

8th China Round Table on WTO Accessions
“Accessions and WTO Reform: On the Road to MC12”
4-6 December 2019, Moscow



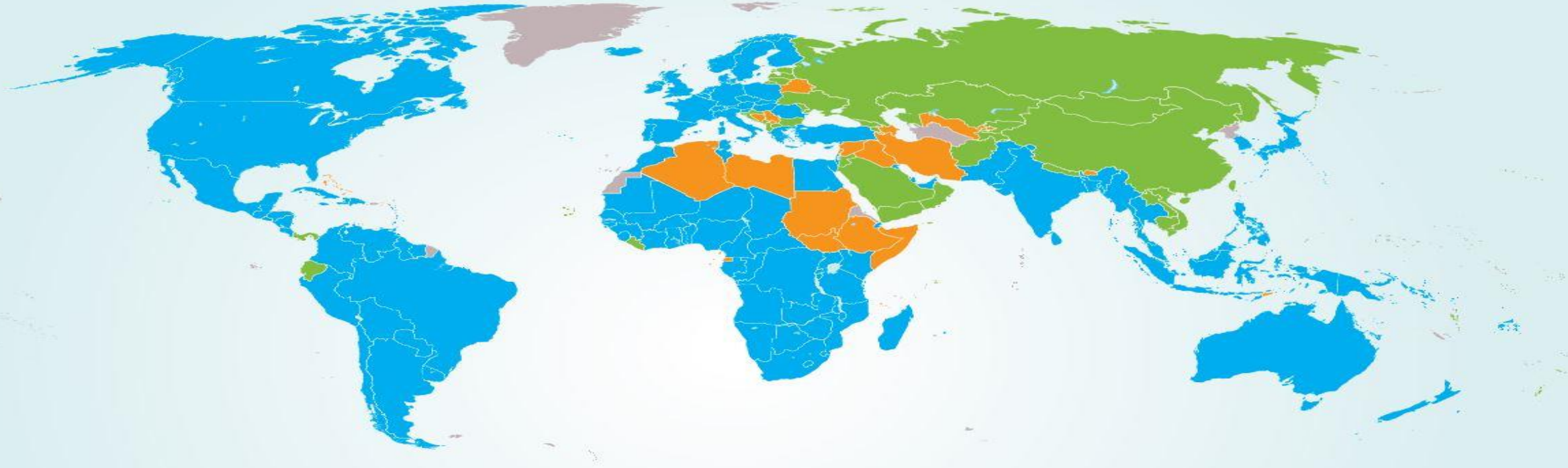
Session 4: State of Play in WTO Accessions



Overview

1. WTO accessions – Achievements to date
2. State of play in accessions
3. WTO accessions in numbers
4. Accessions in 2020: Opportunities and Challenges
5. Secretariat's support for WTO accessions

Map of WTO Members and Observers



ORIGINAL WTO MEMBERS (128)

WTO MEMBERS WHICH NEGOTIATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE XII (36)

ACCEDING GOVERNMENTS (22)

Ecuador
Bulgaria
Mongolia
Panama
Kyrgyz Republic
Latvia
Estonia
Jordan
Georgia
Albania
Oman
Croatia

Lithuania
Moldova, Republic of
China
Chinese Taipei
Armenia
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Nepal
Cambodia
Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of
Viet Nam
Tonga
Ukraine

Cabo Verde
Montenegro
Samoa
Russian Federation
Vanuatu
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Tajikistan
Yemen
Seychelles
Kazakhstan
Liberia
Afghanistan

Algeria
Andorra
Azerbaijan
The Bahamas
Belarus
Bhutan
Bosnia and Herzegovina

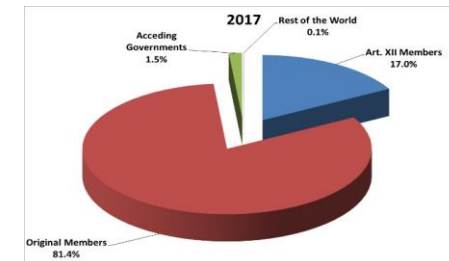
Comoros, Union of the
Equatorial Guinea
Ethiopia
Iran
Iraq
Lebanese Republic
Libya

Sao Tomé and Príncipe
Serbia
Somalia
South Sudan
Sudan
Syrian Arab Republic
Timor-Leste
Uzbekistan

