

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The range of issues that policymakers and negotiators must deal with in the run-up to, and during, services negotiations can be overwhelming. As in all matters of such complexity, the onus should be on the proper delegation of responsibilities, equally proper inter-agency coordination in order to create whole-of-government positions, wide-spread consultation of all pertinent stakeholders and adequate preparation through studying the export and defensive interests of the PTA partner. Developing countries and transition economies must have a clearly formulated vision of where they want to go in the future and how the contemplated PTA negotiations may help to get them there. Equally important is the need to have a clearly formulated set of objectives, both offensive and defensive, with regard to one's own services markets as well as a strategic game plan for achieving them, a sense of what should be assigned to the trade negotiating process and what is more properly in the domain of (unilateral) domestic reform efforts. Negotiators must understand the uses and limits of Aid for Trade commitments, and approach negotiations with a set of clearly formulated demands with well-developed arguments on why the demanded commitments are necessary to achieving the country's economic development or other goals.

Conducting thorough research on previous PTAs entered into with other Parties by a future PTA partner will give policymakers valuable insights into what they can expect in terms of the scope and depth of market opening and rule-making demands. Study of other PTAs entered into by third parties will give policymakers and negotiators an understanding of all the possibilities available to them in negotiating and configuring rules under such treaty frameworks, both under North-South and South-South agreements. Conducting a thorough cost-benefit analysis of the likely implications of the planned PTA, and sharing these results as widely as possible with stakeholders, will also assist negotiators to better articulate offensive and defensive interests as well as informing those interest groups most likely to be affected, thereby raising the legitimacy of the eventually negotiated outcome.

Finally, any agreement is only as good as the degree to which it is adhered to and implemented by the contracting Parties. Preferential trade agreements must therefore be backed up with appropriate institutional structures for monitoring implementation as well as operationally effective rules on enforcing compliance in the event of a perceived breach by one or both Parties. Policymakers and negotiators must therefore familiarize themselves with the various options available to them for drafting such institutional and dispute settlement provisions, and be wary of any attempts by their PTA partner to remove certain clauses from their application.