

New Zealand India Research Institute Webinar Series 2020:
'Conversations in the days of pandemic'
WEBINAR VII: LECTURE

**India's Foreign Economic Policy under Modi: Negotiations and Narratives
in the WTO and beyond**
by Prof. Amrita Narlikar



For all the complexities of India's politics, Prime Minister Narendra Modi seemed to have his economic path cut out for him. His "Aache din aane waale hein" campaign, which had won him a resounding election victory in 2014 for his first term, suggested that Modi's primary goal was growth and development for his country and people, and hence also an agenda of economic reform. Focusing specifically on India's negotiations in the context of the WTO, I show in this paper that India has continued to hold on to its former trade policy priorities and negotiation positions and adopted even more hard-line positions in some cases. Interestingly though, the same policy priorities and negotiation patterns that had ill-served India in the past, may now no longer be a liability. This is only in part a credit to the Modi administration per se. Rather, it is mainly due to the rise of the phenomenon of Weaponized Interdependence, which in turn legitimizes – sometimes even necessitates – the securitization of foreign economic policy, and more specifically, trade politics. Taken in this changing context and if it plays its cards right, India's historic and oft reviled caution in opening up its markets and reluctance to integrate in global value chains, may yet allow it to have the last laugh.

Speaker Bio: Prof. Amrita Narlikar is the President of the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) and Professor at Hamburg University. She is also a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation. Amrita's research expertise lies in the areas of multilateralism, international negotiation, WTO, and rising powers. Her most recent book has been published by Cambridge University Press (*Poverty Narratives in International Trade Negotiations and Beyond*, New York: CUP, 2020). Her previous books include: *Bargaining with a Rising India: Lessons from the Mahabharata* (co-authored) Oxford: OUP, 2014 and *The Oxford Handbook on the World Trade Organization* (co-edited) Oxford: CUP, 2012. For further details, please see: <https://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/team/narlikar>

📅 6 August, Thursday 2020 ⌚ 7.00 - 8.00 PM (NZ time)

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