome should be effective in practice and should enable developing countries meet their needs, in particular in food security and rural development.
- The ministers also take note of the non-trade concerns (such as environmental protection, food security, rural development, etc.) reflected in the negotiating proposals already submitted. They confirm that the negotiations will take these into account, as provided for in the Agriculture Agreement.

# Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

## Services (para. 15)

- Negotiations on services were already almost two years old when they were incorporated into the new Doha agenda.
- The Doha Declaration endorses the work already done, reaffirms the negotiating guidelines and procedures, and establishes some key elements of the timetable including, most importantly, the deadline for concluding the negotiations as part of a single undertaking.

# Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

## Non-agricultural market access (para. 16)

- The aim is “to reduce, or as appropriate eliminate tariffs, including the reduction or elimination of tariff peaks, high tariffs, and tariff escalation, as well as non-tariff barriers, in particular on products of export interest to developing countries”
- These negotiations shall take fully into account the special needs and interests of developing and least-developed countries, and recognize that these countries do not need to match or reciprocate in full tariff-reduction commitments by other participants.

# Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

## Singapore Issues

- Relationship between trade and investment (para. 20–22)
- Interaction between trade and competition policy (para. 23–25)
- Transparency in government procurement (para. 26)
- Trade facilitation (para. 27)
  - These three issues were ones that many developed countries were keen to see negotiations begin on as soon as practicably possible.
  - However many developing countries expressed their reservations and at Doha it was agreed that the decision on whether or not to initiate negotiations on these topics would be postponed until the next Ministerial Conference and would be subject to “explicit consensus”
- Ultimately, negotiations would only be initiated on the issue of trade facilitation



# Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

## Trade facilitation (para. 27)

- The declaration recognizes the case for “further expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit, and the need for enhanced technical assistance and capacity building in this area”.

## Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

### WTO rules: anti-dumping and subsidies (para. 28)

- The ministers agreed to negotiations on the Anti-Dumping (GATT Article VI) and Subsidies agreements. The aim is to clarify and improve disciplines while preserving the basic, concepts, principles of these agreements, and taking into account the needs of developing and least-developed participants.
- Negotiations on fisheries subsidies has emerged as the main issue on which these negotiations have focused.

## Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

### Dispute Settlement Understanding (para. 30)

- The 1994 Marrakesh Ministerial Conference mandated WTO member governments to conduct a review of the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU, the WTO agreement on dispute settlement) within four years of the entry into force of the WTO Agreement (i.e. by 1 January 1999).
- The Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) started the review in late 1997, and held a series of informal discussions on the basis of proposals and issues that members identified. Many, if not all, members clearly felt that improvements should be made to the understanding. However, the DSB could not reach a consensus on the results of the review.
- The Doha Declaration mandates negotiations and states (in par 47) that these will not be part of the single undertaking — i.e. that they will not be tied to the overall success or failure of the other negotiations mandated by the declaration. Originally set to conclude by May 2003, the negotiations are continuing without a deadline.

# Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

## Least-developed countries (pars 42, 43)

- In the Doha declaration, WTO member governments commit themselves to the objective of duty-free, quota-free market access for LDCs' products and to consider additional measures to improve market access for these exports.
- Members also agree to try to ensure that least-developed countries can negotiate WTO membership faster and more easily.

## Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

### The Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health

- This separate declaration on TRIPS and public health is designed to respond to concerns about the possible implications of the TRIPS Agreement for access to medicines.
- It emphasizes that the TRIPS Agreement does not and should not prevent member governments from acting to protect public health. It affirms governments' right to use the agreement's flexibilities in order to avoid any reticence the governments may feel.
- The separate declaration clarifies some of the forms of flexibility available, in particular compulsory licensing and parallel importing.



## Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

### The Decision on Implementation-Related Issues

- “Implementation” refers to a number of problem issues raised particularly by developing countries about the implementation of the Uruguay Round negotiations.
- In Doha this issue was handled in two ways. First, ministers agreed to adopt around 50 decisions clarifying the obligations of developing country member governments with respect to issues including agriculture, subsidies, textiles and clothing, technical barriers to trade, trade-related investment measures and rules of origin in the 14 November 2001 decision on “Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns”
- Second, Ministers agreed in Doha on a future work program for addressing those issues which were not ripe for a decision by the time of the Ministerial Meeting.
- It was agreed that negotiations on outstanding implementation issues would be an integral part of the Work Program in the coming years.

