



Predicting Belarus accession to World Trade Organization by applying a Neorealism approach

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Abstract. The suspension of Belarus' World Trade Organization (WTO) implementation and the effects of the Russia-Ukraine war are probably two of the most hotly debated issues. Belarus enlisted in the fight to uphold its long-standing relations with Russia, which had previously been at war with Ukraine. The WTO also put a hold on Belarus' bid to join the organization as this reason. As an outcome, this paper examines the present global situation of the new realism from the three revised for, guesses the upcoming economic policy, and asks whether Belarus can fulfill a wish to join the World Trade Organization this year based on trade data and members over the past few years. Finally, it is determined that while Belarus is unlikely to join the WTO this year, it is anticipated to do so in the future, based on the idea that doing so will help it resolve its own economic issues, resolve international relations hidden dangers brought on by the Russia-Ukraine war, and improve cooperative relations and trade exchanges internationally.

Keywords: Belarus, WTO, Neorealism.

1 Introduction

One of the three crucial ways to think about contemporary international relations is realism, a theoretical approach that was invented in the early 20th century [1]. Modern academics favor Neorealism over historical realism. Neorealism has been modified by a group of western academics in comparison to classical realism. The most well-known of these is the realism theory of Waltz Pinnacle's "Theory of International Politics," which focuses on the international system's behavioral constraints and also is primarily proposed for anarchy in the international community, the country's moderate interactions with other nations, as well as the balance of power in those interactions [2].

The constraining influence of the international system on state action can be illustrated through a commonly occurring international case. The WTO recently released a statement denying Belarus' request for membership in the WTO on the basis that Belarus engaged in Russia's attack on Ukraine, was considered an accomplice, and determined that such activity was incompatible with the WTO's guiding principles [3].

Upon this, a large number of Western nations proposed penalties against Belarus and Russia, including the suspension or termination of their business operations there [4].

Being a WTO member entails being one of the most favored nations, which can also give each member access to a more stable and equitable trading system that can speed up economic progress. Being a member of the WTO requires Belarus to effectively extend its economic and trade ties with other states, establish new trade relationships, and utilize existing, cutting-edge technologies to increase its export volume and market share. Whether through the expansion and consolidation of its own economic development or through integration with the global economic integration, Belarus may significantly contribute and help. Belarus established the Inter-Ministerial Committee of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus to enter the WTO and reached an agreement with it for 29 years since 1993, when the WTO created the Belarus Working Group after Belarus applied to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) [5]. Three critical challenges dominated the WTO accession talks: Belarus' compliance with WTO legal requirements, market and commodity trade, and government support for agriculture [5]. For Belarus, this year's WTO membership represents not only a massive step in terms of global economic integration, but also the culmination of decades of negotiations and reform. This time, there is clear opposition from the European Union and many Western powers for Belarus to join the WTO, and the WTO's placement and denial of Belarus's candidacy.

The attitude toward the WTO's decision to not hear Belarus's application generally is the message being conveyed, and it might involve two alternative attitudes: either favor or against. On the other hand, a large number of analysts have concentrated more on the political context and factors that led to the WTO rejecting Belarus. The Belarusian side indicated the hope that the accession negotiations can be normalized and the desire to join the WTO this year in the document it sent to the WTO in April 2022 regarding whether its admission process is as usual [6]. The forecast of the adjustments Belarus will need to make in order to join the WTO as anticipated and if it will do so this year is still lacking.

This article will look at the three main Neo-realist amendments that led to the WTO investigation of Belarus' application being suspended in order to make this judgment. Also included in this article are the effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on Belarus and Russia, changes in Belarus' foreign ties with other nations, and an assessment of Belarus' historical, contemporary, and projected trade patterns.

2 Literature review

2.1 Classical realism and Neo-realism

Idealism had been prevalent among the general population prior to the Second World War, but after the war, the importance of rights and interests gained greater traction [7]. The paradigm shift that resulted from Morgenthau's classic opus "Politics among Nations: Power Struggle and Peace," which had a significant influence at the time, helped build the groundwork for subsequent political international relations [8]. The classical realism Morgenthau proposed, in contrast to neorealism, has as its core tenet

that the fight of interests in international politics serves as the primary objective of an endless political activity [8]. Classical realism, on the contrary side, was evidently no longer compatible with the current form following the oil struggle in 1973, and the new realism, pioneered by Waltz and revised by a western scholar, became the new mainstream style still in use today [9]. The three revisions that stress the restraint effect of the international system's structure on state behavior are among them, and they are the most essential and distinctive components [2].

