

COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN SERVICES WEBINAR

LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRY SERVICES EXPORT PERFORMANCE AND FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION OF PREFERENCES NOTIFIED UNDER THE LDC SERVICES WAIVER

Wednesday, 2 June 2021, 14h00, Via Zoom

Ambassador Villalobos

1. Good afternoon, your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to this webinar on "Least-Developed Country Export Performance and Facilitating Implementation of Preferences Notified under the LDC Services Waiver".
2. The webinar has been organised at the request of the Council for Trade in Services.
3. Let me offer a particularly warm reception to:
 - WTO Director General, Dr NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA;
 - the Minister of Trade and Industry of Chad, his Excellency Mr Ali Djadda KAMPARD; and
 - Mr Emmanuel MUTAHUNGA, Commissioner External Trade, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Uganda
4. I would like to thank them very much for taking time out of their busy schedules to be here with us today to welcome you all.
5. Before I invite them to open the webinar, allow me to make a few introductory remarks.
6. Today's webinar has been agreed as part of the Council's discussions to review and promote the operationalisation of the LDC Services Waiver. It is intended to provide a platform for dialogue and experience-sharing

between LDC service suppliers and Members, above all LDCs and the preference-grantors. It seeks to enable delegations to gather first-hand information, from various relevant stakeholders, and assist them in further promoting the implementation of the preferences notified under the Waiver. It also provides an opportunity – with a view to furthering the objectives of GATS Article IV, to facilitate an exchange of information by Members on measures undertaken to promote the increasing participation of LDCs in world services trade.

7. As you will have seen from the programme, Session 1 of the webinar will provide an overview of LDC services trade, drawing upon the most recent, disaggregated information available, and will also present on-going efforts to improve the data in this area. It will set the scene for the subsequent sessions.

8. In Session 2, LDC service exporters will contribute direct, hands-on information on their business and on accessing other markets, pointing to the opportunities they have found and highlighting the challenges they have faced. Importers of LDC services will share their own perspectives in this regard. I look forward to learning about the factors that have contributed to these suppliers' success, and also to any experience gained in this context.

9. Tomorrow, in Session 3, representatives from LDCs will set out their domestic policies and initiatives to support their services suppliers, including efforts to facilitate their integration in GVCs, and to increase and diversify services exports. Members and other relevant cooperation partners will present their technical assistance and capacity-building measures to help LDC suppliers take advantage of export opportunities, including those provided by the preferences.

10. Finally, in our concluding Session 4, all Members are invited to intervene, to discuss any lessons learnt and pragmatic steps to increase LDC participation in world services trade.

11. We have with us an array of distinguished speakers, emanating from governments, the private sector and international organisations. Allow me, on my own behalf and on behalf of all WTO Members, to thank them for agreeing to contribute to today's webinar. We have provided time for questions and answers in each session after presentations; I would encourage you to make the most of the opportunity to interact and engage with our presenters.