# Remembering the Doha Work Program cont.

## Putting the “Development” in the DDA

- The pivot towards making the WTO a more development-centric organization had arguably already been taking place for a number of years (as a reaction, by Mike Moore, to the spectacular failure of the Seattle Ministerial).
- When developing countries seemed reluctant to launch another round, but with developed economies and the WTO Director General desperate to do so, the pivot towards development became a full-fledged turn and “development” and “the needs of developing countries” were supposedly put front and center to the Doha Work Program, so that the round would be named the Doha Development Agenda (or DDA).
- The words “developing” or “development” appear in the Ministerial Declaration 24 and 39 times respectively (63 times in total). This is arguably a real-life example of Sir Humphrey's famous law of inverse relevance, namely “[t]he less you intend to do about something, the more you have to keep talking about it.”

# The Cancun Ministerial Conference | MC 5

Cotton

Explicit Consensus

Ignominious Breakdown



# The Cancun Ministerial Conference | MC 5



## Cotton

- January 2001 Mali tabled a request for subsidies on this commodity to be drastically reduced.
- In 2003, the so-called Cotton-Four emerged: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali, wrote to WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi on 30 April 2003, introducing a “Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton”, which was presented on 10 June 2003 to the Trade Negotiations Committee by Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaoré.
- The proposal became a Cancún Ministerial Conference document.
- At Cancun, DG Supachai Panitchpakdi took the unprecedented step of speaking out in favour of the proposal which put the issue front and center at the meeting, causing developing countries to rally around it and completely catching the US off-guard.
- Earlier in the same year, Brazil had launched a WTO dispute settlement case against the US because of its cotton subsidies.

# The Cancun Ministerial Conference | MC 5 cont.

## Explicit Consensus

- Although language on the "explicit consensus" had figured in the 1996 Ministerial Declaration that first introduced the issues of Investment and Competition, the reason it assumed such pivotal importance was arguably the result of intransigence on the part of India as the last holdout at the Doha meeting to agree to negotiations on the Singapore Issues, so that the Indian representative in Doha (Maran) could reportedly only be prevailed upon to accept this concession if the decision to start negotiations on these issues was to be taken by "explicit consensus" at the Fifth Ministerial Conference (i.e. the one after Doha).
- The explicit consensus language obviated the need for a single Member to feel embarrassed about being obstructionist and to allow itself to be strong-armed into going along.
- As it turns out, In Cancun, India was not alone in its opposition to the Singapore Issues, since the representative for Malaysia (Rafidah Aziz) also took a strong stand at Cancun, so that, after the tempers of developing country delegates had been inflamed over cotton, many of them chose to vent their anger on the Singapore Issues.



## The Cancun Ministerial Conference | MC 5 cont.

### Breakdown

- The Cancun Ministerial ultimately collapsed when the Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Ernesto Derbez, seeing the lack of progress on the Singapore Issues gaveled the meeting to an unexpected end after 4 days of conflict-ridden and ultimately fruitless talks.
- Many blamed the US for its unwillingness to come up with any kind of compromise on cotton besides telling the Cotton 4 to diversify their economies.
- Others blamed the EU for waiting until the last day to concede on the Singapore Issues.
- Some even saw Derbez's sudden desire to end the meeting over the intractable stance of developing countries vis-à-vis the Singapore issues as a way to do so without allowing the talks to continue and thereby risk the prospect of the US becoming isolated on the cotton issue.



# The July 2004 Rescue



- Discovering Momentum in Early 2004
- Mini-ministerial Meeting at the End of July
- Something for Everybody



# The July 2004 Rescue

## Discovering Momentum in Early 2004

- USTR Bob Zoellick, working closely with the EU chief trade negotiator Pascal Lamy managed to achieve a level of productive and constructive progress in the early months of 2004 concerning these two countries' positions on agriculture, that it infected the broader WTO membership and allowed for a sense of momentum to take hold.
- The first half of 2004 saw most WTO Members become more engaged, with a new target date becoming established for reaching consensus on a package of framework agreements by the end of July.

