

Economic Security Dashboard

Methodology Note

Version 1

Last updated: 06 September 2026

Documents screened: 135 WTO documents circulated between 1 January 2026 and 15 August 2026

Documents covered: 23

1. Purpose and scope

The Economic Security Dashboard maps how WTO Members and other participants engage with governance issues in WTO discussions.

In its initial phase the Dashboard provides a structured empirical record of how security-related trade measures and policy concerns are raised, defended, challenged, discussed and framed in WTO bodies, organised into five security sub-domains: Export Controls, Sanctions, Security Tariffs, Strategic Autonomy, and Supply Chains. These are explained in section 5.4.

The Dashboard records how Members frame trade issues in security terms. It does not measure the legality, effect or outcome of any measure, and it does not assess whether a security justification is well founded.

The sub-domain taxonomy distinguishes security-related interventions from ordinary trade, industrial policy, development or domestic economic measures that carry no security, resilience or strategic-autonomy rationale. A subsidy, local-content requirement or trade remedy is not included merely because it has economic or trade significance. It is included where the intervention itself connects the measure to security, resilience, strategic autonomy, coercion or a related security rationale.

The Dashboard is developed in phases and on a best-efforts basis. **The present version codes and summarises security-related interventions from WTO documents.** Additional sources will be incorporated in subsequent phases, together with documents not available or not identified in the current version. The present version should not be read as a comprehensive record of all WTO interventions or all trade-policy discussions.

2. Conceptual anchors

The domain definition and the five sub-domains derive from three anchor sources rather than being constructed ad-hoc:

- the legal frame — GATT Article XXI and linked DSB reports, which supply the essential-security vocabulary recurring throughout the underlying dataset;
- the economic frame — the WTO World Trade Report 2023, which frames economic security as resilience and treats security-driven trade policy as policy directed at minimising the risk of very low welfare under adverse shocks;

- the policy frame — the Joint Communication on a European Economic Security Strategy, JOIN(2023) 20 final, and its four risk categories.

Two boundaries follow. WTO Members have not agreed any definition of economic security, and at least one Member has formally stated that economic security and supply-chain resilience fall outside WTO competence; that contestation is recorded as data rather than resolved by the coding.

3. Sources and scope of review

3.1 Documents

Documents are identified and sourced from the official WTO website and from WTO Documents Online (<https://docs.wto.org>). The underlying dataset covers meeting minutes and records; communications and written submissions; consultation documents such as proposals, recommendations and discussion papers; statements, reports and presentations; decisions and legal instruments; and written question-and-answer documents such as subsidy-notification replies. Dispute settlement reports, Member notifications (such as TBT or SPS Notifications), and ordinary competition or trade-remedy interventions are excluded unless they fall within the defined security scope.

3.2 WTO bodies screened

The following bodies have been screened for this version: General Council, including the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and the WTO Reform tracks; Council for Trade in Goods; Committee on Market Access; Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures; Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade; Committee on Trade-Related Investment Measures; Council for TRIPS and the Working Group on Trade and Transfer of Technology; Committee on Trade and Environment; Committee on Trade and Development, including Aid for Trade and the Work Programme on Small Economies; and Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform.

A body listed above with no entries has been screened and found negative, not left unscreened. Additional bodies will be added as the dataset expands.

3.3 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis is a participant engagement on a particular issue in a particular WTO document. One row represents one substantive intervention or contribution by one Member or participant. The unit is not confined to statements made on the floor of a meeting: a written submission, communication, or written question or reply that is itself security-relevant is equally codable.

Where a document is otherwise out of scope but contains a single in-scope passage, that passage alone is coded and the paragraph reference locates it. The database therefore contains multiple entries from the same document and multiple entries from the same Member.

4. Coding methodology

4.1 Workflow

The coding process combines AI-assisted extraction with expert verification. Claude.ai (Anthropic) was used to identify candidate interventions, locate the relevant paragraphs, propose preliminary classifications under the taxonomy, draft interaction summaries and flag borderline cases. The expert coder remained responsible for validating every coding decision against the source text. No entry

enters the database on an unreviewed AI classification, and the underlying WTO document is the authoritative source for every entry.

