IGA-AGENDA:

The 8th meeting of the Informal Group on Accessions (IGA) in 2013 took place today, 20 September. The meeting was chaired by the Director of the Accessions Division, Mr Chiedu Osakwe. He welcomed Members to this first meeting following the Summer Break and noted that although Members faced a busy calendar of ‘non-stop’ meetings in the lead-up to MC9, a number of accessions were on track. Resources and a ‘feasible’ work program had been deployed. The Secretariat was commended for its work and Members reiterated the necessity to focus on those priorities that could actually be delivered and to take account of their overall workload.

Director Accessions confirmed for Members that Director-General Roberto Azevêdo shared their position that accessions were a strategic priority for the WTO.

OVERALL PACE OF ACCESSIONS

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Director Accessions confirmed for Members that Director-General Roberto Azevêdo shared their position that accessions were a strategic priority for the WTO.

2013 ACCESSION WP FOCUS

Yemen: The IGA was informed that the Draft Accession Package was complete and had been circulated. A final Working Party (WP) meeting was scheduled for 26 September 2013 to consider and adopt the Draft Accession Package, ad referendum. The WP Chairperson would be proposing that WP Members submit the Draft Accession Package, adopted ad referendum, to MC9 for formal action.
Afghanistan: On the bilateral front, Kabul had concluded and signed its market access negotiations with Canada and Japan. Several outstanding negotiations were on the threshold of completion. On the multilateral front, the Draft Working Party Report (DWPR) had been advanced but there remained outstanding technical work. Inputs, including the consolidation of Members’ questions, had been sent to Afghanistan and the Secretariat was awaiting feedback. Although it was maturing rapidly, this accession appeared to no longer be on track for conclusion this year. A visit to Kabul had been tentatively scheduled for the end of September. Kabul was yet to confirm details and timing of the visit.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: This accession was apace. Sarajevo had confirmed to enact pending legislation by the end of September. Multilaterally, technical work on the DWPR had been completed and specific commitment language had been agreed in all areas, except for Trading Rights. The outstanding bilateral market access negotiations were envisaged for conclusion and deposit in the Secretariat by first week of October. A final WP meeting was envisaged for 11 November 2013.

Kazakhstan: The IGA was informed that the Secretariat received inputs from Astana on 16 September on particular chapters, namely SPS, AGSTs and Legislative Action Plan. This was an important and economically significant accession. However, the major impeding factor was the unresolved question of tariff adjustment and compensation. The progress of this accession turned on the resolution of this exercise. In addition, technical work remained in several other areas of the Foreign Trade Regime, principally, inter alia, SPS, Agriculture, TRIMs, local content.

Serbia: The situation remained unchanged. Belgrade needed to adopt outstanding legislation on WTO-consistent GMO regulation.

MAINTENANCE WORK

The IGA was briefed on the progress in 4 other active accessions:

On Seychelles: The IGA was informed that this accession had advanced to intermediate status. A comprehensive set of updated documents had been submitted to the Secretariat and circulated for consideration at the next WP meeting. In support of a WP meeting before the end of this year, a Member noted the effort all parties had made in driving this accession to this stage. Members had invested considerable time and effort and a meeting in November with the Seychellois senior leadership would facilitate feedback to the Delegation of Seychelles.

On Algeria: The deadline for Members’ submission of questions on the AGSTs was 31 August. Algiers had submitted its responses to the Secretariat and a legislative notice was circulated in August. A meeting between the WP Chairperson and the Secretariat had recently taking place. A WP meeting was envisaged for the 1st quarter for 2014, if possible.

On Azerbaijan: Inputs had been received from Baku. The next cycle of meetings was envisaged for 14-15 November 2013.

On Bahamas: Inputs had been circulated in August. If action was finalised in a timely manner on the Factual Summary, then a WP meeting could be envisaged for 12 November 2013.

On WP maintenance work (4 - Seychelles, Algeria, Azerbaijan and Bahamas), Members strongly requested the Secretariat to be sensitive to the pressure of work on Members in the horizontal process of meetings, preparatory for MC9. Accessions with a low likelihood of delivery in 2013 should be carried over to the 1st quarter of 2014.

OUTREACH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The IGA was briefed on the 2 major activities planned for this year: the Global Seminar on WTO Accessions and the Second China Roundtable for LDCs, which were scheduled to take place in Geneva, from 23 to 27 September and Luang Prabang, from 15 to 18 October respectively. These two activities were designed to take stock of the deposited 31 WTO Accession Protocols and improve the understanding of their effects on the rules-based trading system. The programme for the Global Seminar was available on the Accessions webpage and would be forwarded electronically to all IGA Members. Director-General Azevêdo would open the Global Seminar on Monday, 23 September 2013.

Due to resource allocation constraints under the jurisdiction of the Institute of Training and Technical Cooperation, the implementation of the Second China Roundtable was uncertain. Enquiries should be directed to Director ITTC and DDG Jara.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW WP CHAIRPERSON - COMOROS

The IGA was informed that Ambassador Luis Enrique Chávez Basagoitia (Peru) had been approved as the Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of Comoros.

The purpose of the Newsletter is to provide Accessing Governments with a summary report of the meetings of the Informal Group on Accessions and operationally relevant information to assist them with preparations for meetings and negotiations associated with their accession. It is one of several practical steps by the WTO Secretariat to ensure transparency on accessions matters. This document has been prepared under the Secretariat’s own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of Members and to their rights and obligations under the WTO.
### Evolving Calendar of Accessions Meetings (ECAM) ¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Working Party</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Interpretation EN-FR-ES</th>
<th>Own</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 11 September</td>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>Technical Verification on Goods Schedule</td>
<td>COMPLETED on 11 September 2013</td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 20 September</td>
<td>IGA</td>
<td>8th 2013 Informal Group on Accessions</td>
<td>Convening Fax dated 12 September 2013 refers</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 26 September</td>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>11th and final Working Party meeting (PM)</td>
<td>WTO/AIR/4174 dated 3 September 2013 refers</td>
<td>CRI</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**[Tuesday, 1 – Thursday, 3 October]**

**[Tuesday, 8 – Wednesday, 9 October]**

**WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2013**

**[Tuesday, 5 – Wednesday, 6 November]**

**NINTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (MC9) - BALI**

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¹ Dates are suggested to assist planning by Members, Acceding Governments and the Secretariat. However, listed meetings are not automatic and will only go ahead on the basis of inputs from Acceding Governments, received with sufficient time for review by Members, normally a period of at least four weeks.

Scheduling and confirmation of meetings also take account of the distribution of meetings in any particular period, and hence, the capacity of Members and the Secretariat alike to cope.
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<thead>
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<td></td>
<td>EN-FR-ES</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Quarter 2014</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>12th Working Party meeting</td>
<td>Convening Notice pending</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Quarter 2014</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>4th Working Party meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Quarter 2014</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>2nd Working Party meeting</td>
<td>Convening Notice pending</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**

Enquiries related to this calendar should be addressed to:
- Ms. Souda Tandara-Stenier (Tel: 022 739 6321; e-mail: Souda.Tandara-Stenier@wto.org);
- Ms. Nadia Ferdi Demierre (Tel: 022 739 6560; e-mail: Nadia.Ferdi@wto.org); or
- accessions@wto.org