

This master's thesis is concerned with the settlement of particular WTO disputes between Brazil and the United States. The aim of the thesis is to explain the importance of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) for Brazilian trade strategy. To demonstrate the use of the mechanism the focus is placed on two specific disputes involving the United States and Brazil. These disputes, regarding patent protection and cotton subsidies, are analyzed using case-study methodology. Moreover, quantitative research based on WTO disputes data is included in the introductory chapter. The study of the disputes shows that Brazil has been one of the most active users of the DSM and that it has initiated cases predominantly against developed countries, the United States being the most frequent target. This strategy enables Brazil to pursue cases that are likely to have systemic implications and thus could have an impact on the international trade order. The two case studies are examples of disputes of potential systemic importance. They further reveal the complexity of disputes in terms such as the increasing role of NGOs, the concept of retaliatory suits, and the significance of timing and political pressure. The exposed dynamics of the settlement of disputes is useful for understanding other WTO cases as well.