WTO Accessions – Achievements to date

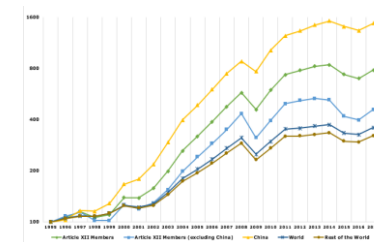
➤ 36 accessions, including 9 LDCs, have been concluded between 1996 and 2016

- Last Members joined in July 2016, i.e. Afghanistan and Liberia
- Article XII Members account for over **20%** of WTO membership



➤ Average length of accession: **10 years and 2 months** (and **12 years and 2 months** for LDCs)

- Shortest: **2 years and 8 months** (Kyrgyz Republic, 1998)
- Longest: **19 years and 9 months** (Kazakhstan and Seychelles, 2015)

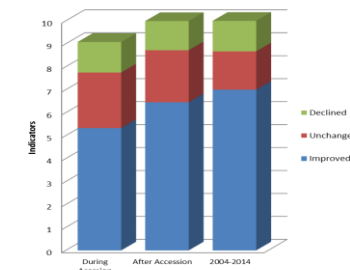


➤ Accession commitments (*see more details in the Background Note*)

- Number of accession commitment paragraphs in Working Party Report: **17** (Mongolia) – **163** (Russian Federation)
- Tariff concessions: **5.1%** (Montenegro) - **39.7%** (Vanuatu) for all products; 7.6% - 43.7% (AG), 4.3% - 39.1% (Non-AG)
- AG Domestic Support & Export Subsidies: 5, 8.5, 10% de minimis levels; AMS (13 Article XII Members); export subsidies bound at zero
- Number of services sub-sectors with commitments: **37** (Mongolia) – **147** (Moldova)

➤ Accession results (*see more details in DG Annual Reports on WTO Accessions*)

- Additional **17%** of world trade covered by WTO rules - today, **98%** world trade conducted under WTO
- GDP Growth rate: On average, Article XII Members have grown **2.5%** faster than ROW
- Trade performance: On average, Article XII Members' trade has grown **20%** faster than ROW
- Export diversification: For about a half of Article XII Members, the number of commodities exported has increased after accession



- Business environment: Improvements in World Bank Doing Business Indicators observed during & after accession

22 Ongoing Accessions per Region (year of application)

Africa	Europe/CIS	Asia Pacific	Middle East	Americas
9	6	2	4	1
Algeria, 1987 Sudan*, 1994 Ethiopia*, 2003 Libya, 2004 Sao Tomé and Príncipe*, 2005 Comoros*, 2007 Equatorial Guinea, 2008 Somalia*, 2016 South Sudan*, 2017	Belarus, 1993 Uzbekistan, 1994 Azerbaijan, 1997 Andorra, 1997 Bosnia & Herzegovina, 1999 Serbia, 2005	Bhutan*, 1999 Timor-Leste*, 2016	Lebanese Rep., 1999 Iraq, 2004 Iran, 2005 Syrian Arab Rep., 2010	Bahamas, 2001
	<i>Turkmenistan</i>			<i>Curaçao, October 2019</i>

On average, the accession process lasting for more than 16 years

Accession Negotiations – State of Play

Multilateral negotiations (Rules)

Application

- *Curaçao*
- *Turkmenistan?*

Working Party Established

(No documents submitted)

- *Equatorial Guinea*
- *Libya*
- *Sao Tome and Principe**
- *Somalia**
- *Syrian Arab Rep.*

Memorandum on Foreign Trade Regime

- *Andorra*
- *Iran*
- *Iraq*
- *Timor-Leste**
- *South Sudan**
- *Uzbekistan*

Factual Summary of Points Raised

- *Bahamas*
- *Ethiopia**
- *Sudan**

Draft Working Party Report

- *Algeria*
- *Azerbaijan*
- *Belarus*
- *Bhutan**
- *Bosnia & Herzegovina*
- *Comoros**
- *Lebanese Rep.*
- *Serbia*

Bilateral negotiations (Market Access)

Initial Goods & Services Offer

- *Andorra*
- *Ethiopia**
- *Uzbekistan*



Revised Goods & Services Offer

- *Algeria*
- *Azerbaijan*
- *Bahamas*
- *Belarus*
- *Bhutan**
- *Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- *Comoros**
- *Lebanese Rep.*
- *Serbia*
- *Sudan**

