

WTO ACCESSIONS NEWSLETTER

...safeguarding, enlarging and strengthening the rules-based multilateral trading system

Accessions Strategic Objectives

- ⇒ Domestic reform instrument
- ⇒ Systemic update
- ⇒ Market access expansion
- ⇒ International cooperation for trade

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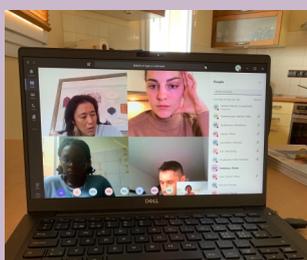
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with contributions from Accessions Division staff

ACCESSIONS DIVISION COVID-19 MEASURES

The Accessions Division remains fully committed to serving the accession community during this unprecedented period of uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While we are working from home until the end of April, we remain reachable at tel: +41 22 739 63 21 and email: accessions@wto.org



Curaçao — New Acceding Government

On 3 March, the General Council established a Working Party to examine the application from the Government of Curaçao to accede to the WTO under Article XII of the Marrakesh Agreement as a separate customs territory. This brings the total number of acceding governments to 23.



General Council — 3 March 2020



Meeting between DG Roberto Azevêdo and Mr Caryl Monte, Chief Negotiator for WTO Accession (Curaçao)

This landmark decision marks the first time since the establishment of the WTO in 1995 that a government requests accession to the Organization as a separate customs territory. This is also the first request for individual membership from a constituent country of an existing Member – the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

At the General Council meeting, after the acceptance of Curaçao as a new Observer government, Mr Caryl Monte, President of the Permanent Commission for International Trade and Foreign Economic Relations and Chief Negotiator for the WTO Accession, underscored Curaçao's long-standing commitment to the multilateral trading system, including through its predecessor, the Netherlands Antilles, which had been a participant to the GATT. Curaçao's main motivation for seeking independent WTO

Membership was the aspiration to "directly participate in the global trade dialogue and seek mutual economic progress by connecting to other trading partners, especially in the Caribbean region, based on a transparent set of multilateral trading rules, administered on the basis of equality and irrespective of the size of member countries."

Ambassador Monique van Daalen of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which had requested the inclusion of Curaçao's accession application on the agenda of the meeting, expressed appreciation for Members' support. She added that Curaçao had been part of the original membership of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to GATT, and subsequently the WTO, along with three other countries in the Kingdom – Aruba and Sint Maarten in the Caribbean and the Netherlands in Europe.

Background on Curaçao



Curaçao is one of four constituent countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. It is situated in the southern part of the Caribbean Sea, about 55 kilometres off the coast of Venezuela, with a population of approximately 160,000. Curaçao assumed all rights and obligations of the former Netherlands Antilles on 10 October 2010 – the date on which the Netherlands Antilles was constitutionally dissolved and Curaçao became its political successor. The principal tradeable sectors of the economy are Tourism, Oil Refining and Bunkering, Transportation and International Financial Services. Since 2018, Curaçao has been negotiating bilateral trade agreements with Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad & Tobago.

Accession Strategic Focus

Belarus: The 13th meeting of the Working Party on the Accession of Belarus, initially scheduled for 24 March, was cancelled due to the suspension of all WTO meetings. In his communication to the Working Party on 18 March, Ambassador Kemal Madenoğlu (Turkey), Chairperson of the Working Party, noted that the rescheduling of the Working Party meeting would be taken up at a later stage, as appropriate, taking into consideration the developments related to COVID-19. He proposed that, should the situation not improve by the end of April, Working Party members consider initiating a new cycle of questions and replies without holding a formal Working Party meeting. Stressing the importance of advancing the bilateral market access track, he also encouraged the Members concerned to

continue to actively engage with Belarus, with a view to finalising negotiations as soon as possible.



Ambassador Kemal Madenoğlu (Turkey), Chairperson of the Working Party

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Further to his recent appointment, Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Staša Košarac has invited

Ambassador Atanas Paparizov (Bulgaria), Chairperson of the Working Party, and the Accessions Division to visit Sarajevo to exchange views on the next steps in concluding the accession process that is at its final stage. The specific dates of the visit are to be agreed, in consultation with Sarajevo.

Comoros: In preparation for the 5th meeting of the Working Party, the revised questionnaire on State Trading was circulated to the Working Party on 19 March. The Secretariat is finalising the revised draft Report of the Working Party which will be circulated shortly, along with other accession documentation. The date of the next Working Party meeting will be decided, taking into consideration the developments related to COVID-19.

