**WTO DA**

A. Uniqueness - Sanctions are currently authorized and imposed under the WTO’s dispute settlement system to prevent the global trade system from collapsing into protectionism and trade wars. Sanctions are the enforcement mechanism of the WTO. Lawrence[[1]](#footnote-1) writes,

The WTO provides more benefits to the United States than GATT did. Its provisions cover more issues that are of interest to the United States: The WTO includes rules on standards and technical barriers to trade; it protects intellectual property; it covers agriculture and services. But the biggest advantage of **the WTO** is that it **includes a mechanism to enforce** these **rules: the dispute settlement system. This has reduced the need for the U**nited **S**tates **to resort to unilateral retaliatory measures, limiting an important source of tension between the U**nited **S**tates **and its partners** and so generating a significant foreign-policy dividend. Indeed, it is striking that **since the advent of the dispute settlement system, the U**nited **S**tates **has generally abided by its agreement not to impose unilateral trade sanctions against WTO members without WTO authorization.**5 Naturally, the system has not been able to solve all the disputes that have arisen. But it has at least been able to contain the effects of these disputes. **By authorizing retaliation but limiting its size, the WTO helps to prevent conflicts in which both parties and the trade system as a whole could be severely damaged.**

At a time when the Doha Round of trade negotiations has stalled and public opinion polls register skepticism about trade, it is worth emphasizing the contribution of enforceable rules to the trading system’s legitimacy. Policymakers in Washington often suggest that support for trade can be bolstered by the use of antidumping suits and other trade-restricting measures that supposedly punish foreigners who “cheat” in order to win U.S. markets. In this view, the WTO’s dispute settlement tribunals damage political support for trade, since the panels have frequently ruled against the use of U.S. trade remedies. But this “safety valve” argument is shortsighted. The use of antidumping suits is a game that more than one nation can play: **In the absence of the WTO’s dispute settlement tribunals, U.S. trading partners would obstruct U.S. exports by resorting to their own “fair-trade” measures, and U.S. resentment of the trading system would be heightened. Enforceable rules offer the best hope of forestalling a tit-for-tat use of protective barriers that would further contribute to the deterioration of support for trade.** In sum, and contrary to what many policymakers suppose, vigorous dispute settlement tribunals make the revival of the Doha Round more likely.

B. Link – The affirmative bans the use of economic sanctions. “Ought not” implies a prohibition, and the affirmative’s benefits are derived from a world without sanctions.

C. Impact - A strong WTO with sanctions as an enforcement mechanism is key to preventing conflict-ridden bilateral agreements that render U.S.-China trade conflict inevitable. Ikenberry[[2]](#footnote-2) writes,

**The WTO is at a critical stage.** The basic standard of nondiscrimination is at risk thanks to the proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements. Meanwhile, there are growing doubts over whether the WTO can in fact carry out trade liberalization, particularly in agriculture, that benefits developing countries. These issues may seem narrow, but the fundamental character of the liberal international order -- its commitment to universal rules of openness that spread gains widely -- is at stake. Similar doubts haunt a host of other multilateral agreements -- on global warming and nuclear nonproliferation, among others -- and they thus also demand renewed U.S. leadership. **The strategy** here **is** not simply to ensure that the Western order is open and rule-based. It is also **to make sure that the order does not fragment into an array of bilateral and "minilateral" arrangements, causing the U**nited **S**tates **to find itself tied to only a few key states** in various regions. **Under such a scenario, China would have an opportunity to build its own set of bilateral and "minilateral" pacts. As a result, the world would be broken into competing U.S. and Chinese spheres.** The more security and economic relations are multilateral and all-encompassing, the more the global system retains its coherence.

And, unrestrained U.S.-China trade conflict will escalate to a massively destructive war. Liu[[3]](#footnote-3) writes,

The resultant global economic depression from a trade war between the world's two largest economies will in turn heighten further mutual recriminations. **An external curb from the US of Chinese export trade will accelerate a redirection of Chinese growth momentum inward, increasing Chinese power, including military power, while further encouraging anti-US sentiment in Chinese policy circles. This** in turn **will validate US apprehension of a China threat, increasing the prospect for armed conflict. A war between the US and China can have no winners**, particularly on the political front. **Even if the US were to prevail militarily** through its technological superiority, **the political cost of military victory would be so severe that the US as it currently exists would not be recognizable after the conflict** and the original geopolitical aim behind the conflict would remain elusive, as the Vietnam War and the Iraq war have demonstrated. By comparison, **the Vietnam and Iraq conflicts, destructive as they have been to the US social fabric, are mere minor scrimmages compared with a war with China.**

Finally, a strong WTO prevents trade wars across the world. Waldmann[[4]](#footnote-4) writes,

Trade is not a panacea for the political, economic and social problems of the world. But it is a force for peace and cross-cultural contact. Countries are less likely to go to war against their trading partners than they are against strangers. **The WTO** furthers the process of **protect[s]**ing **against** commercial skirmishes and potential **trade wars by forging agreement among nations on trade protocols. Without the WTO, trade would be too dangerous a proposition for countries to leave to their trade ministries, and eventually trade disputes could become national security issues.** A non-WTO world would more closely resemble the international economy before World War II, where countries used trade as tools of foreign policy, and international commerce was a pawn of aggressor states. As Franklin D. Roosevelt's former secretary of state Cordell Hull said, "When goods do not cross borders, armies do." Fortunately we do not live in that world. Indeed, if the WTO didn't exist, we would have to create it. And that is precisely what the United States and 22 other countries did in 1948. Today, 134 members of the WTO are dedicated to preventing trade conflicts from getting out of hand. By nature, the wheels of international law move slowly, but the WTO patiently and continuously improves its rules and institutions in order to make the world a better place. Through successive rounds of trade talks going back to 1949, the GATT and its successor the WTO have reduced tariffs on goods from industrial countries from an average of more than 40 percent in 1948 to today's 3.9 percent. As a result, trade has exploded; today it is 26 times the volume of 1949. **Through** GATT and **WTO, countries have** tackled and solved some of the thorniest problems of trade, and have **settled hundreds of trade disputes. The WTO has already:** Dramatically reduced tariffs and other barriers to trade, so that today's exporters and consumers are able to shop for the best deals almost anywhere in the world; **Solved more than 100 trade disputes in the past four years between countries before they got out of hand and turned into bitter trade wars.**

1. Robert Z. Lawrence [Professor of International Trade and Investment at the John F. Kennedy School of Government]. “The United States and the WTO Dispute Settlement System,” COUNCIL ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS SPECIAL REPORT, March 2007, p. 6. http://www.cfr.org/publication/12871/united\_states\_and\_the\_wto\_dispute\_settlement\_system.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. G. John Ikenberry [Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton]. “The Rise of China and the Future of the West.” Foreign Affairs. January/February 2008 Issue. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Henry C K Liu [Chairman of a New York-based private investment group]. Asia Times. 2005. <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/global_economy/GH20Dj01.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Raymond Waldmann [Vice President for International Relations at Boeing]. “World Trade Organization Important to Citizens of City and State.” Seattle Post-Intelligencer. May 11th, 1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)