

# **COMMUNICATING FARMERS PRIORITIES IN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS: A Philippine Experience**

**Raul Montemayor**

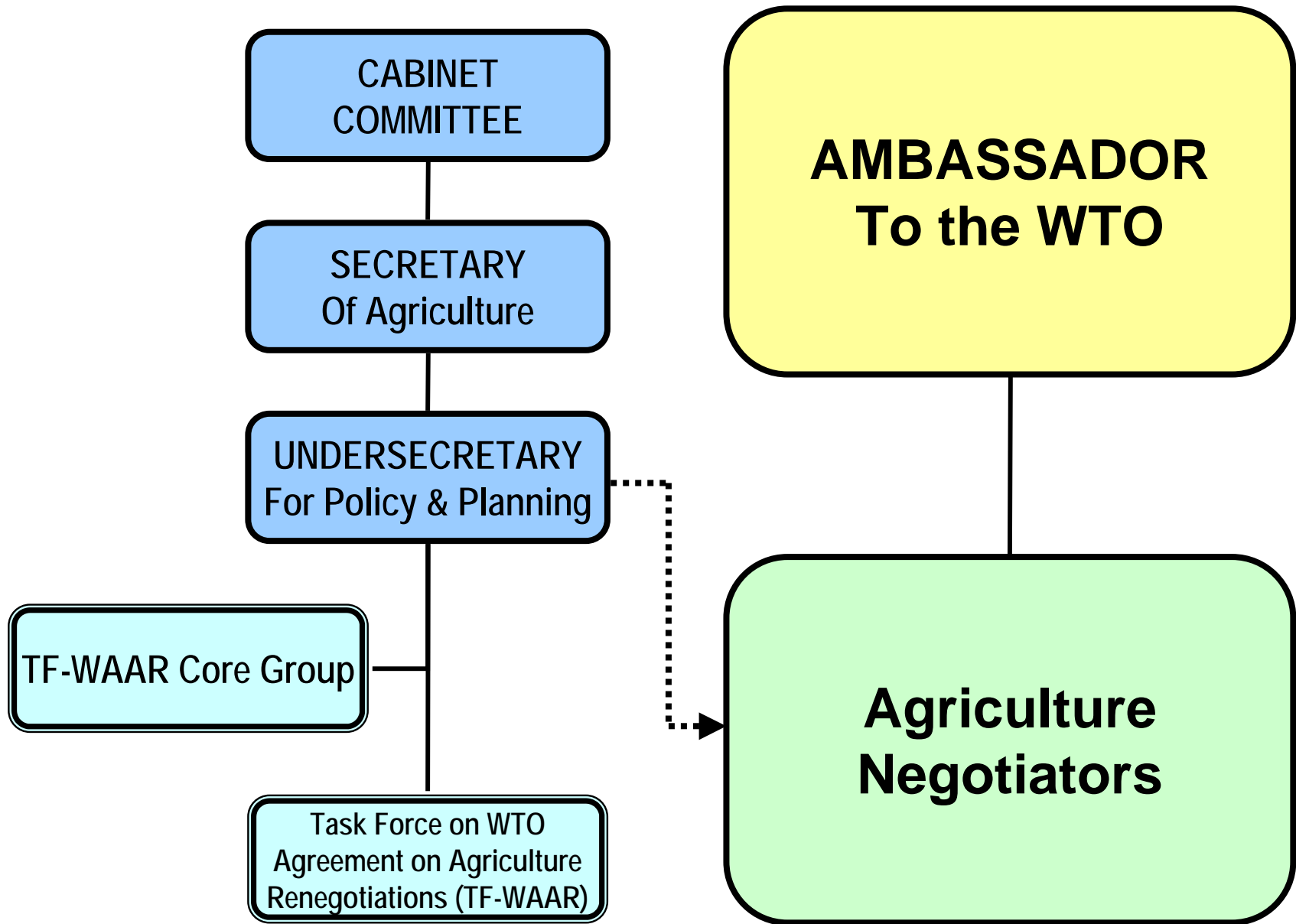
**IPC/COMESA Conference  
Lusaka, Zambia  
3-5 June 2007**

