

# WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO A WORLD WITHOUT THE WTO?

Wednesday  
June 10, 2020  
1130–1300 Hours  
(Indian Standard Time)

Along with a huge number of losses of human lives and concomitant miseries, the on-going global pandemic as a result of novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is creating havoc in all walks of life. Economic, social and political life across the world has got disrupted and is expected to unfold further in the coming weeks, months and may be years. It is having and will have serious ramifications across various sectors, international trade being a major one of them.

Food and pharmaceuticals including medical devices are and will be expected to face significant supply-side shocks. This is evident from a number of export restrictions and other measures on such products that several WTO members have put in place since the advent of this global pandemic. Equally important to note the proposals put forward by countries like Australia, Singapore to the WTO in addressing such measures.

Unless they are addressed in a balanced manner by taking into account all interests, such measures and counter-measures may spiral into a slippery slope of protectionism resulting in spill-over effects from supply to demand-side shocks.

As a result, other than immediate consequences such as loss of producer and consumer welfare, there will be a serious damage to the system of multilateralism, which has underwritten the security, peace and prosperity of the world since the Second World War. Can the humanity afford it to happen?

Therefore, other than debating this broader role of the WTO in underwriting security, peace and prosperity, this Webinar will discuss the following specific suggestions for trade multilateralism under the aegis of the WTO to reinvest itself in a new avatar:

- Creation of a critical mass of support for the European Union-Canada proposal for reforming the WTO's dispute settlement system.
- Revival of the built-in agenda of the existing WTO agreements by advocating for greater transparency in the functioning of the WTO's Committees
- Absorption of the values of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation for future multilateral negotiations

## Speakers and Moderator



**Supachai Panitchpakdi**  
Former Director General, WTO and  
Former Secretary-General, UNCTAD



**Pradeep S Mehta**  
Secretary General, CUTS International



**Mari Pangestu**  
Managing Director for Development Policy  
and Partnerships, The World Bank, Former  
Trade Minister, Indonesia\*



**Manickam Supperamaniam**  
Former Ambassador of Malaysia to the WTO



**Kishore Mahbubani**  
Distinguished Fellow, Asia Research Institute,  
National University of Singapore



**Tanya Spisbah**  
Director, Australia India Institute



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The webinar will be organised through Zoom platform.  
The meeting link will be sent to the registered participants.

To register: <https://bit.ly/2Xg87gV>