

argued, the impediment to market access in the developing countries was usually lack of commitment; now it is lack of implementation. Seen against this background, the US policy to push bilateral deals is fundamentally about using access to its market to promote market development and democratic development in developing countries.

Finally, there is some concern about the expiry of the so-called "peace clause" (an agreement not to bring agricultural issues to WTO dispute settlement prior to 1 January 2004).⁴ It was suggested that the EU and US might decide to address their bilateral agricultural issues through WTO dispute settlement, adding to the political pressure on this still-young institution. It was also observed that the peace clause is not necessarily only an issue for the US-EU relationship: developing countries might well start to bring cases against both!

Can development be addressed through the trade system?

By labeling the Doha Round a "development agenda" (which some saw as an attempt to co-opt the priorities of the anti-globalist movement but others as a building block for the future), the objectives of the Round were nominally broadened well beyond the normal mandate of past trade negotiations.

From one perspective, the WTO is not a development organization and has neither the institutional resources nor the writ to do much beyond promoting or undertaking rather narrow technical assistance.⁵ The stress on the WTO's institutional capacity will get worse if all parties accept all obligations, it was

⁴ Editors' note: The so-called "peace clause" (Article 13, "due restraint", of the Agriculture Agreement) precludes challenges being mounted against a country's agricultural subsidies under the WTO's Subsidies and Countervailing Measures Agreement. The clause expires at the end of December 2003, unless extended, which would require consensus.

⁵ Editors' note: Given the WTO's limited capacity, and the many commitments under the Doha Development Agenda, the General Council subsequently established the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund and expanded funding for technical assistance by 80 percent.