# BACKGROUND

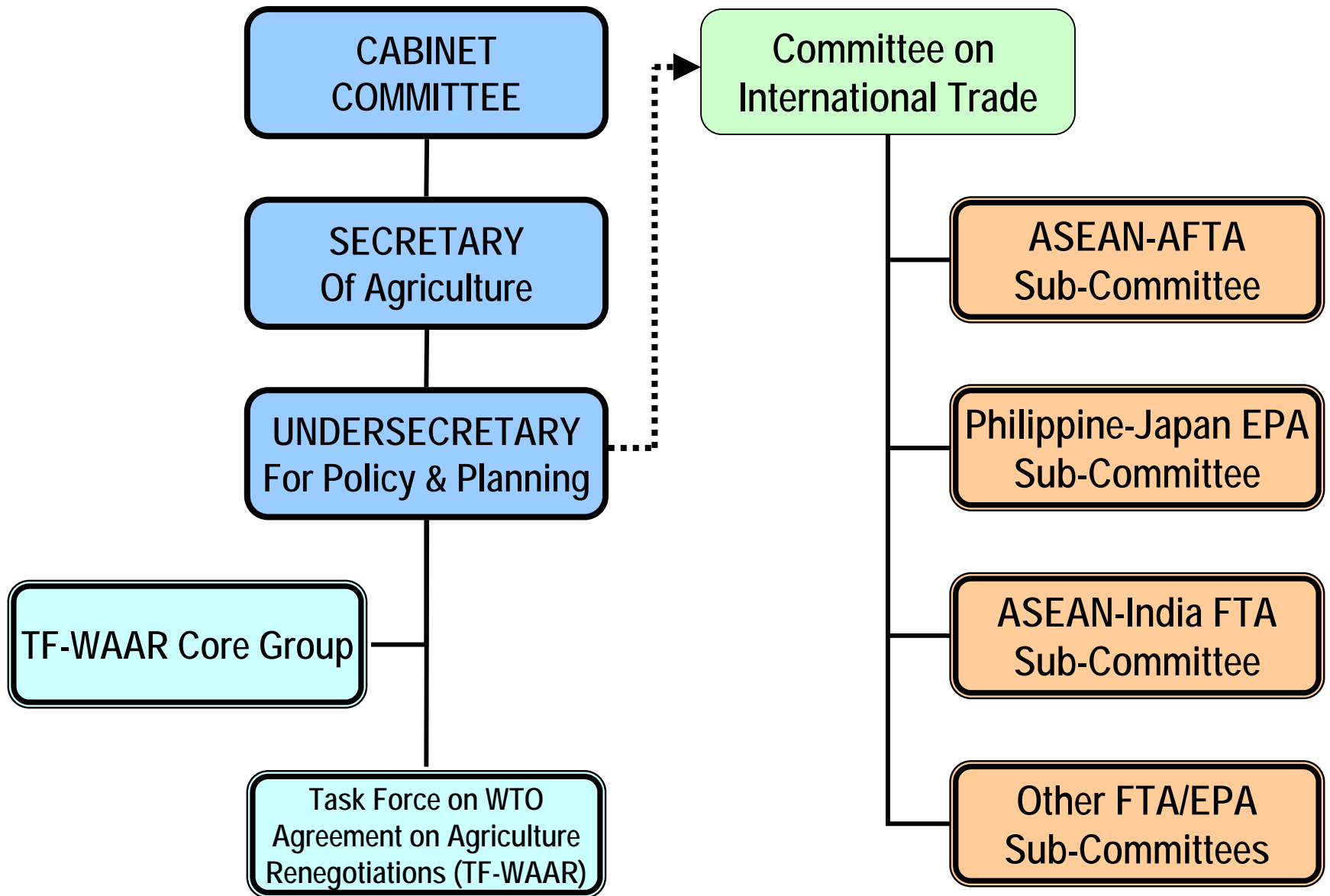
- **Lack of stakeholder consultations during UR negotiations led to:**
  - **Errors in schedules of commitments**
  - **Relatively excessive concessions**
  - **General lack of understanding of UR AoA**
- **Public backlash after accession due to:**
  - **Broken promises for GATT safety nets**
  - **Surge in imports and trade deficits**
  - **Apparent unpreparedness of key sectors for open competition**

# BACKGROUND

- **Onset of Doha Round negotiations spurred a more consultative process due to:**
  - **Need to generate stakeholder support for new trade agreement and further reforms**
  - **Lack of financial and technical resources at capital and in Geneva**
  - **Clamor of private stakeholders for involvement**
- **This led to the creation of the:**
  - **Private Sector Task Force on WTO Agreement on Agriculture Renegotiations (TF-WAAR)**
  - **TF-WAAR Core Group**



# EXPANDING THE TF-WAAR MODEL TO COVER REGIONAL FTAs



# LESSONS LEARNED

- **Need for sincere willingness of the part of the government to involve the private sector in trade negotiations**
- **Consultation mechanism must be formalized, institutionalized, sustained, and linked to official negotiating structure**
- **Need for clear and consistent policy direction from government**

# LESSONS LEARNED

- **Private stakeholders must be willing to invest time, resources and effort**
- **Private sector representatives must maintain close contact with their constituents**
- **Consultation must be inclusive while exhorting representatives to adopt broad-minded perspectives**
- **Official alliances within the WTO can be complemented by private sector linkages with peers in other countries**

# LESSONS LEARNED

- **Need for prompt, comprehensive and continuous preparation for negotiations**
- **Need to invest in information management systems for trade negotiations**
- **Transparency must be balanced with need to preserve confidentiality of information**