Documents are screened using the taxonomy and its associated terms. Keyword searching is used for initial triage only and is not determinative in either direction. The absence of a keyword does not exclude one, because security-related discussion frequently occurs under agenda items whose titles contain no security terminology. Every document admitted to the review stage is therefore read in full, section by section, rather than filtered on titles, agenda headings or keyword frequency.

4.2 The security-sense test

Terms such as “security”, “resilience”, “supply chain”, “strategic”, “sovereignty” and “coercion” are in wide general circulation at the WTO and appear routinely in environmental, developmental, commercial and regulatory contexts. An intervention qualifies only where the term carries a security, resilience or strategic-autonomy rationale in the intervention itself. The boundary rules below were settled on decided cases during the coding exercise and are applied consistently.

Situation	Treatment
A tariff where the imposing Member expressly invokes Article XXI or essential security interests	In scope, coded Core under Security Tariffs.
A trade-remedy or unfair-practice tariff with a strategic-technology flavour but no asserted national-security rationale	In scope, contextual. Coded only where a genuine strategic-technology rationale is present.
Overcapacity, subsidy and level-playing-field complaints	In scope only where the intervention is framed as a security or strategic-dependency risk. Complaints framed purely as market distortion or trade remedy are excluded.
Food security	Out of scope.
A “national security” regulatory-objective code attached to a product-safety or conformity-assessment measure notification	Out of scope, unless a security rationale is advanced in an actual submission or intervention.
Conformity-assessment, cybersecurity or encryption measures whose stated objectives or named features are security-type, debated in market-access terms	In scope, contextual.
General WTO-reform, “trade turbulence” or systemic-resilience appeals	Out of scope absent a security rationale or a security-framed measure. “Resilience” applied to the trading system itself does not qualify.
Public-order, border-control or law-enforcement security	Out of scope. The sub-domains target geopolitical, strategic-autonomy and economic-coercion concerns, not domestic law enforcement.

Situation	Treatment
Climate and environmental instruments, such as carbon border measures and deforestation regulations	Out of scope, unless a specifically security-related criterion within the instrument is itself in issue.

The detailed inclusion rules, exclusions and coding caps applied within this framework are maintained in a separate coding guide used by the coding team.

Every included entry is internally classified as Core or Contextual. Core entries concern an intervention explicitly about economic or national security, or about a security-framed measure. Contextual entries capture interventions where the security dimension is genuinely present but is not the principal subject of the agenda item or statement. Interventions that neither satisfy an inclusion rule nor clearly fall within an exclusion are set aside for review and are not carried into the published dataset until resolved.

5. Content of the database

5.1 Fields

Each entry records the following. Certain working fields used during coding and review are not published.

Field	Description
Document Symbol	WTO document symbol, allowing retrieval from WTO Documents Online.
Date	Date the document was circulated.
Title	Document title as published, including the meeting date where applicable.
WTO Forum	The body in which the intervention was made or to which the document was submitted.
Participant	The Member, group or participant making the intervention.
Reference Paragraph	Paragraph or section reference locating the intervention within the document.
Stance	The position taken by the participant (section 5.2).
Domain	The analytical domain. In this version, National & Economic Security throughout.
Measure 1–3	Up to three measures discussed, ranked by relevance (section 5.3).
Measure Owner	The Member whose measure is under discussion, or “Multiple Members” where the intervention relates to a class of measure (e.g. sanctions against the Russian Federation) or “Not applicable”, where measure is unidentified.
Security Sub-Domain 1–2	Primary and, where applicable, secondary sub-domain (section 5.4).

Field	Description
Governance Dimensions and connected topics 1–3	Up to three distinct governance dimensions, ranked by relevance (section 5.5).
Interaction Summary	A short summary of the intervention in neutral reported form. It is a navigational aid, not a substitute for the source text, and should be read together with the paragraph reference.

