



World Trade Organization

Dearest delegates,

My name is Noelle Morey (she/her/hers) and I am a fourth-year Environmental Science student at the University of Florida with minors in Communication Studies and Agricultural & Natural Resource Law. I currently have the pleasure of serving as the President of UF Model UN, and it is my absolute honor to serve all of you as your director for the World Trade Organization at the very first SwampMUN. After partaking in 8 years of Model UN, competing in nearly 30 General Assembly committees (six of them being virtual!), I am so excited to bring this committee to life alongside all of you!

I truly believe that the delegates make the committee, and I cannot wait to see what you all bring to the table. It is expected that you will conduct ample research into your position, the topics at hand, and any relevant UN reports to best prepare for fruitful debate. As such, performance in this committee will be evaluated on the following factors: willingness to learn and grow, collaboration with fellow delegates in a constructive and positive manner, and quality of speeches/writing. The thing that has kept me coming back to Model UN year after year is not the awards or the competitive thrill, but rather the genuine connections and innovations we get to shape throughout each conference weekend. I expect each of you to prioritize the factors of kindness, diplomacy, and creativity in and out of each session during our time together.

Throughout the preparation process, please lean on your resources and field any questions to our amazing SwampMUN team. During the conference, please do not hesitate to ask for help - I have faith that this will be an unforgettable learning experience for all of us! "See" you in November, and as always, go Gators!

Best,

Noelle D. Morey

Rules of Procedure

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as "Present" or "Present and Voting."

Motion to Open Debate

This opens the floor for debate, allowing other points or motions.

Motion to Set the Agenda

This motion determines the order in which the topics of a committee will be debated. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass.

Motion to Open the Speaker's List

Opening the Speaker's List requires a simple majority to pass. A delegate may only be present on the Speaker's List once, but may re-enter after he/she has spoken. If the Speaker's List expires, debate then closes.

Motion to Set Speaking Time

Speaking Time must be indicated by this motion from the floor before any members of the body may speak on the Speaker's List. This motion must also accompany any motion for a Moderated Caucus. In a Motion to Set Speaking Time for the formal Speaker's List, a delegate may also specify a number of questions or comments to automatically affix to the Speaking Time. These designated questions or comments may also have Speaking Time or Response Time (in the case of a question) limits, but these are not required. The Director may rule any Motion to Set Speaking Time dilatory. This motion requires a simple majority. Any delegate may make this motion between formal speakers in an effort to change the Speaking Time.

Motion to Close the Speaker's List

The Speaker's List may be closed upon a motion from the floor. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass. Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus This motion must include three specifications:

- a. Length of the Caucus
- b. Speaking time, and
- c. Reason for the Caucus.

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus should never exceed twenty minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Motion to Table the Topic

If a delegate believes that the flow of debate has become stagnant, he/she may make this motion. To Table the Topic is to halt debate on the present Topic, save the speakers' list and all draft resolutions, and move on to the next Topic on the Agenda. The delegate making this motion may also choose to specify a previously tabled Topic. This motion requires a two-thirds vote to pass. The Topic may be returned to at any time by tabling the present Topic and adding the phrase "for the purpose of returning to Tabled Topic _____," to this motion. If no Topics have been previously tabled, debate must follow the established Agenda. This motion is to be used sparingly.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- a) To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure,
- b) To question relevance of debate to the current Topic or
- c) To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any

question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking

on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any

further questioning time. The question must conform to the following format:

Delegate from Country A raises placard to be recognized by the Committee Director.

Committee Director: "To what point do you rise?"

Country A: "Point of Inquiry."

Committee Director: "State your Point."

Country A: "Will the delegate from Country B (who must have just spoke) yield to a question?"

Committee Director: "Will the Delegate Yield?"

Country B: "I will" or "I will not" (if not, return to the next business item)

Country A asks their question (it must not be a rhetorical question.)

Country B may choose to respond or to decline.

