

# WILL CHINA REDEFINE INTERNATIONAL TRADE NORMS?

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## ABSTRACT

*China has joined most global institutions and accepted a cornucopia of international norms. As it rises, China has started assuming the responsibilities that come with its great-power, promoting global governance amid surging anti-globalization sentiments. Does this signal that China has embraced the international trade norms dominated by the western powers? Alternatively, will China redefine international trade norms? This article examines China's trade behaviors, particularly after it joined the World Trade Organization (hereinafter "WTO"), intending to elucidate these issues. In light of prevailing domestic politics and international relations, the article finds that China's attitude towards the international order and international norms is evolving. With respect to compliance with the existing norms, it has exhibited the following approaches to WTO rules: honoring its commitments, using international trade rules to its advantage, and actively participating in the making of new rules. China's trade behaviors have charted a course showcasing China's journey from a rule-taker to a trade rule-rider and trade rule-maker. While some observers suggest that China will become a trade rule-shaker, this article takes the view that there is a compelling reason to argue that*

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*it is redefining itself as a trade rule-maker by reshaping rules and tactically giving new meaning to the existing norms.*

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