• The concept of plurilateral agreements could date back to decades.
  ✓ The Code on Subsidies in Tokyo Round
  ✓ The Plurilateral Agreements as annexes to GATT
  ✓ The Agreement on Government Procurements
  ✓ The Agreement on Information Technology Products

• Nature of the plurilateral agreements
  ✓ Non-MFN basis: benefits limited to the Parties, “quasi-FTAs”, such as GPA
  ✓ MFN basis: benefits extends to the non-Parties, “voluntary liberalization”, such as ITA

• Reasons for pursuing plurilateral agreements
  ✓ Long stalemate of multilateral trade talks
  ✓ Like-minded groups liberalize for the sake of their mutual interests to create incentive for multilateral agreement
• Relations between Plurilateral and Multilateral Agreements

✓ Generally speaking: NOT AGAINST EACH OTHER

➢ The Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures in the Uruguay Round V.S. Code on Subsidies in Tokyo Round
➢ The Agreement on Government Procurement in the Uruguay Round V.S. Code on Government Procurement in Tokyo Round

✓ Needs to be analyzed on a case-by-case basis

➢ Whether to launch within the framework of WTO
➢ Whether adequate transparency is provided
➢ Whether subject to the WTO rules including DSB
➢ Possibility for latecomer to join
➢ Possibility to “be mutlilateralized”
• Debates between Pluri- and Multi- Agreements in the current context

• some Members took Services as the initiative to negotiate “plurilateral” (?) agreement

  ✓ View of the AGAINST: divert Members’ attention, ignorance of development dimensions, discriminate against the developing countries, break the DDA mandate and ignore the negotiations results

  ✓ View of the FOR: create momentum for revitalizing DDA, beneficial to developing countries, eg. The Warwick Commission Report on the Future of the WTO
• My view
  ✓ What kind of “plurilateral” are we talking about? FTA-like or “plurilateral as plurilateral”? GPA-like or ITA-like?
  ✓ Whatever, FTA or plurilateral, not alternative for DDA
  ✓ To revitalize or to rehypnotize the DDA?

• Implication for developing countries
  ✓ Less bargaining chips
  ✓ Hard to form broad interests groups
  ✓ Less chance to balance among different topics
  ✓ Inability to push the topics to their own interests