

There are also new 21st-century issues to explore—such as trade in services. This trade is already worth \$5 trillion a year, or two-thirds of global GDP.¹⁴ However, the barriers to trade in services are extremely high—equivalent to tariffs of some 30 to 50 percent.¹⁵

One way forward would be to push for so-called “plurilateral” trade agreements—that is, deals among a limited numbers of like-minded countries that agree to work within the framework of the World Trade Organization. Such deals would be open—on the same terms—to all WTO members.

Similarly, there is room to boost trade in digital products, for example, by establishing freedom of data flows that could help realize the full potential of global e-commerce.

■ Conclusion

Some 50 years ago, the Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan described how technology had shrunk the world into a “global village”.

Today’s generation of leaders and policymakers will be measured by their ability to create a global village on a human scale—a place where people can find a safe and prosperous home for themselves and their children.

The IMF—with its analytical and financial resources—will continue to push for and help in this endeavor.

Economic openness and collaboration is in our DNA, too. It is the very reason for which the IMF was founded.

Thank you very much.

■ ENDNOTES

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