Accession State of Play — LDCs

Ethiopia: Following the 4th meeting of the Working Party held on 30 January, over 160 written questions were received from two Members. Currently, Addis is working on the responses to these questions. Once the responses are ready, an updated set of documentary inputs will be prepared for the next Working Party cycle.



Mr Geremew Ayalew (Ethiopia) at the General Council— 3 March 2020

Somalia: At the General Council meeting on 3 March, Ambassador Ebyan Mahamed Salah of Somalia announced the imminent submission of the Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime (MFTR) to the Secretariat. Accompanied by Chief Negotiator Maryan Hassan, she stressed that the Government of Somalia was committed to economic reforms and considered WTO

accession as a crucial process to consolidate its reform efforts. She also informed the WTO membership that the IMF approved Somalia's eligibility for debt relief under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. The debt relief was officially announced by the IMF and the World Bank on 25 March. This is a significant step towards debt sustainability, enhanced growth, and poverty reduction in Somalia.



Ambassador Ebyan Mahamed Salah at the General Council— 3 March 2020

South Sudan: Following the establishment of the Transitional Government of National Unity in February, Ambassador Mohammad Haqjo (Afghanistan), Chairperson of the Working Party, sent a congratulatory letter to South Sudan's new Minister of Trade and Investment, Mr. Kuol Athian, recalling the

progress made in the accession process to date and outlining the next steps, especially the actions required by Juba in the coming months.

Sudan: Following the Chair Visit by Mr Katsuro Nagai (Japan) in January, the Secretariat has been in touch with Khartoum regarding the preparation of updates to the Factual Summary of Points Raised which would take account of recent developments in economic and trade policies following the establishment of the Transitional Government in August 2019. In parallel, Sudan has been in touch with the Secretariat regarding the organisation of outreach activities involving the Council of Ministers and the private sector in the near future.

Timor-Leste: With the upcoming formation of a new coalition Government, the visit of Ambassador Rui Macieira (Portugal), Chairperson of the Working Party to Dili, initially scheduled for April, is postponed until later. In the meantime, the Accessions Division remains in touch with Dili, ready to provide necessary technical assistance.

Accession State of Play — Non-LDCs

Equatorial Guinea: Malabo is working to finalize its Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime (MFTR) in the coming weeks. Once the MFTR is finalized and validated by the Government, it will be circulated to WTO Members for questions and comments. At the same time, a vacancy notice for the Chairmanship of the Working Party will be opened.

Uzbekistan: On 2 and 6 March, Tashkent circulated the following negotiating inputs to the Working Party: the replies to Members' questions on the MFTR; a questionnaire on import licensing procedures; and revised market access offers on goods and services. Ambassador Ji-ah Paik (Republic of Korea), Chairperson of the Working Party, will hold consultations with Members on the next steps, including the timing of the Working Party meeting, taking into account WTO meeting schedules related to COVID-19.



Mr Askar Mirsaidov (Uzbekistan)

Special Focus



2019 DG Annual Report on WTO Accessions

Director-General Roberto Azevêdo presented his 2019 Annual Report on WTO Accessions to the WTO membership on 3 March. Speaking at the General Council, he welcomed the progress made in the accessions of Belarus, the Bahamas and South Sudan where the respective Working Parties met in 2019. Looking at the priorities for the coming period, he noted that the accessions of Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Comoros were technically advanced and could soon enter the final phases of negotiations.

DG Azevêdo also welcomed the reactivation of the accession processes of Ethiopia and Uzbekistan after long periods of dormancy. Moreover, he expressed hopes for the potential reactivation of other accessions, including Algeria, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Lebanon, Serbia and Sudan, in addition to the initiation of the Working Party processes for Equatorial Guinea, Somalia and Timor-Leste.

Furthermore, DG Azevêdo noted that the Secretariat would place additional emphasis on providing technical assistance to Africa, which accounts for 40% of the ongoing accessions. In this regard, the focus will be to ensure coherence and complementarities between membership of the WTO and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Thematic Focus "Greater Coherence in Global Economic Policymaking: The Case of WTO Accession"

Every year, the Annual Report has a thematic focus relevant to accession and the 2019 Report highlights inter-agency cooperation in support of governments' efforts on WTO accession. In particular, this Report discusses in greater detail accession-specific cooperation with the IMF and the World Bank.

The Report highlights areas of mutual interest where trade and economic policy issues discussed in the context of WTO accession negotiations overlap with the work of the IMF and the World Bank. These areas were identified by analysing IMF Article IV Staff Reports, World Bank Country Partnership Strategies/Frameworks, and WTO Accession Working Party Reports. In this context, it is interesting to note that WTO accession has been specifically mentioned in the recent IMF Article IV Staff Reports of nine acceding governments, and that World Bank Country Partnership Strategies/Frameworks have been agreed with twelve acceding governments.

