



Resolution 1269 (2002)¹

Managing globalisation: the role of the World Trade Organisation in the world economy

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly notes with satisfaction the major achievements of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) since its establishment in 1995 and since the Assembly's last statement on WTO activities in its [Resolution 1101 \(1996\)](#). Even though implementation of the Uruguay Round, launched in 1995, has on the whole proceeded satisfactorily, the failure to inaugurate a new round at Seattle in 1999 dealt a serious blow to the world's efforts to strengthen and adapt the global trading system on a basis of greater openness and universally shared principles.
2. The Assembly welcomes the agreement reached in Doha (Qatar) in November 2001 for the pursuit of new WTO negotiations on a broad range of subjects related to international trade and investment. The "Doha Development Agenda" is especially important in order to instil new confidence in a world economy seriously affected by the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September.
3. The new negotiations are all the more necessary as world trade grew by only 2% in 2001 compared to a 12% increase in 2000. Although European trade still shows comparatively healthy growth, especially in central and eastern Europe and in the Russian Federation, this situation cannot be expected to continue in the absence of a strong, worldwide economic recovery. The latter can only come about if rapid progress is made with the new negotiations and if earlier Uruguay Round commitments are fully realised.
4. The Assembly notes with concern the violent protests that have marred many recent international conferences, including the Seattle WTO Summit in 1999. Whilst recognising the widely felt anxiety about globalisation and calling for intensified dialogue between all parties concerned, the Assembly nevertheless condemns violence in all its forms and holds the right to peaceful reunion, as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, to be sacrosanct and to require full respect also by the opponents of globalisation.
5. Developing countries, many of which have made important economic progress thanks to more open, rule-based trade made possible by the WTO, are the first to suffer from any slowdown in world trade such as that observed in 2001. To avoid being marginalised in the world economy, especially through a widening "digital gap" in information and communication technologies (ICTs), they must enjoy better, indeed often privileged, access to the markets of richer countries across the whole range of products and services. Furthermore, Council of Europe member states should increase their funding for WTO efforts to help developing countries implement, at administrative level, their various WTO commitments.
6. The Assembly notes with satisfaction the emphasis given in the Qatar Ministerial Declaration to the interests and concerns of developing countries, and in particular the provisions made to allow these countries better access to patented drugs needed to fight epidemics such as Aids.
7. The Assembly welcomes China's membership of the WTO, as well as that of Chinese Taipei (Taiwan), as from 1 January 2002 and considers this event a milestone in world economic and political development. It also welcomes the recent joining of the WTO by Council of Europe member states Albania, Croatia, Georgia,

1. Assembly debate on 23 January 2002 (5th Sitting) (see [Doc. 9295](#), report of Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Mr Elo). Text adopted by the Assembly on 23 January 2002 (5th Sitting).



Lithuania and Moldova. It hopes that the Russian Federation, with its major population and rapid economic development, will, along with other European countries not yet members, similarly be in a position to join the WTO in the near future.

8. The Assembly recalls its [Resolution 1225 \(2000\)](#) on prospects for a new transatlantic trade relationship, in which it regarded as “vital that this relationship [between Europe and North America] be maintained and strengthened – for the economic, political and security benefit of both continents, and by implication for the world at large”. Given the present more difficult world economic situation, the Assembly in this context stresses the need for all WTO members fully to respect the WTO’s dispute settlement mechanism and, as far as possible, to reach friendly settlement of disputes outside that mechanism in order to avoid overburdening it. The Assembly is very anxious that the dispute settlement mechanism should provide effective help in preventing and alleviating the painful cost of adapting to global markets experienced by developing countries, and frequently also by certain sectors in the rich countries.

9. The Assembly stresses the importance for global trade development of pursuing efforts to obtain solutions that will better protect the safety and stability of international financial markets.

10. Finally, the Assembly notes its long-standing concern that environmental protection and core labour standards should form an integral part of world economic development. It therefore welcomes the conviction expressed in the Qatar Ministerial Declaration that “protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development can and must be mutually supportive”. It is also important that the agreements on core labour standards established within the International Labour Organization are ratified and respected by all WTO members.