2.2 Three major revision

2.2.1. Anarchy.

Morgenthau attempted to use human nature in classical realism to explain the inter-relationships between governments. People's personal thoughts were the source of both the struggle for rights and the alliance of interests [9]. The influence of anarchy is seen to highlight the necessities and requirements of international relations in the new realism, and this state can also be called the structural constraint between countries. Even with Waltz does not dismiss the problem of conflict caused by human imperfection [9,10].

2.2.2. National Security.

Traditional realism demands and holds that when a sort of rational thought revolves around political principles, the primary orientation of state purpose will be applied in the state power itself [9]. The major distinction and difference between classical realism and new realism, in addition to the reason why classical realism might become popular in the post-World War II era, is interest value. The perspective that new realism should represent first can be better reflected by using moderate and appropriate tools and tactics to govern power as opposed to directing the value of power in the direction of purpose. In international relations, maintaining a nation's internal security and exterior stability is more crucial than relentlessly pursuing the interests and rising national strength that come with power [11].

2.2.3. Balance of Power.

The balance of power between nations is one of the new realism's shifts that researchers have focused on the most [10]. They hold that mutual restraints between nations, such as trade and cooperation among nations and the signing of treaties among nations, are what primarily contribute to the stability of the global community [10]. The approach and focus of looking at trade ties among international relations are often limited for many researchers who develop and promote classic realism, and they prefer to examine and compare the causal relationship between countries in a one-way fashion [11]. The new realism, which places more emphasis on examining the reciprocity between nations and pursuing the balance of power, is better suited for studying the current state of international trade than the preceding classical realism.

3 Analyzing Belarus and its application of joining WTO- a Neo-realism approach

3.1 Follow the Structural constraints

People frequently assume that state action in conflicts stems from human nature's ingrained ideas about power and interests, whereas the actual supply and demand relationship is either rarely acknowledged or is frequently viewed as a tertiary condition. When Belarus applied for a normal evaluation under the WTO suspension, the outside world's perception of Belarus was primarily focused on amplifying the demand of human nature itself to the scale of national behavior, including, but not limited to, supporting sanctions against Russia and Belarus or believing that the surrounding countries of Ukraine do not have a responsibility to provide due assistance [13]. The support and collaboration Belarus will seek, as well as the contribution it may provide to the world economy, are highly vital but rarely acknowledged if it is to join the WTO at this particular time of global recession. These two distinct analytical stances can also be congruent with how realism has altered. Waltz presented a new crucial "structure" in the new realism as opposed to the classical realism, which prioritizes the individual perspectives of individuals in the conflict between nations in international relations [10]. This suggests that in the anarchy of the international community, the supply and demand relationship between countries will exert some restraint on the country itself and its conduct, and this so-called "structural constraint" will emerge in some unique international circumstances.

Currently, Belarus's economic and commercial condition is not very favorable. Belarus has consistently experienced a sizable trade imbalance in terms of volume since the fall of the Soviet Union up until the present day. The trade deficit between Belarus and Russia both increased, from USD 3.4 billion in 2020 to USD 7.3 billion in 2021, as a consequence of the recent decline in the global economy [14]. In regards, Belarus exports more than half of its total exports to Russia, which is also its largest supplier, making Belarus highly dependent on Russia economically and making it challenging for Belarus to generate sufficient profits [14]. Belarus is subject to structural limitations from Russia as a result of the strong relationship between interests, particularly amid, and Belarus's reliance on Russia. This is one of the reasons why Belarus had to join the war to help Russia after the war broke out. As the main body of the Belarusian economy, state-owned enterprises intervene and control agriculture, commerce, industry, construction industry and even catering industry, which makes it difficult for private enterprises and labor to obtain profits, and the people have no power [15]. As a result, the Belarusian people have shown a sluggish and slow overall state of economic and trade production.

