

concluded the Uruguay Round without fully appreciating what they were getting into, or realizing the value of the veto that they had thereby acquired, they were much better prepared this time around. And, equally importantly, they were prepared to exercise their new-found clout.³

By the same token, there was little question that the countries primarily in the *demandeur* position at Doha were the industrialized group. The question was whether the industrialized countries would be able to move far enough to keep the developing countries—who were, in the view of some, quite prepared to walk away from Doha without a launch—from doing just that.

As it turned out, there is scarcely a paragraph in the Doha Declaration that does not mention developing country market access, special and differential measures for implementation of WTO agreements, or technical assistance and capacity building.

Flexibility on TRIPS

The ice-breaker in generating movement towards the apparent consensus was, in the estimation of most, the willingness signalled early in the Doha process by the United States—but also by other countries including notably Switzerland and Canada—on the issue of access to essential medicines within the broader context of the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

This issue was of deep concern to many developing countries and to large sections of the population in the developed countries. Economic analysis provides only qualified support for the technical framing of the TRIPS Agreement; in trade policy terms, the sharp movement towards harmonization and “one size fits all” regulatory structures embodied in this agreement is considered dubious by some observers. Moreover, the battle for the moral high ground on this issue was barely

³ As was observed, resistance to the idea of altering the consensus-based approach in the WTO reflected to a good extent the interest of developing countries in preserving their effective veto in the consensus-based format.