

Foreword by the Director-General of the WTO

Trade policy used to be a rather simple matter of defining conditions of access to markets at the border. Little more was needed than rules defining non-discriminatory tariff levels, circumscribing the use of quantitative trade restrictions, and protecting the conditions of market access through the principle of national treatment. But the very success of these simple rules in creating the conditions for successive bouts of market-opening negotiations bred the complex and multi-faceted institution that is the World Trade Organization of today. As tariffs tumbled, all manner of other policies became crucial for continuing market integration. The rules had to follow the reality. It is a brave person now who claims more than a passing familiarity with each and every aspect of the WTO Agreements.

In this fascinating labyrinth of what passes for policy relating to trade, it is unconvincing to argue that there is ever enough research and analysis. There will always be more that needs to be explored and better understood. Every effort to illuminate, to clarify, and to explain the trading system must surely be welcome. But if we are to advance our understanding of what makes sense and what does not, and contribute effectively to international economic cooperation, the quality and integrity of analysis is vital. This has become more especially true in recent years as dozens of developing countries facing formidable development challenges seek progress through meaningful participation in the world trading system. One of the great strengths of the WTO is its commitment to universality. If we are to give meaning to this vision and foster confidence in the fairness of the system, we must ensure its proper design on solid conceptual foundations.

I am proud to associate the WTO Secretariat with the birth of the *World Trade Review*. The journal is committed to promoting high-quality policy analysis and welcomes contributions from a wide range of disciplines and cross-section of contributors. This is not an in-house journal devoted to selling pre-conceived ideas. Its mission is to promote informed and honest debate and to deepen understanding. The journal's editorial independence is central to these objectives. I wish the Editor and the members of the Editorial Board of the *World Trade Review* well in this important endeavour.

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