

## Trade, Law *and* Development

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### CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

#### *Special Issue on Trade Facilitation*

Founded in 2009, the philosophy of *Trade, Law and Development* has been to generate and sustain a constructive and democratic debate on emergent issues in international economic law and to serve as a forum for the discussion and distribution of ideas. In keeping with these ideals, the Board of Editors is pleased to announce *Trade Facilitation* as the theme for its next *Special Issue* (Vol. XI, No. 1).

Trade facilitation is the simplification, modernisation, and harmonisation of international trade procedures. It helps simplify customs procedures by reducing costs and improving their speed and efficiency through a multilateral understanding. The Trade Facilitation Agreement ("TFA") entered into force on February 22, 2017 and is one of the first major new agreements reached by the member countries of the WTO since its establishment in 1995. It contains provisions for expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, sets out measures for effective cooperation between customs and other appropriate authorities on trade facilitation, and contains provisions for technical assistance and capacity building in this area.

There is extensive empirical data to suggest that trade facilitation can significantly boost trade. However, several concerns exist regarding the projected benefits of the TFA, its implementation, and its enforcement in an increasingly protectionist trade environment. There is also uncertainty as to how the TFA will bring uniformity and consistency in the border management of developing and least-developed countries and the role of the Committee on Trade Facilitation in this respect. Moreover, most regional and bilateral preferential trade agreements negotiated in the recent past have incorporated varying provisions related to trade facilitation. It is unclear whether the TFA has been successfully able to achieve broad application of these commitments. These subjects have not received sufficient attention from mainstream academia yet. Consequently, existing literature is inadequate to effectively equip policymakers to deal with such issues.

Alongside this, India has been championing trade facilitation in services at the WTO. Trade in services too faces various barriers at and behind the border, which poses difficulties for service providers from developing countries like India in accessing key markets. India's proposal focussed on making existing market access meaningful through reduction in transaction costs arising from unnecessary regulation. The proposal received a mixed response. Some Members like China even supported the proposed agreement going beyond the scope of domestic regulation under GATS, while others expressed concerns regarding the need for a separate legal text for trade facilitation in services and the nature and scope of the obligations put forth therein.

This *Special Issue*, currently scheduled for publication in July 2019, will provide an ideal platform to deliberate on trade facilitation initiatives at the WTO and how they relate to more regional initiatives. Accordingly, the Board of Editors is pleased to invite original and unpublished

submissions for the *Special Issue on Trade Facilitation* for publication as ‘Articles’, ‘Notes’, ‘Comments’ and ‘Book Reviews’.

Manuscripts may be submitted via e-mail, ExpressO, or through the TL&D website. For further information about the journal and submission guidelines, please visit [www.tradelawdevelopment.com](http://www.tradelawdevelopment.com).

In case of any queries, please feel free to contact us at: editors[at]tradelawdevelopment[dot]com.

**LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS: 15<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2019**

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**PATRON:** P.P. Saxena **ADVISORS:** Raj Bhala | Jagdish Bhagwati | B.S. Chimni | Glenn Wiser | Daniel B. Magraw, Jr. | Vaughan Lowe | Ricardo Ramirez Hernandez | W. Michael Reisman | M. Sornarajah **FACULTY-IN-CHARGE:** Rosmy Joan **BOARD OF EDITORS:** Mridul Godha | Rakshita Goyal | Anirudh Gotety | Noyonika Nair | Radhika Parthasarathy | Ipsita Gupta | Shreya Singh | Averal Sibal | Gautami Govindarajan | Iti Mishra | Mihir Mathur | Rishabh Meena | Shefalika Shekhawat | Amogh Pareek | Anirudh Sood | Apoorva Singh | Parnika Mittal | Sahil Verma | Sarthak Singla