If the Delegate from Country B does not yield to or chooses not to answer a question from Country A, then he/she yields all remaining questioning time to the Committee Director.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Working Papers and Draft Resolutions

Once a Working Paper has been submitted, approved, distributed, and formally introduced to the body, it can and will be referred to as a "Draft Resolution." In order for a Working Paper to be submitted to the Committee Director, it must be in correct format and bear the names of a combination of a number of Sponsors and Signatories necessary to introduce, as determined by the Committee Director. Sponsors are the writers of the Working Paper, and agree with it in its entirety. They should be able to vote 'yes' for the paper during voting procedure. Signatories are those delegates interested in bringing the Working Paper to the floor for debate, but do not necessarily agree with its contents. A delegate can motion to discuss the working paper during a moderated caucus or unmoderated caucus. A delegate can also motion for an author's panel, which is essentially a moderated caucus moderated by the authors. It is the chair's discretion on the maximum amount of authors allowed on the author's panel.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that all Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not

agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and nonsubstantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

SwampMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the SwampMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Motion to Close Debate and Voting Procedures

A motion to close debate may only pass with a two-thirds majority. Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

Once moving into voting procedures chair can only accept these motions:

- A point of order to correct an error in procedure
- An appeal of the decision of the chair
- A motion for division
- A motion for roll call vote
- A motion for adoption by acclamation

No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures. Each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Draft Resolution as a whole is put to a vote. The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures. Unless otherwise specified by the Secretariat, each Committee may pass as many resolutions as it agrees are necessary to efficiently address the Topic. Delegates who requested to be noted as "Present and Voting" are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.

Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: "For," "Against," "Abstain," or "Pass." During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, "Pass," reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to "Passing" Delegates, they must vote: "For" or "Against."

Voting with Rights

During a Roll Call vote delegates may vote "For with Rights" or "Against with Rights." Delegates

will be granted 30 seconds to explain their reasons for voting for or against a draft resolution. This time will come after the tabulation of votes. Delegates should use this option sparingly. It is meant for delegates who feel that their vote may seem off policy, despite it being correct. The acceptance of rights is up to the director's discretion. If a speaker goes off topic during their allotted time the director will rule their speech dilatory and move to the next motion in order.

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

Introduction

Following the massive upheaval of the global economy in the wake of the Second World War, several organizations were formed with the express purpose of facilitating trade and reconstruction. The result was the creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). With the failure to establish the International Trade Organization (ITO), the GATT agreement was the main apparatus for managing international trade until the World Trade Organization's founding in 1994.

GATT Rounds

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was first proposed in the UN's conference on Trade and Employment as a result of the failure to form the ITO (International Trade Organization). The first treaty was signed in Geneva in 1947, by 23 states on the topic of tariff reductions, which affected over \$10 billion worth of international trade. The following rounds in Annecy (1949), Torquay (1950), Geneva II (1956), and Dillon (1960) brought further tariff reductions and expanded the membership of the GATT. The Kennedy round in 1964 addressed anti-dumping and established exception of reciprocity of tariff reductions for developing states (a direct result of UNCTAD), as well as bringing the GATT membership up to 48 states. The Tokyo round (1973), was the most extensive yet, lasting over 74 months and involving 102 signatory states. This lead to tariff concessions amounting to over nineteen billion dollars' worth of trade, as well as the adoption of a set of "Codes" dealing with non-tariff issues such as subsidies and anti-dumping. The final and most ambitious round was the Uruguay round in 1986. By the time of the Uruguay round, there had been little movement on issues relating to agricultural products, as they exempted from previous agreements when it came to the areas of import subsidies and export quotas. This resulted in the Agreement on Agriculture, whose goals were to improve market access to agricultural products and the reduction of domestic subsidies and quotas, which had the effect of distorting the prices of agricultural goods.

