



Faculty of Legal Sciences

School of International Studies

The Crisis of Multilateralism in the World Trade
Organization. A Systematic Literature Review

**Project prior to obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in
International Studies**

Author:

Tabatha Mayreth Abril Campoverde

Advisor:

Luis Bernardo Tonon Ordóñez

Cuenca – Ecuador

2026

With all my love to my mother, Lady Zoraya, for her unconditional love, because she trusts me even when I doubted myself, for being my rock to keep going forward and my refuge when I needed more. To my father, Christian Armando, my eternal love, my beloved angel, because he has been my inspiration to live, with his protection I know that I can walk without fear. To my sister, Ashlee Yarixa, for being my best friend, my life partner and my baby forever, I am sure that with her I will never be alone. To my nephew Víctor Armando, who arrived in the right moment, to fulfill my life with colors. To Miguel Ángel, for showing me the real meaning of family and that it is built on love. To my grandmother, Guillermina María, for all of the years of love, support and teachings. To my favorite uncle, Adarcilio Humbertino, for his jokes and love. To my uncle-grandfather, Dr. Victor Manuel, for all of the afternoons of stories and affection, that only a grandpa knows how to give. And finally, my loves Negra, Perla, Miel, and Mike, for their company and unconditional love. Thanks, because without you I would not be able to keep going.

And, most importantly, to myself, Tabatha Mayreth, for not giving up and going forward, because even with difficult moments, we were able to overcome everything, we have experienced unimaginable things, and at the end, we were able to be happy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God and Virgin Mary, for helping me to find my path, for being my support in all of the difficult processes and for protect me. To my family, especially my mother, for giving me the courage to go ahead and showing me what I am capable of, because all of the things that I am today are thanks to her, because no matter the circumstance, I know that together we can face any storm. Thank you for being my role model and teaching me to face life with courage despite the suffering. To my best friend, Doménica Pauleth, for being my light in the darkness, for walk by my side and never leaving me go. To my godparents, Fabiola del Rosario and Diego Xavier, for being my guardian angels. To my aunt and godmother, Yeny Lisbet, for all of the support through the years. I want to thank my thesis advisor, Economist Luis Tonon, for his support and guidance throughout this process. To engineer María Inés Acosta, for her constant support throughout my entire university career. Likewise, to my friends, Camila, Katherin, Lesly, Randy, and Solange, thank you for your affection and for showing me that I am not hard to love.

To everyone who has been by my side, thank you for being my support and for reminding me that you will always be there for me al every step pf my life.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures.....	iv
ABSTRACT	v
RESUMEN	vi
1. Introduction	1
2. Theoretical Framework.....	1
3. State of the Art.....	5
4. Methodology.....	7
5. Results of the Review	10
5.1 Economic Factors	10
5.2 Political Factors	14
5.3 Reform Proposal	17
6. Discussion.....	19
7. Conclusions	23
8. References	25

List of Figures

Figure 1 PRISMA Flow Diagrame	9
--	---

The Crisis of Multilateralism in the World Trade Organization. A Systematic Literature Review

ABSTRACT

The international trade system is experiencing tension in one of its principal institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO), which has faced persistent difficulties to achieve consensus that has been evident since the Doha Round in 2001. This organization has established guidelines and rules for fair negotiations among its members. Unfortunately, since its creation, it has been the subject of criticism, as well as a lack of commitment from member states in decision-making processes, leading to a set of institutional blockades that reflect the crisis of multilateralism within the WTO. The objective of this study was to identify the factors causing the consequences of this crisis during the 2015-2025 period, through a systematic literature review based on the PRISMA methodology. The results confirm the existence of a crisis within the WTO and multilateral trading system, which is evidenced by the different factors such as the blockade of the Appellate Body, the stalemate of multilateral negotiations, the organization's inability to control trade wars and the proliferation of bilateral and regional agreements, resulting in a fragmentation of the trade system.

Keywords: Blockade, international trade, consensus, stalemate, WTO, Appellate body.

Crisis del Multilateralismo en la Organización Mundial del Comercio. Una Revisión Sistemática de Literatura

RESUMEN

El sistema internacional de comercio enfrenta tensiones en una de sus principales instituciones, la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC), la cual ha tenido dificultad constante para alcanzar el consenso, reflejado desde la Ronda de Doha en 2001. Esta organización ha sentado las bases y normas para negociaciones justas entre sus miembros, desafortunadamente desde su creación ha sido foco de críticas y falta de compromiso por parte de los Estados en la toma de decisiones, esta ha presentado una serie de bloqueos, lo cual refleja la crisis del multilateralismo en la OMC. La presente investigación tuvo el objetivo de identificar los factores causantes de las consecuencias de la crisis durante el período 2015-2025, por medio de una revisión sistemática de literatura bajo el método PRISMA. Los resultados confirman la existencia de la crisis dentro de la OMC y el sistema de comercio multilateral, esto se evidencia en factores como el bloqueo del Órgano de Apelación, estancamiento de las negociaciones multilaterales, la incapacidad de la organización para controlar las guerras comerciales y aumento de acuerdos bilaterales y regionales, lo cual ha demostrado un sistema comercial fragmentado.

Palabras clave: Bloqueo, comercio internacional, consenso, estancamiento, OMC, órgano de apelación.