

and will not want to see change. Whence is the political support to come to change policies that have long resisted change?

Further, the US approach of pushing the envelope in bilateral/regional agreements tends to weaken the level of ambition at the multilateral level by creating constituencies in favour of preserving existing preferences. This contrasts with the dynamic in launching the Doha Round when the US got the Africans to counter resistance from India.

In past rounds, bringing in new issues facilitated the construction of a package that worked for all. But it is not clear that this can be done again. Is there enough to put on the table? It was suggested that, in the context of a big deal, the US could possibly do something on anti-dumping. However, the issues put forward by the EU that broaden the agenda (e.g., the Singapore issues, environment) do not evidently mobilize a constituency in Europe that could generate the pressures to move on agriculture. For example, it was suggested, there is no one obviously beating the drum for competition policy outside the Brussels bureaucracy. Insofar as there is a constituency for other EU issues (e.g., environment) its members tend to be against, not for, the rest of the trade package!

The Negotiating Agenda

The discussion addressed some of the issues being addressed in the individual negotiating groups. We take these up in turn. As a general preliminary observation, it was argued that progress of the individual negotiating groups will be determined in part by the strength, engagement and ambition of their Chairs, especially in the groups where the gaps are wide and the issues to be resolved in identifying acceptable trade-offs are complex.