# The July 2004 Rescue cont.

## Mini-Ministerial Meeting at the End of July

- The first draft of the “July package” was circulated on 16 July, and members started negotiating intensively in various formats in the fortnight beginning 19 July, in what was for all intents and purposes a ministerial meeting given that many trade ministers descended on Geneva.
- Green room meeting were dominated by the Five Interested Parties (US, EU, Brazil, India and Australia).
- Long negotiation sessions night after night with responsibility for the negotiations being first taken over by Tim Grosser from Superchai and then by Zoellick who presided at a series of one-on-one meetings with individual Members seeking special language to be inserted into the draft text to reflect their own political-economy sensitivities.
- At 2 am on Sunday morning of August 1<sup>st</sup> Zoellick and Lamy convened press conferences to proclaim that the Doha Round had been saved.

# The July 2004 Rescue cont.

## Something for Everybody

- Agricultural tariffs to be cut subject to a tiered formula, with highest duties suffering the severest cuts.
- Analogous tiered formula to be used for cutting agricultural subsidies with the biggest cuts being made by the biggest subsidizers
- EU conceding the phasing out of all export subsidies by an as yet undetermined future date
- Various flexibilities such as Sensitive Products (for all Members developed and developing) which would be spared from severe tariff cuts
- Additional flexibilities for developing countries with the ability to set aside a number of so-called Special Products which would also be sheltered from tariff cuts.
- On cotton, the US agreed to language promising that the issue would be addressed ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically within the agriculture negotiations”.
- Many countries managed to get specific exceptions from tariff cuts or subsidy disciplines to suit their own political-economy constraints



# The Hong Kong Ministerial Conference | MC 6

- Aid for Trade
- An End-Date for Export Subsidies
- The Anti-Climax



# The Hong Kong Ministerial Conference | MC 6

## Aid for Trade

- It was quite early on during the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference that the jockeying over a flurry of proposals on aid for trade started to pick up momentum, beginning with a proposal by Japan.
- The Japanese proposal was soon followed by others such as one from the EU and then the US.
- The thousands of developing country representatives in Hong Kong rapidly became enthused with a new-found sense of purpose and excitement thanks to these proposals.
- This seemed to be a carefully calculated foil to blunt any attempt to mobilize developing countries to become enraged at the lack of progress on issues that really mattered to them.



## The Hong Kong Ministerial Conference | MC 6 cont.

### **An End-Date for Export Subsidies**

- At the 2004 mini ministerial Pascal Lamy as EU Trade negotiator had been forced to concede that export subsidies would be phased out at some time in the future
- In Hong Kong, the pressure mounted for Mandelson to concede to a specific date.
- The stated goal of the G20 going into the meeting was to have the EU agree to eliminate all export subsidies by 2010.
- The EU ultimately agreed to eliminate all export subsidies by 2013 (when the budget for the CAP would be redrafted) with a concession to front-load much of these cuts.
- Mandelson managed to tie this concession to progress being achieved in the Round as a whole, i.e. to make it subject to the Single Undertaking.

## The Hong Kong Ministerial Conference | MC 6 cont.

### The Anti-Climax

- No progress on cotton
- No clarifications of how many tariff lines could be qualified as “Sensitive” or “Special”
- No commitments on how much other forms of trade-distorting support would be reduced by
- Yet another postponement of the deadline to achieve modalities
- Aid for trade commitments totally non-actionable
- Developing countries becoming increasingly shrill about issues such as tariff erosion and the need to maintain “policy space”.
- Guy de Jonquieres quote in the Financial Times:  
“Rarely in the history of international negotiations have so many laboured so long to produce so little.”

## The July 2008 Impasse cont.

- Food Prices Spike
- The US Mortgage Crisis Starts to Spread
- Lamy Bets the Farm (and loses)



# The July 2008 Impasse cont.

## Food Prices Spike

- According to some UN estimates, prices in some countries soared 75 percent from 2006 levels during the 2007-2008 food crisis with some 115 million people joining what is referred to as “the chronically hungry”.
- People in developing countries bore the brunt of the hardship, from Haiti to Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.
- The commodities most affected were wheat, soya, rice, corn
- This meant that food prices suddenly became a domestic security issues which had various repercussions for trade policy from export restrictions, to government stockpiling and (eventually) to food security proposals to become part of the Doha negotiations.