It is apparent that Belarus' admission to the WTO at this moment is not advantageous enough for the WTO to accept Belarus at such a special time, and the benefits that Belarus can provide to the WTO are quite limited when taking into account the current condition of Belarus' economy and trade. Depending on the perspective of Belarus' long-standing trade issues, the internal issues of the government and the people's way of life have impeded the growth and development of the country's economy

and trade, which is primarily the cause for the WTO's tighter application to Belarus. The pandemic and the escalating diplomatic tensions in Eastern Europe and elsewhere were both impacted by the world economic collapse. It was also anticipated that the WTO action against Belarus would be delayed.

However, Belarus' economic development tendency and strategy are also somewhat inspired by the WTO's delay in granting membership to Belarus. In the future, Belarus should increase its own productivity and resource initiative, reduce its reliance on resource imports, and work to minimize its exposure to the effects of the current state of global trade prices. In order to promote national independent productivity, we can also endeavor to accommodate structural limitations and transform those limitations into beneficial resources that support national development. To be more precise, we will keep on carrying out trade integration with Russia and sustain the growing trend of economic integration with Russia while guaranteeing the stability of the domestic political situation and the positive direction of international development. In truth, had it not been for the abrupt effects of the Russia-Ukraine war and the severe economic depression brought on by the global pandemic, Belarus' chances of joining the WTO would have been very high. Therefore, the likelihood of Belarus' WTO application being approved after the global economy has stabilized is something to look forward to.

3.2 The importance of national security

Bringing it back to the arguments put up by the US, the EU, and other nations to deny Belarus membership in the WTO, the WTO has also suspended Belarus' application for this reason. Evidently, Belarus' involvement in Russia's invasion of Ukraine had a profound worldwide impact that significantly influenced the WTO's judgment regarding Belarus' right of passage. Numerous countries that had been tranquil for decades were once again drawn into conflict and turmoil as a result of the war between Russia and Ukraine, which culminated in the injuries of thousands of civilians and the mass exodus of millions of people from Ukraine [16]. Belarus' involvement in this confrontation was an unavoidable outcome. Russia has been Belarus' largest trading partner and source of political reliance for a long time, regardless of its economic, trade, or political clout, and there is an essential tie between them in the community of destiny [14]. It remained uncertain for other nations, too, and the war's disarray and social unrest added to the fear. For this reason, several Western nations paused or even ceased their trade and business dealings with Russia and Belarus.

The new realism has brought new ideas and revisions to the dialectical method, which holds that the state will take security concerns into greater consideration when power and interests are at stake [17]. This is due to the size of Waltz's influence on the state and its impact on international relations. This occurrence is related to the fact that other nations must care more about maintaining their security and take into account trade and economic aspects of international relations as a war between Russia and Ukraine threatens to break out. It may be claimed that the world community at least has the same attitude toward maintaining and maintaining peace in the face of Russia and Belarus, which may affect issues of international peace and national secu-

riety. Following the suspension of its WTO application, Belarus should focus on persuading other nations of its commitment to upholding peace and international security. However, according to a statement made by the WTO, Belarus's application and accession talks won't be taken into consideration soon [18]. It will be difficult to ignore the effects of the start of a war, and it will take time to diminish the security dangers and increased psychological awareness that it brings to other nations. Additionally, the WTO's founding principles and objectives called for employing procedures and conventions to the greatest extent possible to suit the requirements of all nations. By facilitating trade between nations, the WTO may not only advance the development aim of comprehensive, just, and fair global economic integration but also uphold international peace [18]. It is undisputed that Belarus engaged in the Russia-Ukraine war and had some influence despite taking a passive role in it.

As a result, even though Belarus' Ministry of Foreign Affairs has often expressed optimism that the WTO negotiations will be completed by year's end and that Belarus will have the honor of joining the WTO [17]. Sadly, the WTO has not indicated that it intends to resume regular processes and negotiations with Belarus. According to the forecast, Belarus's odds of wrapping up WTO negotiations this year are extremely poor. In order to soothe the hostile international relations at the moment, Belarus should put more of an emphasis on maintaining international ties and trade exchanges in the next years. It should also take the initiative to create favorable diplomatic relations between nations. Maintain a healthy rate of development, make adjustments and progress in trade, and work to restart normal negotiations as soon as feasible in the coming years so that you can join the WTO.

