



Perspectives on WTO Negotiations

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Outline

- Update on the current talks and unsettled issues.
- Options to move forward the negotiations agenda.



Update

- Very little (none) progress made since July 2008.
- Failure to agree on a modality package has been sold as the result of a US – India showdown on SSM.
- But other factors also explain why negotiations are stalled.
- Recent stocktaking exercise has not changed anything.



Options

- Sectoral negotiations
- Plurilateral agreements
- Bilateral or regional agreements
- Rely on dispute settlement procedure



WTO, trade, and food security

- Despite all the hurdles, the DR still can go a long way in addressing food security concerns.
- The central policy issue then is how can the WTO deliver an agreement that fulfill trade promises.
- It can be done while addressing non-economic objectives.



Argument

- What matters are trade flows, not policy instruments.
- Once countries decide on a given volume of trade, we should let them deliver this market access any way they want.
- In agriculture, countries commit to instruments under incomplete information about market outcomes.



Critiques

- Managed trade?
- Just additional TRQs with the usual problems?
- Too late?