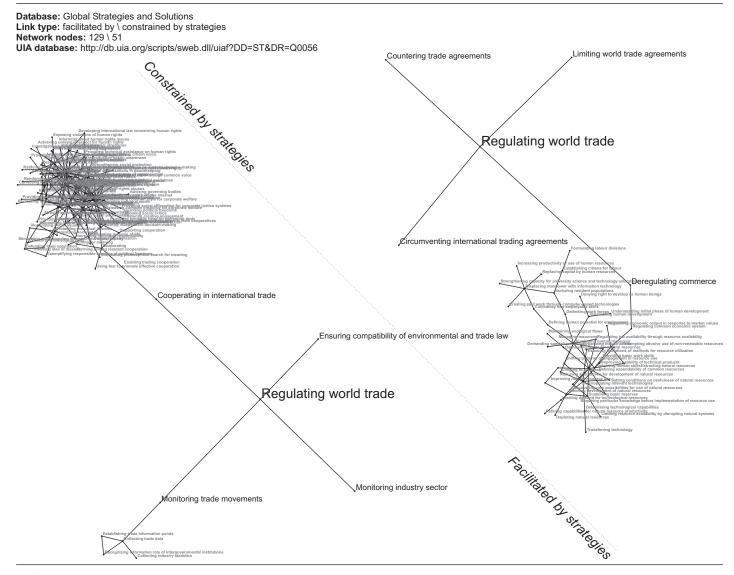
Figure 10.1.3.8. Regulating world trade



## A claim ...

"There is no substitute for the confidence and credibility that the WTO lends to expanding trade based on rules. Nor is there any substitute for the temporary relief the WTO offers national economies, especially against unfair trade and abrupt surges in imports. There is also no substitute for the WTO's authority for resolving disputes which command the respect of all member nations." (Clinton at Davos 2000)

## and counter-claims

! Every agreement within the WTO so far has been the result of intense conflict between countries or groups of countries, which eventually concluded on the basis of the superior bargaining power of developed countries. This process has put the developing countries as a group at an inherent disadvantage.

! Developed countries are actively advocating the introduction of a "social" clause in the multilateral trading system, which would give privileged countries a tool for selective, one-sided and neo-colonial protectionism, with the effect of increasing poverty instead of attacking it at its root.

! A multilateral trade regime cannot simply be a mechanism to address trade disputes and remove unequal barriers. It must look at equity not from the narrow confines of trade practices, but from the overall relationship of nations and peoples wellbeing.

! The positive role of trade in development cannot be realized without addressing the monopolistic operations of global corporations.

! Ever since the United States supported the creation of the World Trade Organization to resolve international trade disputes, the long-standing question always has been: Will the USA comply if a big decision goes against it? The question arose in 1996, when the European Union filed a complaint with the Geneva-based trade regulatory body over the Helms-Burton law, which prohibits other countries from doing certain kinds of business with Cuba. The USA said openly it would not change the law even if the trade body overruled it. But the case was dropped after the two sides compromised.

! International rules are undermining domestic sovereignty. Why should we let a bunch of World Trade Organization bureaucrats determine the fate of our Earth?.

! Today's trade disputes often have little to do with traditional trade barriers - the tariffs and quotas nations impose on each other's goods to protect their domestic industries. Instead, many trade wars are fought over hormones in beef, bananas, or genetically modified foodstuffs - or sea turtles. ! There are rules for some but not for others, such as the conditions imposed by the IMF and the World Bank.