## The July 2008 Impasse cont.



### The US Mortgage Crisis (*et al.*)

- Although the global financial crisis didn't really get started until the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September 2008, financial markets were already starting to get very jittery by the time WTO members met for a mini-ministerial in July 2008.
- In addition to the added uncertainty of looming and actual banking failures, the political dynamics in the US were shifting with sweeping changes in recent congressional midterm elections that had put both houses in Democratic hands and Trade Promotion Expiry about to expire.
- Finally, with George W Bush's presidency coming to an ignominious end the outgoing president was desperate to find any positive developments to add to an otherwise lackluster legacy.



# The July 2008 Impasse cont.

## Lamy Bets the Farm (and loses)

- Lamy had convened the July meeting for the purpose of preparing the formal establishment of modalities in agriculture and NAMA.
- It was ultimately the DG who after 5 days of talks that had seen only modest convergence, seized the initiative and took the rather desperate measure of himself drawing up a framework for compromise on many of the issues that had eluded consensus up to that point, including:
  - Proposed cap on US agricultural subsidies of \$14.5 billion;
  - Wording on sectoral negotiations aimed at slashing tariffs for specific industrial goods (chemicals and gemstones etc.);
  - Developing countries “Special Products” (exempt from any tariff cuts) would be granted on up to 5 percent of tariff lines;
- Ultimately, Lamy’s proposal failed because it represented too many constraints for the Indians (who were demanding the policy space for a loosely formulates Special Safeguard Measure), and too little additional market access for US exporters of agricultural and non-agricultural products. The Chinese were also dubious about having to be bound by sectoral arrangements.

# Developments since 2008

- The GFC and its Trade Effects
- Creeping Protectionism
- Food Security Front and Center



# Developments since 2008



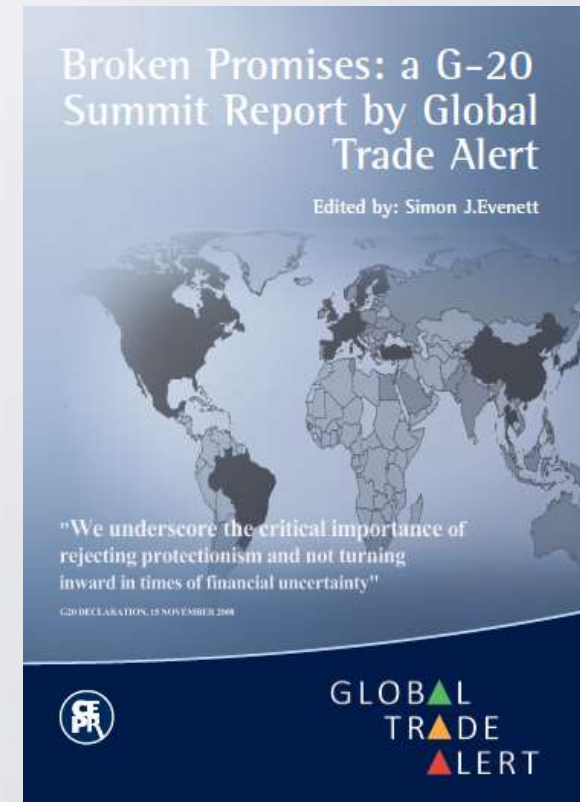
## The GFC and its Trade Effects

- A collapse in demand due to growing unemployment saw import demand and thus export flows decrease significantly across a number of products that are usually traded internationally (autos, electronic and consumer goods, travel-related services, textiles)
- The tightening of credit markets worldwide also led to a rise in the cost of trade financing, which consequently had a chilling effect on trade flows in two main ways:
  - First, the crisis exacerbated a shortage of liquidity to finance trade credit;
  - Second, the credit crunch and economic slowdown made banks averse to financial risk.

# Developments since 2008 cont.

## Creeping Protectionism

- In developed countries, many measures were implemented under stimulus packages (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Chinese Taipei, United Kingdom, United States).
- Many countries initiated containing bail-outs for domestic industries, particularly the auto industry (Austria, Japan, Portugal, Spain, Canada, the United States).
- In addition, many countries were compelled to prop-up their financial sectors (Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States).