5.2 Stance

Stance records the position taken by the participant, judged on the substance of the intervention rather than on isolated words or phrases.

Stance	Applied when
Defence	The participant defends, explains, supports or justifies a measure. Reserved for the measure owner or an explicit supporter.
Apprehension	The participant raises a concern, adverse impact or objection — including an allegation of WTO-inconsistency — without putting forward a specific proposal.
Request/Recommendation	The operative content of the intervention is a call for action, a solution or a way ahead.
General Statement	The intervention acknowledges or discusses an issue, or shares factual information, without constituting a specific proposal, defence or substantive objection.

Where an intervention both registers a concern and proposes a remedy, Request/Recommendation is assigned only where the proposal is the operative content; a concern accompanied by a general appeal is Apprehension.

5.3 Measures and measure owner

Up to three measures are recorded where they are identified in the intervention, ranked by relevance and named using controlled terminology so that substantially similar measures can be compared across documents and bodies.

Measure Owner identifies the Member whose measure is under discussion, not the Member making the intervention. Where a measure is attributable to more than one Member or to a class of Members, the owner is recorded as “Multiple Members”. Where an intervention identifies no specific measure, the measure field records “No Specific Measure” and the owner “Not applicable”; a participant discussing a general security issue is not treated as discussing a particular Member’s measure.

5.4 Security sub-domains

Each entry is assigned a primary security sub-domain and, where appropriate, a distinct secondary sub-domain. Indicative terms are illustrative, not exhaustive, and are never determinative on their own.

Sub-domain	What it covers	A few indicative terms
Sanctions	Sanctions, embargoes and trade bans imposed against a country, and the legal defence of those measures under the WTO security exceptions. Includes Members challenging such measures as unlawful and Members defending them as necessary. Coercion claims belong here where the instrument is a sanction or embargo.	sanctions; embargo; trade ban; unilateral coercive measures; Article XXI; security exception; essential security interests; emergency in international relations; secondary sanctions; asset freeze; oil price cap
Export Controls	Licensing and restrictions on outbound flows of dual-use goods, advanced technology and strategic products, including semiconductor controls, entity-list designations, and end-user and re-export controls. Covers both Members imposing them and Members objecting.	export controls; export licensing; dual-use goods; entity list; semiconductor controls; technology leakage; end-user restrictions; re-export controls; extraterritorial export controls
Supply Chains	Concerns and measures about reliable access to critical minerals, rare earths, energy and other essential inputs, and about reducing supply-chain fragility through diversification, stockpiling or relocation of production. Includes export restrictions on raw materials used to manage domestic supply.	critical minerals; rare earths; supply chain resilience; security of supply; diversification of supply sources; stockpiling; friendshoring; nearshoring; reshoring; energy security; downstream processing; fragmentation; disruption
Security Tariffs	Tariffs imposed outside normal MFN rules and justified by national security, reciprocity or trade-imbalance arguments, and Members responding to them. Coercion claims belong here where the instrument is a tariff.	reciprocal tariffs; unilateral tariffs; national security tariffs; secondary tariffs; tariff weaponisation; weaponisation of dependencies; economic coercion through tariffs; chokepoints; tariff retaliation
Strategic Autonomy	The broader debate about economic security as a goal of trade policy: domestic support and production measures justified by security or resilience; overcapacity and non-market practices framed as security risks; and calls for policy space or WTO reform made in economic-security terms, including whether economic security belongs at the WTO at all.	strategic autonomy; open strategic autonomy; economic security as a policy goal; policy space for security; technological sovereignty; industrial base; onshoring; investment screening; local content for security; overcapacity; non-market policies and practices; de-risking; industrial policy

New sub-domains, if identified, will be added to the next version of the dataset.

5.5 Governance dimensions

The database additionally records the governance issues raised by the intervention, so that legal questions can be distinguished from economic effects, development considerations, institutional questions, and political-economy or strategic considerations. Up to three distinct dimensions are recorded per entry, ranked by relevance.