3.3 Inter-state relations

In addition to the current explanations, the long-term causes are less well-known and, particularly in the long run, the power dynamics between nations play a significant role in the comprehension of the reasons for the suspension of the WTO application examination of Belarus. The balance of power between states is crucial to preserving international stability and preventing wars caused by anarchy in the international community, as this structure has always been underlined and recognized by new realism [10]. The foundational tenet of the new realism, that the structure of the international system has a constraining impact on state behavior, is supported by long-term cooperation along with the various alliances and systems formed by several countries in order to effectively develop their economic interests and maintain equal interests in order to protect their own countries from encroachment.

The reason that countries engage with one another is due to the two-way causality of influence and direction between nations as opposed to one-way export or import, which is connected to international commerce cooperation. The most significant of them is Russia, which has already been addressed numerous times. Russia has maintained the integrated development of politics, military, economy, and trade between the two nations for more than ten years as Belarus' most established trading partner [14]. Additionally, in recent years, Belarus has exported a lot of goods to China, Germany, Ukraine, Poland, and other nations [20]. The fundamental definition of

bilateral commerce is the ability of both parties to obtain advantageous conditions to reach a mutually agreeable trade status quo through the import and export trade between them. As a result of the interaction between state relations, causality in the new realism likewise shifts from being unidirectional to being multidimensional. Regarding the effects of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Ukraine, Poland, and even several EU nations—countries with which they formerly had extremely strong relations—are opposed to Russia and Belarus. It is obviously unthinkable if this does not impact trade between a number of Eastern European nations. The past alliances will surely fall apart, the existing power-checks and balances will be destroyed, and perhaps even more bloody international confrontations would result.

The WTO is a current international system, so it is obviously not a wise decision to approve Belarus' application given the tilt and power imbalance that the world is currently experiencing. Belarus and Russia are also obviously in a situation where they are at risk of losing allies and are not dependent on other cooperative relationships. It could lead to new global conflicts in an effort to prevent the power imbalance that would result from Belarus' WTO membership. The maintenance of restrictive connections between governments is still the most crucial factor in an international system organization when it comes to membership, even though the WTO should adhere to the principles of fairness and justice. In a result, it is still quite possible that Belarus' request to join the WTO won't be granted before this year. But that doesn't imply that Belarus won't be able to join the WTO in the future. In order to accomplish this, Belarus and Russia may easily locate other trading Allies to achieve the balance of power in the global situation, restore the previous balance of power between the nations, build a solid foundation for peace, and manage international relations.

4 Conclusion

The conclusion of this prognosis can be drawn from the study by means of the aforementioned analysis and demonstration. It must be acknowledged that there is very little chance that Belarus will be able to join the WTO this year. The worldwide anarchy, the security concerns raised by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, or the overall power dynamics among nations are all obstacles to Belarus' application for WTO membership this year and the restart of the regular WTO evaluation procedure for Belarus.

No matter how important it is for the world community or for trade relations, Belarus needs to join the WTO since it will open up a lot of opportunities for growth and promotion. Belarus should therefore not abandon its application for WTO membership, but instead should continue to modify and revise the WTO proposal and the factors that led to its rejection in various ways. Belarus will make every effort over the next five years to successfully apply for membership in the WTO through the evaluation process, take part in global economic integration, learn from development, triumph collectively through cooperation, and effectively implement the common prosperity of economic globalization.

The changes and innovations made during the transition from classical realism to new realism are discussed. We can better comprehend Belarus's current condition with regard to applying to the WTO and potential changes in the future through these analysis and projections. Considering the likelihood that Belarus will join the WTO this year, the macroeconomic growth of in-depth grasp of international relations. This paper provides some explanations and discussions on the reasons for the temporary suspension of Belarus' application as well as an analysis of the short- and long-term factors of international problems for international relations researchers who are interested in learning more about the development of the WTO and Belarus and the anticipated events that may occur in the future. We may provide certain contributions and references to people who want to research pertinent knowledge and information by contrasting the distinctions between classical realism and modern realism as well as classifying and summarizing their theories and advances.

Based on the three revisions of Neo-realism, this article primarily predicts the likelihood that Belarus would join the WTO in the future, emphasizing the relationship between the two. Therefore, the development of Neorealism as well as projections for Belarus and the WTO's future can demonstrate the constraining influence of international relations on state action. Future studies can compare the contrasts between Neo-realism and international relations more thoroughly by starting from a structural approach. more investigation and analysis of each association's origins and development.

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