## Developments since 2008 cont.



### Food Security Front and Center

- Since 2008, the focus in the WTO Agriculture negotiations has moved away from Special and Sensitive Products and the Special Safeguard Measure to the issue of food security.
- The main thrust of this has been to allow developing countries to pay domestic farmers above-market prices to grow staple crops needed for national stock-piling programs. These rules would run afoul of WTO subsidy commitments, and thus India and others (Indonesia) are pushing for a relaxation of subsidy disciplines for their specific purposes.

# Anticipating Bali

- Food Security
- Trade Facilitation
- Least Developed Countries
- Other Issues
- The New DG



# Anticipating Bali



## Food Security

- In November 2012, a group of developing countries led by India (known as the G-33) tabled an informal proposal seeking additional flexibilities in agricultural disciplines.
- The main thrust of the proposal is to allow developing countries to pay domestic farmers above-market prices to grow staple crops needed for national stock-piling programs. These rules would normally run afoul of WTO subsidy disciplines on trade-distorting domestic support.
- Another element of this proposal is to loosen or broaden the definition of what constitutes non trade-distorting domestic support to allow developing countries to finance a range of agricultural reform policies.
- Farm lobbies in developed countries have urged their trade negotiators to fight these proposals or to encumber any such provisions with tight constraints so they don't represent a blank check for developing country governments to bankroll their farm sectors indefinitely.



# Anticipating Bali cont.

## Trade Facilitation

- This is the one Singapore Issue that Members achieved an explicit consensus on in July 2004 to start negotiations on.
- The negotiating mandate directs Members to “clarify and improve” a number of existing GATT disciplines including:
  - Article V (Freedom of Transit),
  - Article VIII (Fees and Formalities connected with Importation and Exportation), and
  - Article X (Publication and Administration of Trade Regulations).
- Negotiations also focus on technical assistance and capacity building



## Anticipating Bali cont.



### Least Developed Countries

- Original Doha mandate spoke of integration of the LDCs into the multilateral trading system requiring meaningful market access, support for the diversification of their production and export base, and trade-related technical assistance and capacity building;
- At Hong Kong, language was adopted that would see WTO Members required to provide duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) market access on a lasting basis, for all products originating from all LDCs.
- At Bali, the onus will be on Members to unhook this commitment from the Single Undertaking and operationalize it immediately.

# Anticipating Bali cont.

## Other Issues

- Expanding membership and coverage of the Information Technology Agreement (now seems very unlikely in the face of Chinese intransigence)
- Ratifying the changes to the Government Procurement Agreement agreed at the WTO Ministerial in 2011 (probably not going to happen either since not enough Members have themselves implemented the new rules)
- Achieving consensus on an Agreement on Non-Preferential Rules of Origin (not really being talked about at all for Bali but may come after)
- Abandoning the Single Undertaking in areas such as services (this has long been the de-facto position of many countries and is a tendency that will only increase)

## Anticipating Bali cont.



### The New DG

- Brings a badly needed breath of fresh air to the Director Generalship.
- Should be able to play a decisive role in steering big emerging market Members towards playing a more constructive role.
- Also has the tough role of finding a face-saving conclusion to the Doha Round and then re-orientating the Organization to meet the needs of an evolving trading system.

# Findings and Conclusions

- The potential agreement that could be achieved on trade facilitation, although significant, pales in comparison to the substantial improvements to the world trading system that were envisaged at the outset of the round, which is a sober and depressing thought.
- The funk over agriculture was best summed up in an ICTSD/FAO paper:

“Current disciplines on agriculture [...] deal primarily with the challenges of structural over-supply on global markets that characterized the 1980s and 1990s, but arguably do not respond effectively to problems associated with the volatile and rising prices for food and agriculture that many experts expect will continue to predominate in the years ahead”

