

would argue is false). Moreover, there is no clear response to the concerns that are being raised by the intrusive nature of WTO rules in the services sector (where trade disciplines have the potential to influence the substantive content of domestic regulation and possibly even to result in WTO dispute resolution panels making rulings on substantive domestic regulation, for which many would argue WTO panels have neither the requisite expertise nor, more fundamentally, the legitimacy). A resolution to the broader question of democratic legitimacy that exercises the civil society movement is thus also not yet in sight.

Conclusions

A failure to launch a round at Doha would have been very damaging for global governance. There are alternative avenues that nation-states can take in addressing pressing trade-related problems—the WTO is not after all the only game in town. However, bilateralism and regionalism in the trade policy arena carry their own risks.

While the successful result at Doha was therefore of much importance, it is not clear how properly to characterize this success—a round or an agenda. Indeed, the Doha Declaration has no equal in terms of the skill with which it deployed “constructive ambiguity” to paper over fundamental divides. The work program, regardless of how characterized, will be decided at the fifth Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in Mexico in 2003. Accordingly, it is impossible at present to predict the outcome of the success at Doha.

Nonetheless, there is great significance in the symbolism that is invoked in the Doha Declaration (in particular, the persistent refrain of special and differential treatment for developing countries) and in the fact that the United States and the European Union conspicuously “wooded” Africa before and during the meetings. By contrast, the South played no great role at Punta del Este. The importance of development issues in the current work program cannot, therefore, be emphasized enough.