WTO

By the Uruguay round, it was evident to the member states of GATT that a new body was necessary to manage trade negotiations as the GATT system was struggling to adapt to a rapidly globalizing international economy. The final act of the Uruguay round established the WTO through the Marrakesh agreement on April 15, 1994 and the WTO was inaugurated in 1995, with the GATT at the heart of the organization. The decision-making body of the WTO is the Ministerial conference, meeting bi-annually. These ministerial conferences were often contentious. Either among members, highlighting the divide between the developed and developing nations, such as in the Singapore and Cancun conferences (1996 and 2003 respectively) or drawing large public protests, such as the Seattle conference (1999). The fourth conference took place in Doha (2001); it launched what is known as the Doha development round. The Doha round is ongoing and known for failures in negotiations and disagreements between parties such as the United States, Japan, The European Union, and developing countries. The Doha round sought to tackle a wide array of issues, two of which will be covered in this committee: tariff reductions and agricultural barriers.

Topic I: Agricultural Products

Introduction

Since the signing of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Agricultural issues have been a central point of contention in the history of trade negotiations. Issues such as subsidies, food aid, and security have been at the center of negotiations. The first major step taken towards resolving these issues was the Agreement on Agriculture during the Uruguay round. Agricultural issues became a key part of the agenda of the Doha Development round, fueling the breakdown in negotiations several times due to the disagreements between developed and developing states on this issue. From 2001, when the round of negotiations was inaugurated, until 2015, no progress was made towards a solution on these issues.

Nairobi

In 2015, the ministerial conference in Nairobi resulted in a breakthrough in negotiations on topics involving agriculture as part of the Doha Agenda. The main effect of the Nairobi agreement was the elimination of export subsidies for agricultural products, effective immediately for developed countries, while developing countries had a longer window to implement the agreement. These subsidies were price distorting in nature and many had argued were a barrier to free trade. While Nairobi resolved a key area of contention within the Doha development round, there was a consensus among the signatories that further measures were necessary within the issue of agricultural issues. "The group argues that WTO members must agree to address the concentration of domestic support on specific agricultural products in some countries.

Subsidies

An issue that has arisen is that the Nairobi agreement referred specifically to export subsidies, while agricultural subsidies in general have continued to rise. By removing the subsidies' specification for exported goods, the subsidies for these agricultural products can continue. The issue no longer solely applies to rich countries, as middle income nations such as India continue subsidies under the guise of "food security." The issue of subsidies is something this committee must resolve, whether to close this new subsidy loop hole, and if so, where to draw the line. Should the Nairobi agreement extend to any subsidies that affect agricultural goods, or are certain domestic subsidies permissible, even if they distort market prices of these goods in a major way? An example of this is argued by the Cairns group, a coalition of both developed and developing countries in the WTO in a paper published by the group: "Excessive concentrations of product- specific support continue to impact world market prices for a range of goods, many of which are of great importance to developing and least developed countries," the paper says. The Cairns Group singles out rice, sugar, dairy, wheat, soybeans, beef, and cotton as examples of markets which are especially affected by the phenomenon...Negotiations must lead to a significant reduction, with a view to total elimination, of all types of domestic support that have distorting effects on the cotton market."2

Food Aid

Nations such as the United States provide food aid to developing nations or other areas with low food security. This has led to producers in other nations to claim unfair competition. The manner with which food aid is distributed and its effects on domestic agricultural markets is another issue that Nairobi failed to address, and remains on the Doha Agenda. This ministerial conference must find a food aid solution in a way that does not eliminate aid completely, yet drives domestic producers of food out.



Food Security

In many developing nations around the world, food security is a major issue. States defined as "food secure" are those that have reliable access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.3 Since 2013, members of the World Trade Organization have agreed to attempt to find a permanent solution to the issue of public stockholding programs for food security purposes. Through these programs, states purchase and stockpile food to distribute to those in need. Some of these programs involve support to farmers, which is considered to distort trade when the government purchases food at fixed prices known as "supported" or "administered" prices. The WTO is working with eight other international organizations on an Agricultural Market Information System, which is used to detect abnormal market conditions that would affect food security and to devise well-informed, coordinated strategies to deal with them.4 The WTO is also a member of a High-Level Task Force on The Global Food Security Crisis, and as such maintains an interest in the resolution of this issue.