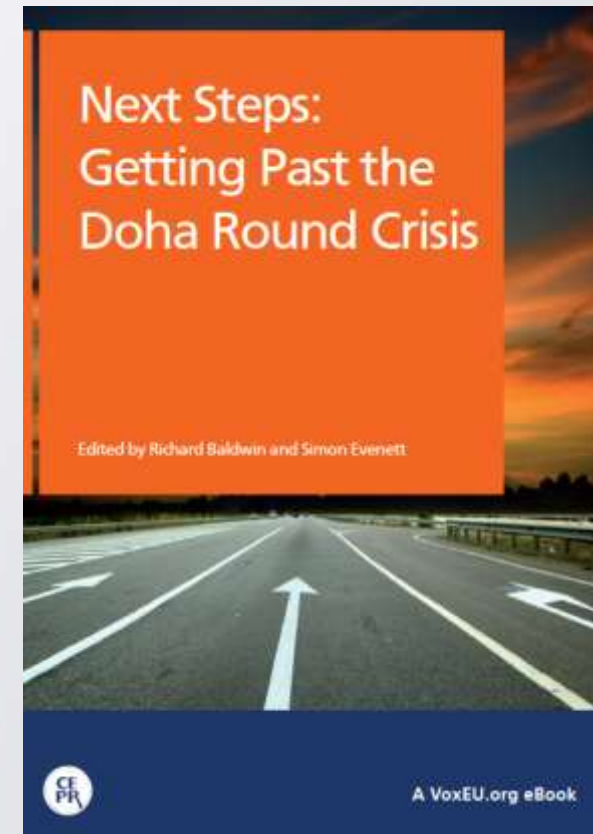
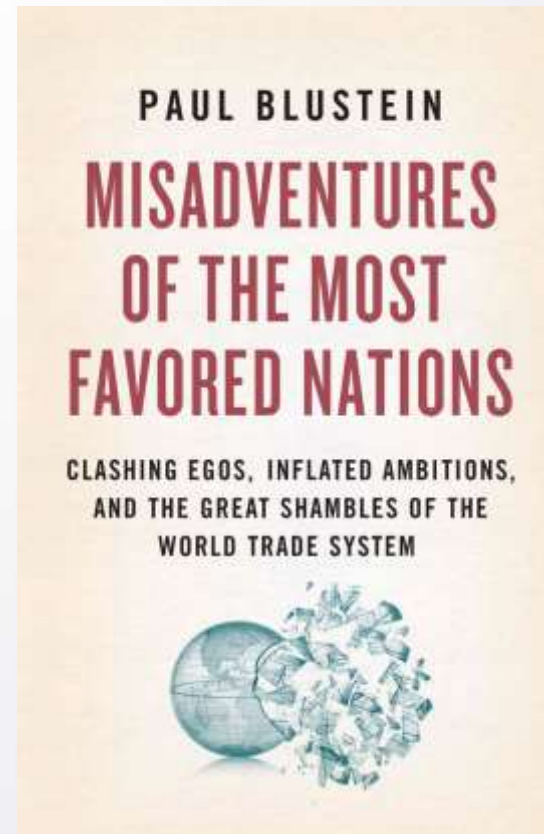
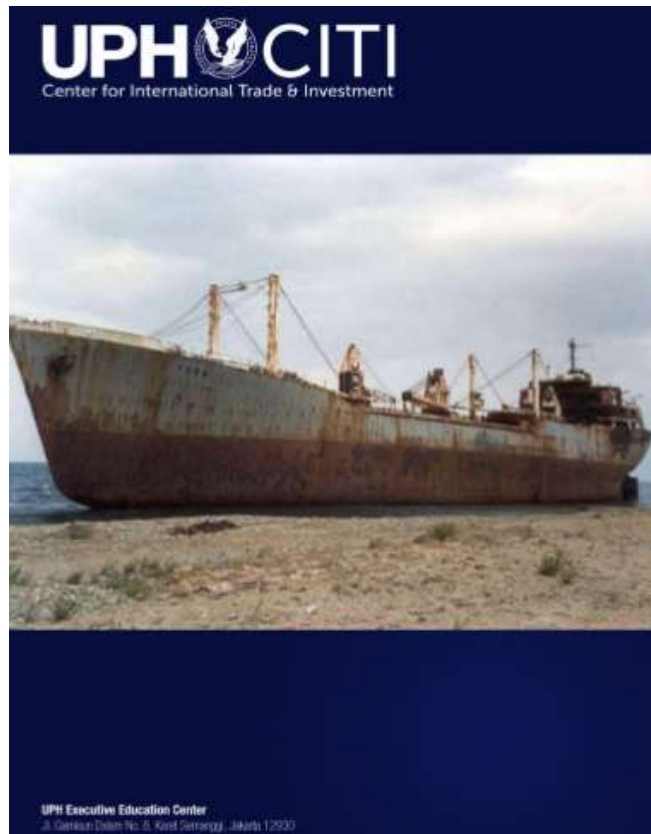
  - With a lack of US leadership in driving trade liberalization at the WTO and with China also failing to take a lead in pursuing future gains in market access, there’s little the Organization can achieve on this front.
  - Nevertheless, the WTO continues to play an important role in monitoring implementation of commitments, providing transparency, serving as arbiter when disputes arise, and acting as a sounding board for Members to discuss their trade-related issues and concerns.

