

THE DOHA ROUND

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The Progresses and Delays in the Doha-negotiations

- **Abstract** The WTO was established as successor of GATT in 1995. In spite of its relatively new creation, the WTO holds the same organisational problems as the older international institutions of Bretton Woods, which together represent global governance, as we know it today. More specifically, WTO's structure and decision-making procedure are accused of not having developed in line with globalisation, which has resulted in WTO being unable to successfully dealing with the increasing number of members accessed as well as issues – trade and non-trade related - raised in its framework. However, the lack of capability and authority to act did not prevent the WTO from launching a new trading round in 2001; the Doha Development Agenda. For the first time in the history of GATT/WTO, a round was given specific prior to developing countries. Nevertheless, the supposed development prior of the Doha-Round is claimed to be a question of rhetoric rather than real attentions. To put it mildly, the Doha-negotiations have not been a ruler-straight assignment. Despite significant progresses, the Doha-talks have primarily been the subject of disagreements with the developed countries on one side of the table and the developing countries on the other, which has caused considerable delays in the negotiations. This thesis attempts to demonstrate the progresses and delays in the Doha-negotiations from four different perspectives. Following the introduction section of *chapter 1*, *chapter 2* puts the WTO under magnifying glass in order to establish its influence as an international institution on the Doha-negotiations. *Chapter 3* looks into the most important areas and actors of the negotiations consisting of varying groups in all directions, which in different ways have influenced the Doha-Round. Further, this section covers economic and political theories accounting for the areas and actors causing progresses and delays in terms of being primarily economically or politically related. *Chapter 4* deals with different world affairs of present times, which are considered some of the main challenges for the international community and the spill-overs these may have on the DDA. Lastly, *chapter 5* sums up and concludes the most substantial points of the fields analysed.

Preface

The research for this paper has been an interesting and long journey. One of my tasks during my internship at the Royal Danish Embassy in Washington D.C. was to work out a report on the temporary breakdown of WTO's Doha Round in July 2006. From that point on, I decided that the Doha-negotiations were to be the subject of my master thesis. However, the line of approach turned out to be a rather difficult task because of the considerable number of aspects and possible perspectives of the case. The collected material and information have been extremely comprehensive. Each time I opened one door – ten more doors appeared. Therefore, one of the greatest challenges has been to decide on which approaches and factors to cover and how to handle these. I have as far as possible attempted to be objective in my analysis by illustrating the issues in focus from different and opposite views, but obviously the paper will reflect the writer's opinions in some respects.

In order to present the case from different angles as well as attempting to include new and inaccessible information, I have carried out an extensive empirical study. In this respect, I would like to thank the Embassy and the Danish Foreign Ministry for access to their archive as well as receiving weekly reports, information and updates from WTO-specialists and diplomats. I would also like to give a special thanks to Søren Jakobsen, former Negotiator and Administrator of Trade in Services in the Doha-Round for the interview dealing with the process of the service negotiations. Moreover, I would like to thank Professor and Director of Copenhagen Consensus Bjørn Lomborg for the opportunity to participate in a personal meeting in Washington D.C. between him and the Danish Ambassador in the US. From this I was further enlightened of the important interactions between world trade and some of the other difficult challenges the international community is facing. Last but not least, I would like to thank my supervisor of Aalborg University Mammo Muchie for assisting me in regards to specifically confining the problem formulation as well as advising theoretical framework used in the report to explain some of the different issues raised.