Draft Goods and Services Schedules



Accessions by status - 2019 DG Annual Report

General Status	Accession WP (establishment)	Last WP meeting	Next WP meeting (based on Secretariat's assessment)
Strategic focus 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belarus (1993) 2. Bosnia & Herzegovina (1999) 3. Comoros* (2007) 	<p>12WPM, July 2019</p> <p>13WPM, February 2018</p> <p>4WPM, March 2018</p>	<p>February 2020</p> <p>Q1 2020</p> <p>Q1 2020</p>
Work in progress <i>On-going efforts to move the WP process</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Azerbaijan (1997) 2. Bahamas (2001) 3. South Sudan* (2017) 4. Sudan* (1994) 	<p>14WPM, July 2017</p> <p>4WPM, April 2019</p> <p>1WPM, March 2019</p> <p>4WPM, July 2017</p>	<p>Q1 2020</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>2020</p> <p>Q2 2020</p>
Reactivation <i>Efforts to resume the WP process after at least 5 years</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethiopia* (2003) 2. Iraq (2004) 3. Lebanese Republic (1999) 4. Serbia (2005) 5. Uzbekistan (1994) 	<p>3WPM, March 2012</p> <p>2WPM, April 2008</p> <p>7WPM, October 2009</p> <p>13WPM, June 2013</p> <p>3WPM, October 2005</p>	<p>January 2020</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>Q1 2020</p>
Activation <i>Efforts to start the WP process with MFTR</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equatorial Guinea (2008) 2. Somalia* (2016) 3. Timor-Leste* (2016) 	<p>No WP held to date</p> <p>No WP held to date</p> <p>No WP held to date</p>	<p>2020</p> <p>2020</p> <p>2020</p>
Inactive <i>No WP held at least during last 5 years</i>	Algeria (1987), Andorra (1997), Bhutan* (1999), Iran (2005), Libya (2004), Sao Tomé and Príncipe* (2005), Syrian Arab Republic (2010)		 

Notes: * LDCs

Accession in Number: On-Accessions

Acceding Government (Working Party establishment)	Number of WP meeting(s) held	Number of documents issued to the WP ⁺	Number of questions replied to by Acceding Governments ⁺
Algeria (1987)	12	105	1897
Belarus (1993)	12	173	2955
Sudan* (1994)	4	88	917
Uzbekistan (1994)	3	34	1348
Azerbaijan (1997)	14	110	2338
Andorra (1997)	1	17	225
Lebanese Republic (1999)	7	61	834
Bosnia & Herzegovina (1999)	13	95	1272
Bhutan* (1999)	4	47	380
Bahamas (2001)	4	45	601
Ethiopia* (2003)	3	16	474
Libya (2004)	-	2	-
Iraq (2004)	2	13	335
Serbia (2005)	13	93	1538
Islamic Rep. of Iran (2005)	-	8	697
Sao Tomé & Príncipe* (2005)	-	1	-
Comoros* (2007)	4	45	638
Equatorial Guinea (2008)	-	1	-
Syrian Arab Rep. (2010)	-	4	-
Timor-Leste* (2016)	-	3	-
Somalia* (2016)	-	1	-
South Sudan* (2017)	1	7	8

Note: *LDC

⁺Based on the documents circulated to the Working Party, not including the documents which are currently processed by the Secretariat.

Accession in Number: Completed Accessions

No .	Article XII Members	Length of accession process	#f WPMs held	# of documents issued	# of questions replied	# of legislation submitted to WP
1	Ecuador (1996)	3yr.4mo	10	11	111	69
2	Bulgaria (1996)	10yr.1mo	9	7	276	26
3	Mongolia (1997)	5yr.3mo	5	12	146	33
4	Panama (1997)	5yr.11mo	5	23	502	45
5	Kyrgyz Rep. (1998)	2yr.8mo	6	63	952	155
6	Latvia (1999)	5yr.2mo	6	49	396	77
7	Estonia (1999)	5yr.8mo	9	44	490	77
8	Jordan (2000)	6yr.3mo	5	53	929	52
9	Georgia (2000)	3yr.11mo	3	56	512	53
10	Albania (2002)	7yr.9mo	8	95	607	66
11	Oman (2000)	4yr.5mo	6	52	808	55
12	Croatia (2000)	7yr.1mo	6	94	919	111
13	Lithuania (2001)	7yr.3 mo	5	90	640	167
14	Moldova (2001)	7yr.7mo	6	84	861	124
15	China (2001)	14yr.9 mo	18	71	441	2,300
16	Chinese Taipei (2002)	9yr.4mo	11	50	960	96
17	Armenia (2003)	9yr.2mo	5	42	434	87
18	N. Macedonia (2003)	8yr.4mo	5	52	829	132