Special Safeguard Mechanisms

A Special Safeguard Mechanism is a tool that allows developing countries to raise tariffs temporarily to deal with import surges or price falls5. Special Safeguard Mechanisms have traditionally been used by Least Developed countries (LDC's) to brunt the effects of a drastic surge in imports. While other mechanisms in the WTO require the claimant to provide evidence of cause or damage in order to take steps to enact protectionist measures, which can be costly endeavors, the Special Safeguard Mechanisms for agriculture are different. For agricultural goods, higher safeguard duties can be triggered automatically when import volumes rise above a certain level, or prices fall below a certain level. Also, only applying to agricultural Special Safeguard Mechanisms is the fact that it is not necessary to demonstrate that serious injury is being caused to the domestic industry. The Special

- 3 Food Security
- 4 Food Security
- 5 WTO Glossary

Agricultural Safeguard can only be used on products that were tariffed, about twenty percent of all agricultural products, and can only be used if the government reserved the right to do so in its schedule of commitments on agriculture. Controversies in the past over whether SAS mechanisms should allow developing countries to raise tariffs past the cap agreed to in the GATT Uruguay round. This question and other possible reforms, such as when exactly it can be triggered to Special Safeguard Mechanisms, and if new procedures need to be implemented for seasonal and perishable products, need to be decided by this ministerial conference.

Cotton

Cotton is an issue discussed at the WTO in two ways. The first is assistance provided to cotton producers in developing countries and the second is reforms needed to address subsidies and high trade barriers for cotton commodities6. While the Nairobi agreement had a provision stating that export subsidies would immediately apply to cotton for developed countries and later for developing countries, as well as quota free imports of cotton and cotton products by LDC's, the ministers agreed more efforts are needed by many WTO members to reform their domestic cotton policies. WTO members also committed to hold dedicated biannual discussions on cotton to monitor the implementation of the decisions taken. As in the case of many other agricultural issues, cotton still requires a definite solution to the issues listed, and a necessary apparatus to be able to fully monitor implementation of decision related to it.

Conclusion

Agricultural issues have been a major barrier to completing the Doha agenda negotiations. Tensions between developed and developing members over these issues have been a factor in the years long delay. With the completion of this portion of the agenda, the WTO stands to have an even larger role in international agricultural issues, and can focus its attention on resolving other issues, such as trade facilitation.

Topic II: Trade Facilitation Measures

Introduction

One of the major functions of the WTO as an international body is to provide the framework needed to assist the facilitation of international trade. Trade facilitation refers to policies undertaken by states to reduce the barriers to international transactions7. Barriers to trade can refer to a variety of policies and problems including tariffs, export subsidies, and technical barriers to trade in least developed countries. The contentious topic of trade facilitation was a major reason for the impasse that gripped the Doha development round. In the "July package" of 2004, the General Council decided by explicit consensus to commence negotiations on trade facilitation. Under this mandate, many issues need to be considered by the committee.



Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs)

Technical Barriers to trade are a category of Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade. They are defined as the widely different methods and measures that States use regulate trade. These include measures dealing with consumer protection, market regulation, or resource protection. While a variety in levels of regulations between markets can themselves complicate trade, some of these measures are used to discriminate against imports of foreign goods. The Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade formed during the Uruguay round gives guidelines on Technical Barriers to Trade, yet experts on trade issues still argue there is room for abuse by importing member states. Examples of Technical Barriers to trade include but are not limited to: ingredient identification, product packaging, and import testing/certification procedures.

Tariffs

A tariff is a tax on imports8. Tariffs are considered to be trade distorting policies, as they make the affected goods more expensive on the market. Import tariffs raise a tax on the import of foreign goods, with the burden of the tax being shifted to the domestic consumers of a foreign good, causing it to be more expensive. This gives a price advantage to domestic goods and raise revenues for the tariff imposing government. As a result of the Uruguay Round, governments committed to cut tariffs and to bind their customs rates to levels that are difficult to raise. The Doha Agenda includes the continuation of these efforts, with a discussion on further tariff reductions or new methods to

further the downward trend in the rate of custom duties.

Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade

Non-Tariff Barriers to trade are any policies that distort the importation or export of goods or services that are not through the imposition of a tariff. Technical barriers to trade are a category of Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade. These include policies such as import quotas and export subsidies. As governments' reliance on tariffs steadily declined over the years, non-tariff barriers to trade steadily increased. Their usefulness is due in part because of their opaque nature. They are hard to detect and sometimes they take the shape of policies that have hidden motives. For example, a domestic government might institute a subsidy for a certain industry under the justification to help boost domestic production, while this subsidy produces domestic production, it in turn increases exports of that certain good or service. While the government never specifies it as an export subsidy, it has a similar outcome to one. Non-Tariff Barriers to trade have become increasingly hard to detect and a new method of identification and enforcement might be necessary.



Capacity Building

Certain countries, especially those still considered to be "developing" have difficulties reaping the full benefits of global economic interactions. One of the priorities of the WTO is to provide assistance to developing countries in their attempts to fully integrate into the global economy9. The countries that have been successful integrating into the global economy have seen the highest decreases in poverty levels and increasing living standards. There still are a large number of states that have been unsuccessful in fully joining the global system of economic exchanges. There are also many where trade is failing to make the contribution to development that it should. This issue is a key part of the Doha Agenda and the WTO currently advances this goal through several methods. The WTO sends "technical assistance" to developing countries in instructing officials how their country can gain through the trading system and better explain complex WTO rules. This also leads to developing nations being better able to implement agreements and negotiate with trading partners. Another form of building trade capacity is the building up of infrastructure associated with trade, such as ports and roads. These programs require the WTO's close cooperation with other programs that deal with these areas, such as the United Nations and the World Bank, as well as contributions from member states. Programs such as "Aid for Trade" 10 (a program that distributes aid to developing countries with the intent of building trade capacity and infrastructure) have been a part of the WTO's contribution towards this effort, but the increasing of the scope of these initiatives has been a focus of the Doha Agenda.

Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA)

Non-Agricultural products are goods or services outside of the agricultural sector and encompass more than 90% of international exports11. Another issue on the Doha Agenda is the elimination of tariffs on non-agricultural goods. The current negotiations seek to impose tariff cuts to these goods, while maintaining flexibilities for sensitive industries, especially in developing countries. These include states with small or vulnerable economies (31 are categorized as this), least- developed countries (32 are categorized as this), recently acceded members (RAMS, or states that have joined relatively recently, 16 are categorized as this). The latest text issued on this issue was in 2008 and work on this issue remains to be done.

Special and Differential Provisions

Special and Differential provisions are contained in most WTO agreements and give developing countries a special set of rights apart from developed members. Examples of these included lower mandated tariff reductions or a large time table to implement agreements in order to take their economic situation into consideration 12. The 4th Ministerial conference mandated the review and analyses of these provisions. In the Bali conference, a mechanism to analyze these provisions was set up, this session requires what the next step in this issue should be.

Categorization and Enforcement

As such with Special and Differential provisions, many WTO decisions and agreements require extensive economic analyses and categorization in order to maximize their effectiveness and enforce agreements more efficiently. Currently several monitoring bodies have been set up on certain issues to handle required analyses associated with them, while many others do not13. A decision should be made whether they are necessary and if so, what the next step is with them.

Future of Doha

The Doha Agenda commenced in 2001, and has been held up in the subsequent years over contentious disagreements over issues on the agenda. Progress on these issues has been made slowly over the years. In the years since the commencement of the Doha Agenda, several member states have begun to argue that some of the issues on the agenda are no longer relevant and the agenda should be tabled to address more relevant topics. Failure to make substantial breakthroughs in negotiations has "undermined the credibility of the multilateral trade system." 14 This has led several nations to go back to the bilateral trade agreement approach and seek the development of regional trade blocs. The future of the Doha agenda must be decided, with members deciding to keep negotiations of the current agenda in place, or to close the Doha round and begin discussions on a new set of issues.

- 11 Non-Agricultural Market Access
- 12 Special and Differential Treatment Provisions
- 13 Integrated Trade Intelligence Portal
- 14 New York Times Editorial Board

Alternatively, members could decide that the agenda system itself is antiquated and develop a new framework for future negotiations.

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