

## The Official View

Officially, "secure trade" is replacing "free trade" in North America. What is surprising is that trade may now become *freer* (or faster). How can that be?

At first blush, the goals of security and trade seem naturally opposed and difficult to reconcile. Security is associated with regulation, barriers to entry, "high politics." Trade is associated with freedom of enterprise, the removal of barriers, "low politics." One could even go so far as to say that the two aims epitomize the classic divide between politics and economics: as one author mentions, "crisis and war are the dominant factors in international relations, while trade and economic relations are recessive elements."<sup>12</sup>

That there is a distressing downside to global openness has long been known: openness does not just facilitate the movement of products, workers, capital, technology and organizations; it also facilitates the flow of undesirables—biohazards, contagious diseases, narcotics, illicit weapons, and terrorists. However, until recently, it was widely held that an outgrowth of globalization and free trade would be peace: open, friendly borders were understood to foster friendly international relations (the democratic peace thesis<sup>13</sup>).

Few would entertain this idea even lightly now: in light of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the tension between the two aims of security and trade became acute. That terrorists and trade could share the same arteries became apparent when the Canada-U.S. border was effectively shut down in the days following the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, resulting, at some crossings, in 32-km-long backups. As a report by the U.S.

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<sup>12</sup> Gilbert Winham, *The Evolution of International Trade Agreements* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 3.

<sup>13</sup> On the absence of war between liberal-capitalist democracies, see John M. Own, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace" *International Security* 19, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 87-125 and John Macmillan, "Democracies Don't Fight: A Case of the Wrong Agenda?" *Review of International Studies* 22 (1996): 275-299.