## Findings and Conclusions cont.

- The Doha Round - as originally conceived - is for all intents and purposes dead and has been since July 2008.
- The limited number of achievements that can be harvested should be done so at Bali or immediately after so that the WTO can draw a line in the sand and move on.
- Under the direction of the new DG, the Organization should begin formulating what its role can and should be in terms of continuing to provide the invaluable services it provides now and what new areas or issues should be brought into its fold.

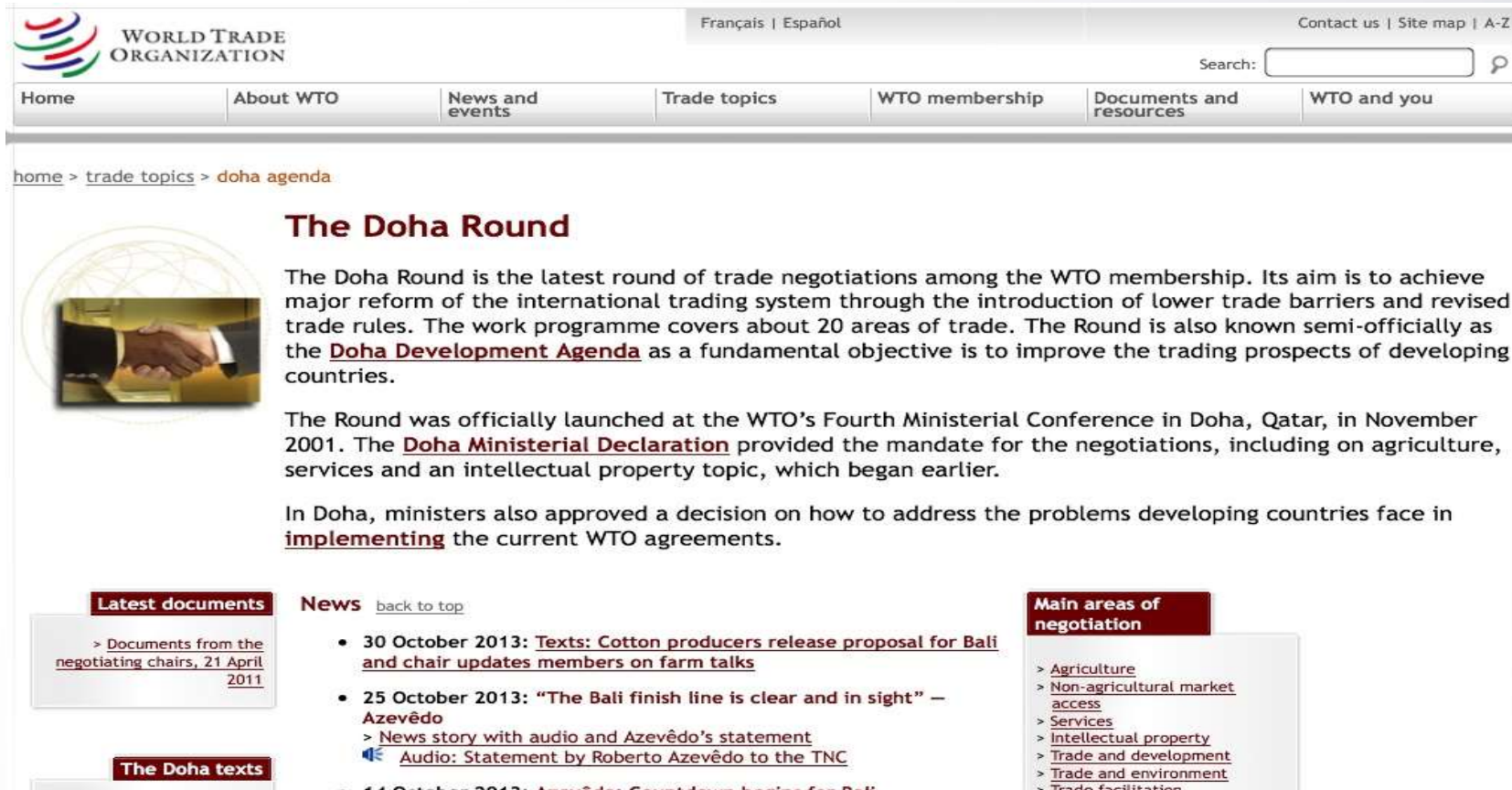


# Want to Know More?





# Want to Know More?



The screenshot shows the WTO website's 'The Doha Round' page. At the top, there's a header with the WTO logo, language links (Français | Español), and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Home, About WTO, News and events, Trade topics, WTO membership, Documents and resources, and WTO and you. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: home > trade topics > doha agenda. The title 'The Doha Round' is prominently displayed. To the left of the text is an image of two hands shaking over a globe. The text explains that the Doha Round is the latest round of trade negotiations among WTO members, aiming for a major reform of the international trading system. It mentions the 'Doha Development Agenda' and the 'Doha Ministerial Declaration'. A sidebar on the left contains 'Latest documents' and 'The Doha texts'. A sidebar on the right lists 'Main areas of negotiation' including Agriculture, Non-agricultural market access, Services, Intellectual property, Trade and development, Trade and environment, and Trade facilitation. The 'News' section in the center lists recent updates, such as the release of a proposal for Bali and chair updates on farm talks.

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## The Doha Round

The Doha Round is the latest round of trade negotiations among the WTO membership. Its aim is to achieve major reform of the international trading system through the introduction of lower trade barriers and revised trade rules. The work programme covers about 20 areas of trade. The Round is also known semi-officially as the **Doha Development Agenda** as a fundamental objective is to improve the trading prospects of developing countries.

