

From Doha to Kananaskis: The Future of the World Trading System and the Crisis of Governance*

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Perhaps the most important outcome of the fourth Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which took place at Doha, Qatar, in November 2001, was that it did not fail; it achieved its stated goal, the launching of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations.

Whilst this may sound like damning with faint praise, the launch was, in the context, not insignificant since the ministers gathered at Doha bore a burden that transcended their portfolios. The shadow of what many have termed the “debacle at Seattle”, where the third WTO Ministerial Meeting in

* This chapter highlights some of the main themes that emerged from the discussions at the conference “From Doha to Kananaskis: The Future of the World Trading System and the Crisis of Governance”, Toronto, March 1-3, 2002. The conference was jointly organized by the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies at York University and the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto, with support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. As these discussions were held under Chatham House rules, there is no attribution of statements to individual participants. In any event, the choice and elaboration of themes from an event such as this – a three-day conference involving academics, government officials and members of civil society that elicited a spirited debate on every issue raised – necessarily reflects the editorial judgement of those holding the pen. Responsibility for the text thus rests with the authors; the views expressed here are not to be attributed to the organizing institutions or to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Papers from the conference are available online at www.robarts.yorku.ca. Daniel Drache is Director of the Robarts Centre, York University; Sylvia Ostry is Distinguished Research Fellow at the Munk Centre, University of Toronto. The assistance of Dan Ciuriak, Senior Economic Advisor, Trade and Economic Policy and Trade Litigation, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, in developing the text is gratefully acknowledged.