

Annex II: Questionnaire for Arab members having acceded to the WTO after 1995

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Policy context for the accession of Arab economies

1. What were the main challenges facing the economic performance before starting the accession process? Please identify challenges in order of national priority.
 2. What are the foremost important considerations behind the decision to seek membership of the WTO? For example:
 - a) Ensuring greater economic policy coherence including a trade policy direction that is supportive of the overall economic strategy;
 - b) Ensuring stability and predictability in conditions governing trade in goods and services to promote expansion of guaranteed export opportunities;
 - c) The need to diversify the economy away from dependency on a narrow export base;
 - d) Improving the domestic business environment through promoting competitive market conditions;
 - e) Attracting foreign direct investment;
 - f) Upskilling domestic human resources;
 - g) Contributing to economic and social development goals;
 - h) The desire to share experiences and best practices and to act jointly with other WTO members, including in future negotiations;
 - i) Other considerations (please specify).
- In the response, please address the considerations listed above according to the national order of priority, including other considerations not listed above.

Accession process

3. How did the government establish a domestic coordination and consultative mechanism for all relevant stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental) to ensure active participation in WTO activities? Please describe how such mechanisms were structured and how they interacted to perform their functions? Was any institutional re-structuring necessary?
4. How has the government been communicating the accession-related information and reforms to all relevant stakeholders?
5. What are the current mechanisms for increasing and sustaining public awareness, including among the private sector, about the WTO?

6. What were the main challenges related to trade and the economy that you faced during the accession process? This could relate to:
 - a) Exchange rate and monetary policy challenges;
 - b) Technical regulation challenges (e.g. TBT, SPS, others);
 - c) Tariff reforms and other import regime reforms;
 - e) Reforms related to trade in services (financial, telecommunications, information technology services, transportation, distribution, energy, tourism, professional services, and others);
 - f) Other challenges (please specify).
7. What were the main challenges not related to trade? This could relate to non-trade regulatory reforms, as well as internal or external political challenges, among other challenges. What solutions were suggested for these challenges? What have been the experiences gained?
8. Were there phases in the accession process where progress slowed? What were the main causes for this? What solutions were found to reactivate the process?
9. Was there continuous and strong political will behind the accession process? If so, how was it sustained? If not, what were the main causes, and how was the political will reignited?
10. Looking back at the accession process, what general and specific recommendations do you have? What would you have liked to know from the start? What would you have done differently?
11. What WTO-related reforms have been undertaken so far? How was this achieved? Such reforms include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Main steps taken to reform the direction of or adjust the implementation of trade policy;
 - b) Main regulatory reforms;
 - c) Main institutional reforms;
 - d) Development of infrastructure (physical and digital) and human capital;
 - e) Steps taken to enhance trade facilitation for goods and services;
 - f) Other measures to encourage/assist exports/exporters of goods and services;
 - g) Activities and participation in the WTO and other international organizations;
 - h) Interactions with existing/prospective trading partners, including in respect of preferential trade agreements.

Post-accession

12. What WTO-related legislative and regulatory reforms were implemented in the post-accession period? What steps were undertaken to comply with accession-specific WTO commitments, including those with transition periods?
13. What were the main steps taken to reform the direction of or adjust the implementation of trade policy:
 - a) Main regulatory reforms;
 - b) Main institutional reforms;
 - c) Development of infrastructure (physical and digital) and human capital;
 - d) Steps taken to enhance trade facilitation for goods and services;
 - e) Other measures to encourage/assist exports/exporters of goods and services;
 - f) Activities and participation in the WTO and other international organizations;
 - g) Interactions with existing/prospective trading partners, including in respect of preferential trade agreements.
14. How did the government review the implementation of WTO commitments? Did the government adopt a national WTO accession implementation strategy/road map? Has the strategy been fully implemented?
15. How did WTO accession contribute to the achievement of the government's broader poverty reduction and economic development goals? What were the main implications of WTO accession for the economy (e.g. GDP, trade growth in goods and services, trade openness, trade competitiveness and diversification,

employment, balance-of-payments accounts, investment, etc.)?

16. What were the main challenges faced by the government in the post-accession stage? How did the government identify and respond to the technical assistance and capacity-building needs?
17. How did the government communicate the implementation-related information to all relevant stakeholders and the WTO? What are the mechanisms for increasing and sustaining public awareness about the WTO?
18. Please provide a summary description of the participation of your government in the work (negotiations) of the WTO. What are the

government's priorities? Are there any challenges faced as a WTO member?

19. Have there been any implications for the external policy environment? Does the government participate in any regional/preferential trade initiatives? How are these aligned with WTO membership?
20. What challenges did you face following WTO accession? How was this related to the implementation of accession commitments?

Please provide suggestions, if any, for how the WTO Secretariat can improve its support to Arab members having acceded under WTO rules in the post-accession phase.