



**“WTO Accession for Somalia:  
Anticipation, Preparation and Reformation”**

**Part I (Introduction and Anticipation) by H.E. Faduma A. Mohamud**

**Introduction:**

Excellencies, Honorable and Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentleman,

Before I delve into my intervention, I first wish to express my deep gratitude and thanks. On behalf of the Federal Republic of Somalia, I take this opportunity to thank Director-General Mr. Roberto Azevedo and the entire WTO Secretariat for their wavering support and this most gracious invitation to speak before you all here today.

I also take this time to acknowledge my esteemed counterparts on this panel discussion - I am honoured to be sitting here amongst them today. From those who

represent states that are long time WTO members, to those representing countries currently navigating their own accession process . There is much that can be learned from the experiences and perspectives shared here and I shall take note of many the salient points raised which I believe will be very helpful for the process that lies ahead for Somalia.

### **Anticipation:**

Since Somalia's application was submitted in 2015 and accepted in 2016, much change has occurred in the country. The most notable being the change in political landscape and peaceful transition of the new government earlier this year. There is much focus on how this new government will proceed and in this instance, how it's WTO accession will fare and it is important to note that domestic support is the key determiner to this accession.

This leads me to my next point: His Excellency President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo is strongly committed to Somalia's accession, and his new administration have pledged their support to the reforms that need to take place as this is an arduous journey which needs the political will and drive at home. A key example of governmental recognition and support is the appointment of the Chief Negotiator and the establishment of Somalia's dedicated Negotiating Team who are currently hard at work preparing the MFTR.

The Government understands Somalia's need for extensive support as a LDC and post conflict state in joining the WTO - moreover the image that some member states have of Somalia, albeit not the most assuring or misled. Whilst one may argue that there is much groundwork to be made in the years to come, it is always important to look in retrospect to know where one is going.

Strong legislation, regulations and investment and trade have long been key economic drivers in Somalia prior to the civil war from its inception as Africa's first democracy in 1960. Imperative to note then, the remarkably progressive stance the country held then as a newly independent country. The pre-civil war years saw a proliferation of infrastructural expansions, industrial developments, new regulations and many legislations being passed of which I was lucky to be able to witness this golden period. It is in this spirit that we look forwards and not backwards.

I implore all member states who may not be familiar with Somalia and its remarkable rebuilding and recovery process to research or schedule a meeting with us so that we can share knowledge and data on the country. It is important that we have the support of each and everyone of you during this accessions process and I look forward to meeting some of you this week.

I will now introduce Somalia's Chief Negotiator, Ms. Maryan Hassan, who will now give her intervention.