Steptoe is widely recognized as one of the world's leading law firms in matters arising under the agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Steptoe has, for over a decade, consistently been one of only two law firms in the world that received a top-tier ranking from Chambers Global for its WTO practice.

Steptoe has advised WTO Members and private sector interests in more than 50 different WTO dispute settlement proceedings. Steptoe has represented and advised clients at every stage of dispute settlement, and is among the few law firms in the world that regularly appear on behalf of WTO Members in both panel and Appellate Body proceedings. We work with our clients to develop case strategies, participate in the consultations process, prepare written submissions, and present arguments before panels and the Appellate Body.

Steptoe has litigated a wide array of issues relating to the interpretation and application of the WTO Agreements. The WTO disputes in which Steptoe has been involved include disputes relating to trade remedies, trade in goods, trade in services, intellectual property rights, and technical barriers to trade, among others. Many of these disputes have resulted in landmark panel and Appellate Body reports interpreting key provisions of the WTO Agreements.

Together with our colleagues in Steptoe's Trade Policy and Investor-State Arbitration Groups, we advise sovereign and commercial clients on how to use international trade and investment agreements to achieve their objectives. Our understanding of WTO disciplines, along with the role that WTO dispute settlement can play in enforcing those disciplines, is an important element of Steptoe's comprehensive approach to addressing market access issues and other barriers to trade and investment faced by our clients.

Steptoe's leading WTO practice reflects the firm's decades-long involvement in the field of public international law and treaty-based arbitration. The advice that Steptoe provides to WTO Member governments is just one example of the work that Steptoe does for sovereign governments across a variety of different practice areas.

**Noteworthy**

- *Chambers USA*, International Trade: Trade Remedies & Trade Policy, Nationwide (2017-2020)
- *Chambers USA*, International Trade, Nationwide (2005-2016)
- *Chambers Asia-Pacific*, International Trade/WTO, China (2011-2021)
Representative Matters

Steptoe lawyers have been involved in many of the most complex and high-profile WTO disputes since the founding of the WTO in 1995, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) before it. For example:

- **Australia** — *Certain Measures Concerning Trademarks and Other Plain Packaging Requirements Applicable to Tobacco Products and Packaging* (DS434, DS435, DS441, DS458, DS467). We represented the Government of Australia in connection with the tobacco plain packaging disputes, which were among the largest and most complex disputes ever to be filed at the WTO. These disputes implicated critically important questions concerning the relationship between measures to protect public health and the trade-related obligations that WTO members have under the WTO Agreements. We helped Australia achieve sweeping victories before the panel and the Appellate Body.

- **Argentina** — *Measures Relating to Trade in Goods and Services* (DS453). We represented the Government of Argentina in a case that upheld Argentina’s use of defensive tax measures against countries that do not adhere to international standards of tax transparency.

- **Brazil** — *Certain Measures Concerning Taxation and Charges* (DS472, DS497). We represented the Government of Brazil in relation to complaints by the European Union and Japan against the principal elements of Brazil’s industrial policy. The dispute concerned the relationship between permissible domestic production subsidies and impermissible domestic content requirements under the GATT 1994, the SCM Agreement, and the TRIMs Agreement.

- **United States** — *Countervailing and Anti-dumping Measures on Certain Products from China* (DS449). We represented the Government of China in this dispute challenging the consistency of US legislation retroactively authorizing the imposition of countervailing duties on imports from so-called “non-market economies” (including China) with the transparency requirements in Article X of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. China disagreed with the panel’s central legal finding, and the Appellate Body reversed this finding, and agreed with the interpretation that was advanced by China.

- **United States** — *Anti-Dumping and Countervailing Duties (China)* (DS379) and **United States — Countervailing Duty Measures on Certain Products from China** (DS437). We represented the Government of China in these disputes establishing important jurisprudence concerning the interpretation and application of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.

- **China** — *Electronic Payment Services* (DS413). We represented the Government of China in the first dispute arising under the General Agreement on Trade in Services relating to trade in financial services.

- Represented the Canadian softwood lumber industry in all aspects of the WTO litigation over the past 20 years relating to trade in softwood lumber between Canada and the United States.
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