Dimensions are assigned through a more granular set of governance topics, which keep assignment consistent across coders and documents.

Governance Dimension	Governance Topic	What it covers
Legal	WTO Consistency & Legal Interpretation	Whether a measure conforms with WTO rules and international law, and how provisions or exceptions (incl. the security exception) should be interpreted.
Legal	Transparency & Due Process	Transparency, notification, consultation, procedural fairness, predictability and administration of a measure.
Economic	Market Access & Trade Effects	Effects of a measure on imports, exports, market access, trade flows, supply, availability or prices.
Economic	Competitiveness	Effects of a measure on the competitive position of firms, industries or sectors.
Economic	Diversification	Reliability, diversification and resilience of supply chains and value chains where the concern is ECONOMIC - continuity of inputs, sourcing, logistics, and exposure to disruption - rather than a strategic/security rationale.
Development	Policy Space	A Member's claimed ability to pursue domestic economic, industrial, development or security objectives through policy measures.
Development	Developmental & Distributional Effects	Differential effects of a measure across developing countries, LDCs, vulnerable economies, sectors or groups, including development-sense food/energy security.
Institutional	Cooperation & Coordination	Calls for cooperation, coordination, information sharing, common approaches or collective responses among governments. Also includes the role, capacity, mandate, coordination or appropriateness of WTO bodies (incl. forum-competence and WTO reform) in addressing a measure.

6. Consistency and quality controls

Before a version is released, closed value lists are enforced for stance, sub-domain, governance dimension and relevance, and measure names are checked against the controlled terminology.

Documents yielding entries on a first pass are re-read section by section, because keyword-influenced first passes systematically under-detect threads under procedural-sounding headings.

7. Updates and corrections

The database is a living resource. Each release carries a version number and a date of latest update and is accompanied by a change log recording content added, corrected or reclassified, and any change to a coding rule. Superseded versions remain citable; users should cite the version and access date they relied on.

Users who identify a missing document, a missing intervention or a coding error are invited to report it at satish.t@rumoconsulting.in. Corrections are reviewed against the source document and, where accepted, incorporated in the next release.

8. Limitations

The database is compiled on a best-efforts basis from publicly available WTO documents. It should not be regarded as an exhaustive or error-free record of all security-related discussions at the WTO.

- Phased and partial coverage. Not all bodies have been screened across their full document history. Absence from the database is not evidence that a topic was not discussed.
- Documentary lag. WTO minutes are circulated well after the meetings they report, and documents are sometimes revised. Relevant material may not yet have been identified or incorporated.
- Minutes are summaries. Most entries derive from summary records, which condense interventions. Coding reflects what the record reports, not necessarily everything a delegation said.
- Coding is interpretive. Stance, sub-domain and governance classifications rest on analytical judgement applied to a documented rule set. Reasonable analysts may differ at the margins, particularly on Core versus Contextual and on the Economic–Political Economy boundary.
- Counts are not weights. An intervention count measures how often an issue was raised, not its importance or its outcome. Members with larger Geneva missions intervene more often, so counts reflect who spoke on the record rather than the distribution of underlying interests.

9. Legal and methodological disclaimer

This database is provided for research, analytical, informational and policy purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice, an official WTO record, or an authoritative interpretation of any WTO agreement, decision, document, Member position or legal claim.

Coding classifications, including the identification of a security-related measure, security sub-domain, stance or governance dimension, are analytical classifications reflecting the methodology described above and the researcher's assessment of the source material. They are not statements of legal fact, and they are not positions endorsed by the WTO or by any WTO Member. The database does not purport to represent the views of the WTO, its Secretariat, or any WTO Member.

Users should consult the original WTO document and the relevant legal instruments before relying on any statement, measure, legal position or interpretation for legal, policy, commercial or compliance purposes. Errors and omissions identified through further review will be corrected in subsequent updates.

10. Suggested citation

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