Furthermore, the Report reviews how the WTO's Cooperation Agreements with the IMF and the World Bank, under the Coherence mandate, provide a formal basis for collaboration on accessions between the WTO and the respective institutions. This collaboration has been expressed through: (i) use of observer status rights; (ii) access to documents; (iii) use of documents in Working Party meetings; (iv) technical cooperation; and (v) consultations between staff.

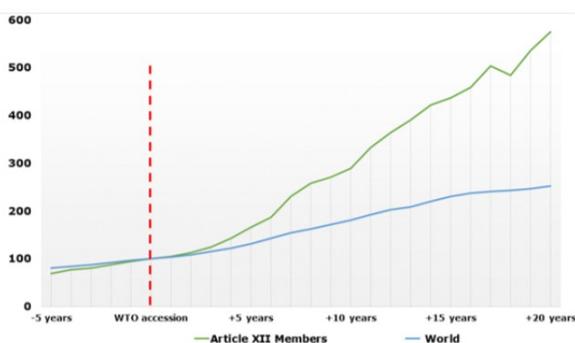
The report concludes that heightened collaboration with other international organizations could take place at both institutional and country levels.



Trade and Economic Performance of Article XII Members

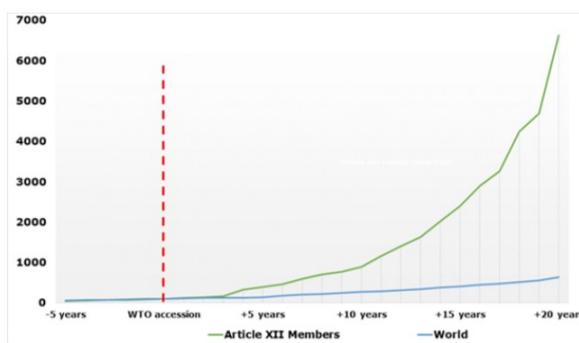
The 2019 Report presents new indicators on the economic performance of Article XII Members, focusing on growth trends pre- and post-WTO accession.

Figure 1: GDP growth rate of Article XII Members (Indices, WTO accession year = 100)



Source: IMF.

Figure 2: Growth rate of FDI inward stocks of Article XII Members (Indices, WTO accession year = 100)



Source: UNCTAD.

2019 DG Annual Report on WTO Accessions (cont'd)

Figure 3: Growth rate of merchandise exports of Article XII Members

(Indices, WTO accession year = 100)

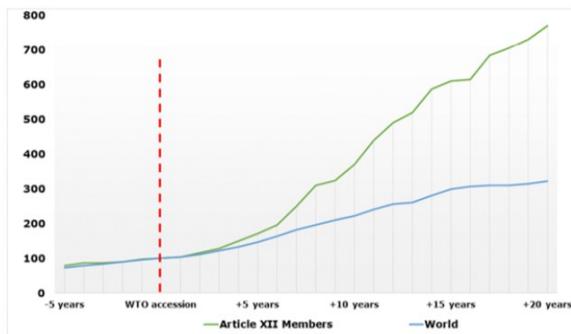
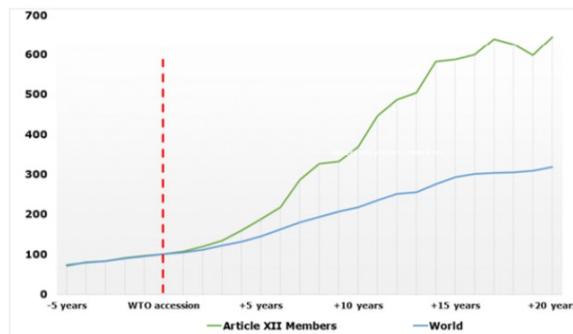


Figure 4: Growth rate of merchandise imports of Article XII Members

(Indices, WTO accession year = 100)



Source: WTO Data Portal.

The figures provide the trade and economic performance of Article XII Members in the years before and after accession to the WTO by depicting growth trends in GDP (Figure 1), inward foreign direct investment stocks (Figure 2), merchandise exports (Figure 3), and merchandise imports (Figure 4). These indicators demonstrate that after acceding to the WTO, these economies, on average, experienced faster growth - both in comparison with the years prior to WTO accession and when assessed relative to the world average.

