MAKING TRADE POLICY GREAT AGAIN: WHAT POLICYMAKERS SHOULD LEARN FROM TRUMP’S ELECTION

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ABSTRACT

Donald Trump’s election as President of the United States (hereinafter “U.S.”) of America offers a cautionary tale about how trade policy depends on the continuous support of citizens and politicians. Trade liberalisation advocates should ask themselves whether traditional policies are so detached from the reality of citizens’ quotidian concerns that they can be easily instrumentalised for electoral gain. There is a disconnect between international trade policies and domestic concerns, with many citizens seeing themselves as the losers of the international trade game. Pro-trade politicians and policymakers should acknowledge that trade policy benefits countries as a whole but makes some citizens richer and others poorer. Revitalising consensus on trade policy among political circles and the community at large requires looking back, underlining the good things that trade liberalisation has achieved; but also looking forward, devising new ways of making trade policies more inclusive and equitative for everyone.

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