

AMERICAS CHOICE THE SLOW PATH TO GLOBAL TRADE COOPERATION

ABSTRACT

Free trade agreements are blossoming throughout the Americas and indeed throughout the world. Trade alliances are formed primarily for economic reasons but also due to political considerations. It is frequently claimed that regional trade liberalization schemes are a preparatory stage for larger schemes. This paper will develop the theme that regional trade agreements are a pre-requisite to multilateralism. In order to do so, it will answer two questions in regard with the path to global trade cooperation from the viewpoint of the Americas: Must the Americas choose between regionalism or multilateralism? And is hemispheric multilateralism a precursor to global multilateralism?