Figure 5: Growth rate of commercial services exports of Article XII Members (Accessions concluded prior to 2011)

(Indices, WTO accession year = 100)

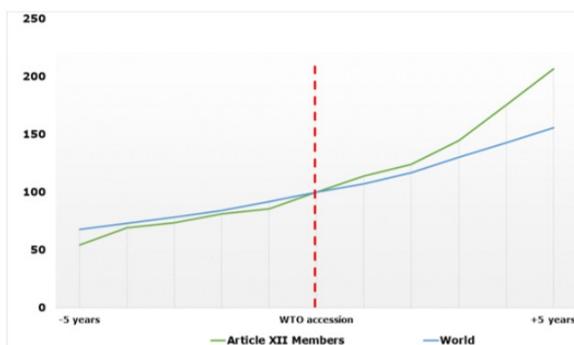
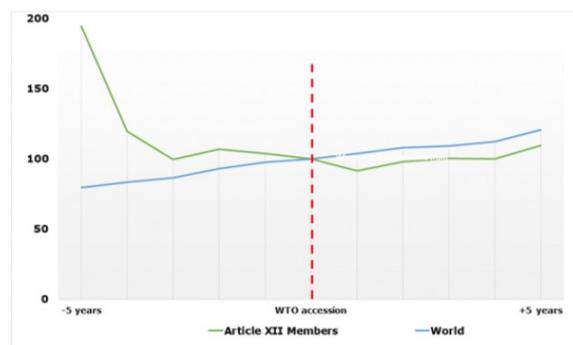


Figure 6: Growth rate of commercial services exports of Article XII Members (Accessions concluded after 2012)

(Indices, WTO accession year = 100)



Source: WTO Data Portal.

On the services side, Article XII Members have also tended to perform better in the years following accession than in the years prior to accession. The picture is more mixed when comparing their performance relative to the world average. In particular, for Article XII Members joining the WTO after 2012, growth in commercial services exports has been positive, but has not outperformed the world average (see Figures 5 and 6).

Special Focus

What is the China WTO Accession Internship Programme?

The WTO Accessions Internship Programme was established as part of China's LDCs and Accessions Programme by the Government of China under a Memorandum of Understanding signed with the WTO in 2011. The Internship provides opportunities for recent graduates and young professionals from developing countries and LDCs in increasing their understanding of the WTO and of trade law, international economics and international relations.

What do interns do?

For a period of 10 months, interns are assigned to tasks intended to enhance their knowledge of the WTO and of trade law and economics and are supervised by a professional staff member of the WTO.

They are also expected to assist the Accessions Division in the day-to-day work including: supporting to professional staff in areas directly related to accessions, including covering meetings and preparing short reports; carrying out thematic research related to accessions, and other tasks in accordance with their capacity-building needs.

Why apply for this internship programme?

The internship provides a unique opportunity to gain first-hand experience in the work of the Accessions Division and the WTO at large. We have asked current and previous interns to give us their thoughts on the program. Here is what they said:

China WTO Accession Internship Programme

Since 2012, 32 young professionals from developing countries and least developed countries (LDCs), including from acceding governments, have participated in the China WTO Accession Internship. This special coverage provides practical information about the internship programme and the testimonies from recent interns who have worked in the Accessions Division.

2019-2020 Cohort

Nahom Gebremariam Teklewold, Ethiopia (May 2019 -)



"Pursuing my deep interest in international trade, I am doing the WTO China Internship Programme. It is providing me with an opportunity to get substantive knowledge of the multilateral trading system while acquiring transferable skills."

Nahom studied law at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia and holds a Masters' degree in International Affairs from the Graduate Institute, Geneva.

Nosirkhon Gozikhonov, Uzbekistan (May 2019 -)



"The China programme internship gave me in-depth knowledge about the multilateral trading system and unparalleled understanding of the complexities of WTO accession procedures and the negotiations that precede these accessions. The experience gained at the WTO will be an invaluable asset in my career. I intend to continue working in international trade and the accession of Uzbekistan to the WTO."

Nosirkhon holds a Bachelor's degree in Commercial Law from Westminster International University in Tashkent and an LLM in International Trade and Investment Law at Lyon Catholic University, France.

Lizaveta Trakhalina, Belarus (July 2019 -)



"The work at the Accessions Division combines a meaningful contribution to my home country, Belarus, in the process of accession to the WTO with work in an international environment. It has equipped me with experience in international diplomacy and international trade policy that would allow me to assist countries in advancing their economic reforms toward national and global prosperity."

Lizaveta holds both Bachelor and Master's degrees in International Law from the Belarusian State University and has recently graduated with a Magister Juris degree (LLM equivalent) from the University of Oxford, where she was an Oxford-Weidenfeld/Chevening scholar.

Chidinma Onyebuchi, Nigeria (September 2019 -)



"The Internship gives a clearer insight into the accession process and the making of international trade policies at the WTO, especially as it discusses reforms to its structures and processes. It is a great opportunity to learn from experts and observe the relationship between trade policies and development and how they interact in the current economic order. This expanded worldview will enhance my ability to impact policies for inclusive development and economic progress."