The Round was officially launched at the WTO's Fourth Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001. The **Doha Ministerial Declaration** provided the mandate for the negotiations, including on agriculture, services and an intellectual property topic, which began earlier.

In Doha, ministers also approved a decision on how to address the problems developing countries face in **implementing** the current WTO agreements.

**Latest documents**

> Documents from the negotiating chairs, 21 April 2011

**The Doha texts**


**News** [back to top](#)

- 30 October 2013: **Texts: Cotton producers release proposal for Bali and chair updates members on farm talks**
- 25 October 2013: "The Bali finish line is clear and in sight" — Azevêdo
  - > News story with audio and Azevêdo's statement
  - > Audio: Statement by Roberto Azevêdo to the TNC
- 14 October 2013: Azevêdo: Countdown begins for Bali

**Main areas of negotiation**

- > Agriculture
- > Non-agricultural market access
- > Services
- > Intellectual property
- > Trade and development
- > Trade and environment
- > Trade facilitation

# Want to Know More?




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**MINISTERIAL CONFERENCES**

## Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference

The Ninth Ministerial Conference will be held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 6 December 2013. The Opening Ceremony will be held on the afternoon of the first day, Tuesday 3 December, followed by two working days, 4 and 5 December, with the Closing Ceremony on the final day, Friday 6 December.

> [Ministerial Conferences](#)

**Other WTO Ministerials:**

- > [Geneva](#) 15 - 17 Dec. 2011
- > [Geneva](#) 30 Nov. - 2 Dec. 2009
- > [Hong Kong](#) 13-18 Dec 2005
- > [Cancún](#) 10-14 Sept. 2003
- > [Doha](#) 9-14 Nov. 2001
- > [Seattle](#) 30 Nov.-3 Dec. 1999
- > [Geneva](#) 18 & 20 May 1998
- > [Singapore](#) 9-13 Dec. 1996


**News**

- **30 October 2013:** [Cotton producers seek Bali commitments, as aid levels for cotton stay healthy](#)
- **25 October 2013:** [“The Bali finish line is clear and in sight” – Azevêdo](#)  
> [News story with audio and Azevêdo’s statement](#)  
🔊 [Audio: Statement by Roberto Azevêdo to the TNC](#)
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