

Maria da Silva: Intervention at the China Round-table Meeting

Session 3: ACHIEVEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHINA PROGRAMME

12:00 - 13:30 CET/ 8pm – 9.30pm Dili time

Greetings from Timor-Leste to the Distinguished Participants.

It is my great pleasure to intervene at the China Roundtable Meeting on the 10th year anniversary of the China programme. I am one of the China Internship programme beneficiaries to have worked at the WTO Accessions Division between March 2017 and January 2018.

Prior to this experience, myself along with the Timorese delegation led by our then Chief Negotiator, Mr. Estanislau da Silva, we participated in our historical event of which marked Timor-Leste's first step in its accession process whereby Timor-Leste first obtained its observer status, in December 2016.

Soon after the application process, I was among the fortunate young professionals to have been granted the opportunity to work at the WTO Secretariat to be able to learn the firsthand experience of the highly technical procedures accession processes, from some of the more advanced accessions including from those of newly acceded members at that time, which has given me a great benefit in assisting the ongoing Timor-Leste's accession process to date.

Distinguished participants,

The China Internship programme is among a few internship programmes that has offered the opportunity to observer countries, such as my country, to learn and work as an intern at the WTO Secretariat to be able to understand the system and the technical procedures as part of a practical learning experience which will directly benefit the acceding countries in their accession process. I would like to thank the programme for this rare opportunity.

In addition, throughout my working experience at the WTO Secretariat, I was also able to make a lifetime friendship with the staff of the Accessions Division under the dynamic leadership of Madam Director, Ms. Maika Oshikawa.

Today, as I am delivering this speech as a delegate, I am proud to say that my 10-month long internship through the China internship programme has greatly contributed to Timor-Leste's accession process, which has advanced expeditiously since early 2020. Being able to assist the process earlier on, I was able to assist and understand the gaps and the opportunities that exist in the accession process due to my understanding of the technical procedures that I have learned throughout the internship. Furthermore, having learned from other more advanced dossiers has given me greater vantage point to assess and approach Members' interests.

Distinguished participants,

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of China and to the WTO Secretariat for your immense support during my learning experience at the WTO. At the same time, I would also like to also thank the Government of Timor-Leste for all the trust which has enabled my support to Timor-Leste's accession. I hope that further support could be granted to my other fellow Timorese to further strengthening and contributing to human capacity development in expediting our accession process, which, I firmly believe will enable us to better optimize the benefits of our accession for the prosperity and the wellbeing of our people in integrating into the global value chain.

Thank you for your kind attention.