Chidinma is an international lawyer with experience in several international agencies. She holds a Bachelor's in Law (LL.B) and a Masters' degree (LL.M International Law) from the University of Lagos and Cambridge respectively.

China WTO Accession Internship Programme (cont'd)

How to apply?

There is no opening or closing date for applications. The selection process, which involves written exam and interview, is conducted on a rolling basis. Internships may be offered at any time during the year.

A maximum of 5 internship positions are available per year. The maximum duration of the internship is 10 months.

Eligible candidates should:

- Be nationals of LDCs or developing countries that are already WTO members; or
- Be nationals of countries or customs territories engaged in the WTO accession process.
- Have completed their undergraduate studies in a relevant discipline (e.g. economics, law, political science, international relations), or completed at least one year of their postgraduate studies.
- Be between 21-30 years of age.

Interested candidates who meet the above criteria, must complete 2 steps for their application to be considered (incomplete applications will not be considered):

- ⇒ Complete a general internship application under the [WTO e-recruitment website](#), and thereafter,
- ⇒ Send a separate email to ChinaProgramme@wto.org indicating their interest in the China WTO Accession Internship Programme and attaching a copy of the online application form.

Click [here](#) for more information on the China Programme.

Alumni Testimonies

Kulé Galma, Kenya/Somalia (May 2018 - March 2019)



"The programme gave me a good introduction to the WTO and affirmed to me that a career in International Trade was something I wanted to pursue. As a result of my work on the Division's "Trade for Peace" initiative, I was given the unique opportunity to participate on a panel at the Geneva Peace Week. I urge all prospective applicants to apply! It's a fantastic opportunity to launch your career in trade".

Kulé holds a BA in Finance from the University of Hertfordshire and an MSc in Accounting & Finance from the London School of Economics and Political Science. She presently works for the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Geneva.

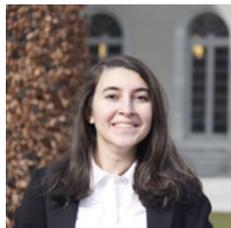
Walter Mandela, Uganda (November 2018 - September 2019)



"Working at the WTO through the China Programme was professionally rewarding and a gateway into the world of international trade and the multilateral trading system. Furthermore, I built professional relationships with some of the leading global experts in international trade. I encourage persons seeking deeper insights into international trade and the multilateral trading system, - particularly the relevance of the WTO, its inner workings, and the WTO accession process to apply".

Walter completed an LL.M in International Law at the University of Cape Town and an MA in Human Rights and Democratisation at the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation, Italy and a BA in Law at Uganda Christian University.

Sariyya Bunyatova, Azerbaijan (June 2018 – April 2019)



"The internship gave me an excellent opportunity to observe first-hand how the multilateral trading system functions and the benefits it offers to acceding countries. It enhanced my understanding of trade policy matters and helped me grow as a trade professional. I got the chance to watch trade negotiations and to learn from the best WTO experts. The experience helped in my work as a consultant supporting Azerbaijan's accession to the WTO."

Sariyya holds an LLB from The Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and an LL.M from the Lyon Catholic University. She is currently working as an international trade law and policy and food safety consultant and as an adjunct lecturer in international economic law at the Azerbaijan State University of Economics.

Esau Simutowe, Zambia (September 2017 – July 2018)



