

A person wearing a white protective suit, hood, and mask is working in a laboratory. They are holding a large piece of equipment, possibly a scale or a balance, and looking down at it. The background shows shelves with various items, suggesting a laboratory or industrial setting.

## TWO KEY CHALLENGES

### MEETING THE NEEDS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The new WTO negotiating round, the Doha Development Agenda, is being called a “growth and development round.” It places developing countries at the heart of WTO negotiations with a package of measures aimed at helping those countries benefit from the global trading system and adapt to WTO rules at a pace appropriate to their development needs. At the same time, it provides work programs to elaborate on the particular concerns of small economies, trade and the transfer of technology, and “special and differential treatment” (a range of measures designed to take practical account of the particular problems facing developing countries, such as longer phase-ins for obligations). A separate decision addressed the critical issue of access to medicines essential to the treatment of diseases such as AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; concrete follow-up has already occurred, with least-developed countries having received a waiver of obligations under the TRIPs Agreement until 2016, and further actions are being prepared in the WTO.

Clearly, trade policy is only one element in fostering development and combatting poverty. Along with market access, poor countries need massive development assistance, and many require debt relief as well. Moreover, good economic governance (including addressing endemic problems of corruption) as well as sound social policies (regarding, for example, basic education) and open and participatory political processes would all improve the sustainable development of these countries. These prescriptions are not novel. Indeed, Canada and the other signatories to the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development (March 2002) covered most of them in setting out the challenges to be