

1 ARTICLE V	1
1.1 Text of Article V.....	1
1.2 Article V:1	1
1.2.1 "Shall make appropriate arrangements for effective cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations".....	1
1.2.2 Observer status	1
1.3 Article V:2	2
1.3.1 "may make appropriate arrangements ... with non-governmental organizations".....	2
1.3.1.1 Guidelines for Arrangements on Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations.....	2

1 ARTICLE V

1.1 Text of Article V

Article V

Relations with Other Organizations

1. The General Council shall make appropriate arrangements for effective cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations that have responsibilities related to those of the WTO.
2. The General Council may make appropriate arrangements for consultation and cooperation with non-governmental organizations concerned with matters related to those of the WTO.

1.2 Article V:1

1.2.1 "Shall make appropriate arrangements for effective cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations"

1. As of 30 September 2011, the WTO had concluded agreements or memoranda of understanding with a number of intergovernmental organizations, including but not limited to the International Monetary Fund¹, the International Telecommunication Union², the World Organization on Animal Health (OIE)³, the World Bank⁴, and the World Intellectual Property Organization.⁵

1.2.2 Observer status

2. The General Council has allowed some intergovernmental organizations to observe its meetings.⁶ In 1995 and 1996, the General Council accorded *ad hoc* observer status to seven international intergovernmental organizations, including: the United Nations, UNCTAD, IMF, the World Bank, FAO, WIPO, and the OECD.⁷ Subsequently, the IMF and the World Bank were granted permanent observer status in General Council meetings by the terms of their respective

¹ WT/L/195.

² S/C/11.

³ WT/L/272.

⁴ WT/L/195.

⁵ IP/C/6.

⁶ See The Rules of Procedure of the General Council, Chapter IV, Rule 11. Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure for the General Council provides: "Representatives of international intergovernmental organizations may attend the meetings as observers on the invitation of the General Council in accordance with the guidelines in Annex 3 to these Rules."

⁷ WT/GC/M/3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 17. The General Council, upon the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee, extended *ad hoc* observer status to the UN, UNCTAD, IMF and the World Bank for the first General Council meeting. WT/GC/M/1. In subsequent meetings, WIPO, FAO, and the OECD were extended the same invitation. WT/GC/M/3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 17.

cooperation agreements.⁸ In its meetings of 7 February 1997, the General Council granted permanent observer status to the United Nations, UNCTAD, FAO, WIPO, and the OECD.⁹ In the General Council meeting of 10 December 1997, the ITC, as a joint technical cooperation agency between the WTO and UNCTAD, was "invited, as appropriate, to attend meetings of those WTO bodies it wished to attend without having to submit a request for observer status".¹⁰

3. To date, no other intergovernmental organizations have been granted permanent observer status in General Council meetings pursuant to the guidelines for "Observer Status for International Intergovernmental Organizations in the WTO" set out in Annex 3 to the "Rules of Procedure for Sessions of the Ministerial Conference and Meetings of the General Council."¹¹

4. Intergovernmental organizations were accorded observer status at various Ministerial Conferences, until the Seventh Session in 2009. Since the Eighth Session in 2011, Members have been unable to repeat past practice with respect to observership for intergovernmental organizations and no intergovernmental organizations have been able to attend as Observers.¹²

1.3 Article V:2

1.3.1 "may make appropriate arrangements ... with non-governmental organizations"

1.3.1.1 Guidelines for Arrangements on Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations

5. At its meeting of 18 July 1996, and pursuant to Article V:2, the General Council adopted the "Guidelines for Arrangements on Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations".¹³ Since the adoption of the Guidelines, the General Council has addressed the issue of external transparency in its meetings.¹⁴

6. At its meeting of 18 July 1996, the General Council agreed to allow non-governmental organizations to attend the Singapore Ministerial Conference.¹⁵ The General Council has since agreed to allow non-governmental organizations to attend subsequent Ministerial Conferences according to the procedure agreed in 1996.¹⁶

Current as of: February 2018

⁸ With respect to the Agreement with the IMF, see WT/L/195, Annex I, para. 6. Also, with respect to the Agreement with the World Bank, see WT/L/195, Annex II, para. 5.

⁹ WT/GC/M/18.

¹⁰ WT/GC/M/25. Note that this was a grant of permanent observer status.

¹¹ WT/L/161.

¹² See, e.g., WT/MIN(05)/INF/7/Rev.3 (final participant list for Hong Kong Ministerial Conference) and /INF/ documents for other Ministerial Conferences.

¹³ WT/GC/M/13, section 9(c). The text of the adopted guidelines can be found in WT/L/162.

¹⁴ WT/GC/M/29, 35, 45, 57, 58, 66.

¹⁵ WT/GC/M/13, section 11(b). See WT/L/162 for the text of the guidelines.

¹⁶ WT/GC/M/65, 66, 68, 78, 95; see, e.g. list of NGOs accredited to attend the 2009 Seventh Session of the Ministerial Conference at Geneva (WT/MIN(09)/INF/10). The procedure is as follows: (i) A limited number of accredited representatives for non-governmental organizations are allowed to attend only the Plenary Sessions of the Conference, without the right to speak; (ii) applications from non-governmental organizations to be registered are accepted on the basis of Article V:2 of the WTO Agreement, i.e. non-governmental organizations "concerned with matters related to those of the WTO"; and (iii) a deadline is established for the registration of non-governmental organizations that wish to attend the Conference.