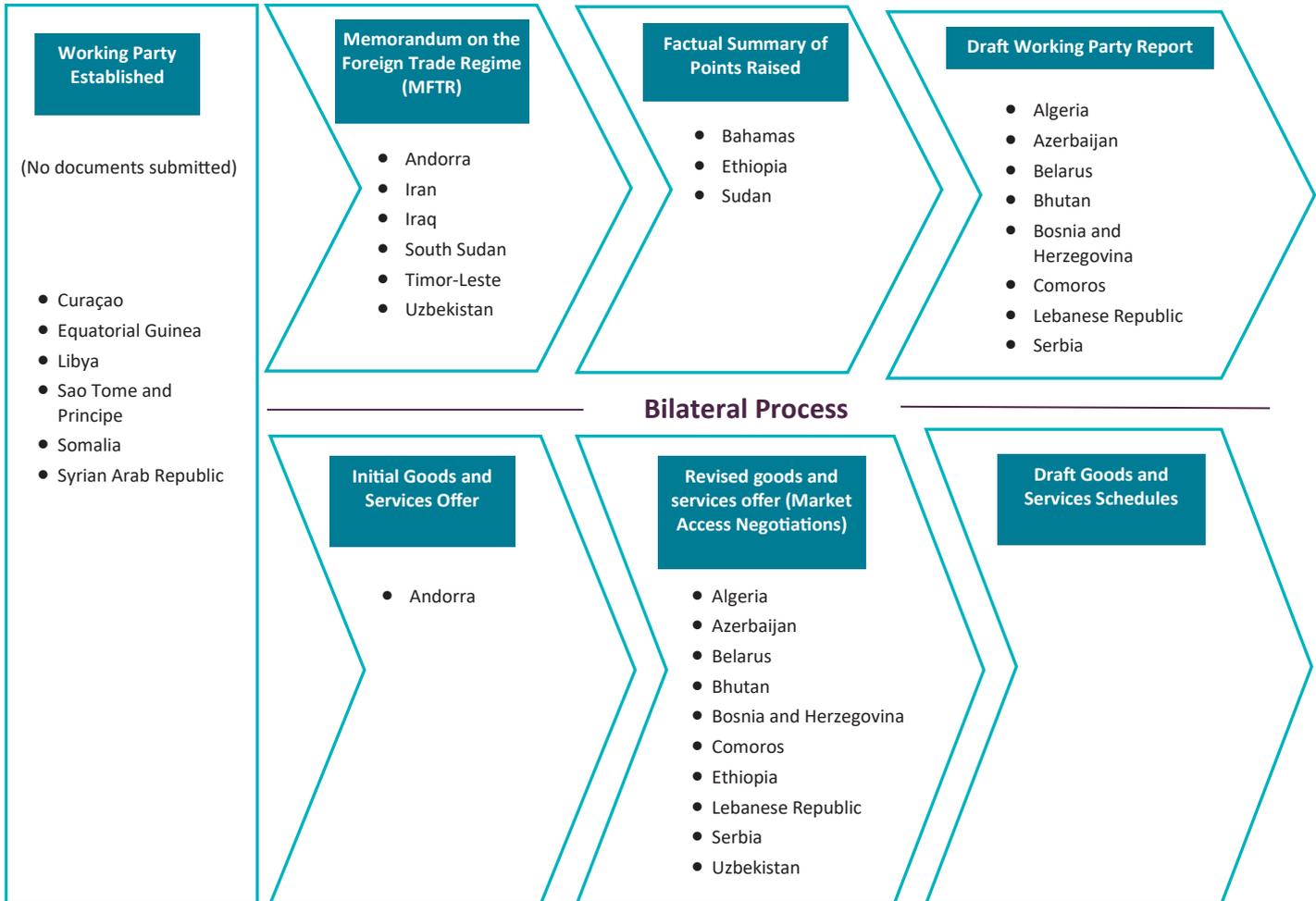
"The China Accessions Programme helped me understand the real challenges that LDCs face in terms of trade and this helped me to quickly adapt to the environment in Zambia and work towards improving Zambia's socio-economic situation through trade in agriculture."

Esau holds both Bachelor and Master's degrees in Economics from Belgorod State National Research University. He is currently working as a Research Associate, Socio-Economic Programs at the International Maize and Wheat

Improvement Center in Zambia (CIMMYT).

WTO Accession Progress Tracker

Multilateral Process



WTO Accessions 2020 — Evolving Work Programme

Accession WP	WP Establishment	Last WP Meeting	State of Play	Upcoming Activity
1. ALGERIA (DZA) Chair: H.E. Mr. José Luis CANCELA GÓMEZ (Uruguay)	17 June 1987	14WPM, 31 March 2014	- Preparation of updated inputs (replies, LAP, AGSTs, LEG)	
2. ANDORRA (AND)	22 October 1997		Inactive	
3. AZERBAIJAN (AZE) Chair: H.E. Dr. Walter WERNER (Germany)	16 July 1997	14WPM, 28 July 2017	- Preparation of updated inputs (replies, LAP, AGSTs, LEG, as well as DWPR)	- 15WPM (Q3 2020 - TBC)
4. THE BAHAMAS (BHS) Chair: H.E. Mr. Andrew STAINES (United Kingdom)	18 July 2001	4WPM, 5 April 2019	- Preparation of updated inputs (replies, EDWPR)	- 5WPM (TBC)
5. BELARUS (BLR) Chair: H.E. Mr. Kemal MADENOĞLU (Turkey)	27 October 1993	12WPM, 10 July 2019	- Updated inputs (AGST, LAP, LEG and replies as well as DWPR) circulated to WP between November 2019 and March 2020	- 13 WPM (Q2 2020)
6. BHUTAN* (BTN) Chair: H.E. Dr. Elisabeth TICHY-FISSELBERGER (Austria)	6 October 1999	4WPM, 30 January 2008	No activity since 2008	
7. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BIH) Chair: H.E. Mr. Atanas PAPANIZOV (Bulgaria)	15 July 1999	13WPM, 7 February 2018	- Preparation of updated inputs (replies, LAP as well as DWPR)	- Next/final WPM to be held in 2020 (TBC)
8. COMOROS* (COM) Chair: H.E. Mr. Luis Enrique CHÁVEZ BASAGOITIA (Peru)	9 October 2007	4WPM, 28 March 2018	- Preparation updated inputs (replies, LAP as well as DWPR)	- 5WPM (Q2 2020)
9. CURAÇAO (CUW) Chair: Pending	3 March 2020	No WPM held to date	- Preparation of MFTR	- Secretariat's TA mission to Willemstad (TBC)
10. EQUATORIAL GUINEA (GNQ) Chair: Pending	5 February 2008	No WPM held to date	- Preparation of MFTR	- Secretariat's TA mission to Malabo (TBC)
11. ETHIOPIA* (ETH) Chair: H.E. Mr. Morten JESPERSEN (Denmark)	10 February 2003	4WPM, 30 January 2020	- Preparation of updated inputs (replies, LAP, as well as Elements of DWPR)	- 5WPM (Q3 2020 – TBC)
12. IRAN (IRN) Chair: Pending	26 May 2005	No WPM held to date	- Preparation of updated inputs (MFTR and MA offers)	
13. IRAQ (IRQ) Chair: H.E. Mr. Omar HILALE (Morocco)	13 December 2004	2WPM, 2 April 2008	- Updated MFTR circulated in Feb. 2018. - Preparation of full range of updated inputs (replies, LAP, LEG, AGST, checklists and questionnaires, MA offers)	- TA Mission in Baghdad (TBC)
14. LEBANESE REPUBLIC (LBN) Chair: Mr. Jean-Paul THUILLIER (France)	14 April 1999	7WPM, 28 October 2009	- Updated inputs (AGST, LAP, LEG, checklists and questionnaires, as well as DWPR) circulated to WP in April-June 2017 - Preparation of updated MA offers	
15. LIBYA (LBY) Chair: Mr. Victor ECHEVARRÍA UGARTE (Spain)	27 July 2004	No WPM held to date	Inactive	
16. SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE* (STP) Chair: Pending	26 May 2005	No WPM held to date	- Preparation of MFTR	
17. SERBIA (SRB) Chair: H.E. Mrs Marie-Claire SWÄRD CAPRA (Sweden)	15 February 2005	13WPM, 13 June 2013	- Preparation of updated inputs (AGST, LAP, LEG as well as DWPR)	- 14WPM (TBC)
18. SOMALIA* (SOM) Chair: Pending	7 December 2016	No WPM held to date	- Preparation of MFTR	
19. SOUTH SUDAN* (SSD) Chair: H.E. Mr. Mohammad Qurban HAQJO (Afghanistan)	13 December 2017	1WPM, 21 March 2019	- Preparation of updated MFTR, as well as other inputs (replies, checklists, LAP, LEG, initial MA offers)	- WTO/ITC TA mission - 2WPM (TBC)
20. SUDAN* (SDN) Chair: Mr. Katsuro NAGAI (Japan)	25 October 1994	4WPM, 14 July 2017	- Preparation of updated FS and other inputs (AGSTs, LAP and LEG)	- Secretariat's TA mission to Khartoum (TBC) - 5WPM in 2020 (TBC)
21. SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC (SYR) Chair: Pending	4 May 2010	No WPM held to date	Inactive	
22. TIMOR-LESTE* (TLS) Chair: H.E. Mr. Rui MACIEIRA (Portugal)	7 December 2016	No WPM held to date	- Preparation of replies on MFTR circulated in July 2017, as well as other inputs (LAP, LEG)	- Chair's visit to Dili, Q2 2020 (TBC) - 1WPM, 2020 (TBC)
23. UZBEKISTAN (UZB) Chair: H.E. Ms. PAIK Ji-ah (Republic of Korea)	21 December 1994	3WPM, 14 October 2005	- Inputs (replies on MFTR, LAP, MA offers) circulated to WP in March	- 4WPM in Q2 2020 (TBC)

Notes: * LDC — AGST (Agricultural Supporting Tables); CVQ (Customs Valuation Questionnaire); DWPR (Draft Working Party Report); FS (Factual Summary of Points Raised); ILQ (Import Licensing Questionnaire); LAP (Legislative Action Plan); LEG (legislation); MA (market access); MFTR (Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime); Q1 (1st quarter); STQ (State Trading Questionnaire); TA (technical assistance); WP (Working Party); WPM (Working Party meeting).

ACCESSIONS ANNIVERSARY DATES — ARTICLE XII MEMBERS



WTO Building — Centre William Rappard

Article XII Member	Membership date
MARCH	
Tajikistan	2 March 2013
APRIL	
North Macedonia	4 April 2003
Jordan	11 April 2000
Nepal	23 April 2004
Seychelles, Republic of	26 April 2015
Montenegro	29 April 2012

ACCESSIONS TOOLBOX

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➔ WTO Director-General's Annual Reports on Accessions	➔ Accession Commitments Database (ACDB)
➔ Handbook on Accessions to the WTO	➔ WTO Accessions Internship - "China Programme"
➔ Accession-Related Technical Assistance Activities	➔ Accession processes of Article XII Members, click here
➔ Accession Intelligence Portal (AIP) on the WTO Website (En, Fr, Es)	➔ WTO Accessions Newsletters

Previous WTO Accessions newsletters:

N° 98 — January-February 2020

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION | Accessions | N° 98 — January/February 2020

WTO ACCESSIONS NEWSLETTER
...safeguarding, enlarging and strengthening the rules-based multilateral trading system

Accessions Strategic Objectives

- Domestic reform instrument
- Systemic update
- Market access expansion
- International cooperation for trade

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- WTO Accessions: **Tajikistan and Timor-Leste**
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- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XIII
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XIV
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XV
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XVI
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XVII
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XVIII
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XIX
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XX
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XXI
- Accession: **Trade Dispute** — Article XXII
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- with contributions from Accessions Division staff

Accession of Ethiopia

The year 2020 marks a turning point in Ethiopia's accession process which is currently set to its 18th year. After an 8-year break, Ethiopia's accession process officially resumed on 20 January 2020 with its 17th Working Party meeting. The Government hopes by 2019 to have completed the accession process and to be able to use the WTO accession process as an anchor for its long-term Economic Reform Plan and lay the ground of achieving WTO membership by 2022.

8th Working Party Meeting, 30 January 2020

Chair: Ambassador Merten Jørgensen (Denmark), who was the first meeting of the Working Party since March 2012. The complete list of members will be shared shortly with the Ambassador to the Prime Minister and Chief Trade Negotiator and composed of 17 members, including Ambassador Jørgensen, Ange Mahe, State Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Gosh Teklehaimanot, State Minister of Finance and other senior representatives from a range of Ministries and government agencies.

African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) which is set to be implemented in March 2018. Ethiopia hopes to realize the accession process as soon as possible, ideally by the end of 2012. Members welcomed the resumption of the Working Party process and expressed support for Ethiopia's accession.

WTO Accession Progress Tracker and Evolving Work Programme

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WTO ACCESSIONS NEWSLETTER
...safeguarding, enlarging and strengthening the rules-based multilateral trading system

Accessions Strategic Objectives

- Domestic reform instrument
- Systemic update
- Market access expansion
- International cooperation for trade

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8th China Round Table on WTO Accessions, Moscow, Russian Federation, 4-5 December 2019

The Secretariat organized the eighth China Round Table on WTO Accessions in Moscow on 4-5 December 2019, in partnership with the Government of the Russian Federation. The theme of the year's Round Table was "Accessions and WTO Reform on the Road to 2020".

The Round Table welcomed the progress to date and rapid evolution of the ongoing 12th accession, while acknowledging the challenges faced by each working group. In particular, Round Table participants encouraged further progress in the accession of Bosnia, Belize and Montenegro, and Central America, which had initiated in 2019, including as possible candidates for the opening WTO.

The Round Table addressed the ongoing activities and to activities effects by several governments including Azerbaijan, Ecuador, Guinea, Ghana, Iraq, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Uzbekistan, which will join their respective Working Party meetings in 2020.

The Round Table stressed the importance of progress and momentum in the updated process of regional integration and WTO accession. Other participants included officials of WTO Members, Working Party Chairpersons and experts from partner institutions.

In addition to the discussion on Accessions and WTO Reform, the Round Table reviewed the state of play in ongoing negotiations, as well as the progress and challenges in several ongoing integration efforts. Here are some of the highlights from the outcome document (in document WT/ACC/2019/2).

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Accession Strategic Focus

In preparation for the next Working Party meeting, which is scheduled for 25 September, the draft of the 12th Working Party meeting agenda was finalized. The agenda was finalized on 11 October. Since no negotiations had been resumed, the draft agenda schedule followed the completion of all bilateral market access agreements concluded and signed between Bosnia and Herzegovina and WTO Members. Separate is yet to conclude bilateral market access negotiations with other Members.

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