No .	Article XII Members	Length of accession process	# of WPMs held	# of documents issued	# of questions replied	# of legislation submitted to WP
19	Nepal* (2004)	14yr.10mo	3	34	466	24
20	Cambodia* (2004)	9yr.10mo	5	48	460	85
21	Saudi Arabia (2005)	12yr.5mo	14	98	1218	95
22	Viet Nam (2007)	12yrs	14	105	3511	184
23	Tonga (2007)	11yr.8mo	3	36	416	74
24	Ukraine (2008)	14yr5mo	17	225	3810	385
25	Cabo Verde* (2008)	8yrs	6	69	888	73
26	Montenegro (2012)	7yr2mo	8	67	1015	114
27	Samoa* (2012)	13yr10mo	2	52	914	123
28	Russian Fed. (2012)	19yr1mo	31	187	2566	529
29	Vanuatu* (2012)	17yr1mo	2	36	343	123
30	Lao PDR* (2013)	15yrs	10	105	1224	159
31	Tajikistan (2013)	11yr8mo	9	71	1296	137
32	Yemen* (2014)	13yr11mo	11	98	1164	58
33	Seychelles (2015)	19yr.9mo	7	110	1043	287
34	Kazakhstan (2015)	19yr.9mo	20	229	1900	412
35	Liberia* (2016)	8yr.7mo	4	39	264	102
36	Afghanistan* (2016)	11yr.7mo	5	62	773	75

Assessment of Accessions: Opportunities & Challenges

Opportunities

- A larger number of active accessions, compared to 3 years ago
 - 3-5 new applications: Somalia, Timor-Leste, South Sudan, Curaçao (and Turkmenistan?)
 - Resumption of accession Working Parties after years of dormancy/inactivity
 - ✓ Comoros (2016), Belarus (2017), Sudan (2017), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018), Bahamas (2018)
 - ✓ For 2020, Ethiopia and Uzbekistan, as well as Iraq, Lebanon and Serbia, depending on domestic situations
- Members' broad support for WTO accessions, at WP level or through technical assistance
- Strong interest & support from international partners
 - IMF, World Bank, ITC, African Union/UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Arab League/Arab Monetary Fund

Challenges

- Challenging international and domestic environments
 - e.g. domestic politics, geopolitics, fragile and conflict-affect situations, recent statehood, frequent changes in government, vested interests
- Capacity and human resource constraints
- Frequent turnover of accession experts
 - Acceding Governments, WTO Members, Working Party Chairs and the Secretariat

Secretariat Support to Acceding Governments

1. Training & Technical Assistance

- National activities – tailor-made to individual accession, depending on accession stage
- Geneva-based specialized training courses on WTO Accessions
 - ✓ 2019: *WTO Rules (2 weeks, February) and Market Access on Goods (one week, November)*
 - ✓ 2020: *Agriculture (one week, October) and Market Access on Services (one week, TBC)*
- ✓ China Accession Internship Programme – Five 10-month intern positions

2. Experience-sharing on WTO Accessions

- China Round Table – Annual, various topics
 - ✓ *Best practices in accession negotiations, LDC accessions and post-accession; African/Eurasian Perspectives on MTS; WTO Rules; Accession Negotiators Network*
- African Regional Dialogue on WTO Accessions, annual, issues of interest to African accessions
 - ✓ *3rd Dialogue, Addis Ababa, 3-7 February 2020 – «Economic transformation through WTO membership and AfCFTA*

3. Support to Accession-related Groups

- Informal Group on Accessions (IGA) – Secretariat's monthly briefings to WTO Members
- Informal Group of Acceeding Governments (IGAG) – Regular meetings of Geneva-based delegations
- g7+ WTO Accession Group – Regular meetings of FCA acceeding and post-accession LDCs
- Informal Dialogue of Acceeding LDCs – *ad hoc*



Secretariat Support to Acceding Governments



4. Information Dissemination on WTO Accessions

- Accession Intelligence Portal (AIP) – documentation, Accession Commitment and Protocol Database (ACDB)
- Accession Newsletter – monthly reporting on developments in WTO accessions
- Tweeter - @OshikawaMaika
- DG Annual Report on WTO Accessions with different thematic focus
 - ✓ «Coherence in WTO Accessions» (2019); «Developments in the Management of Accession Negotiations» (2018)
 - «Accessions and the Business Environment» (2017); «Accession for Structural Reforms and Economic Diversification» (2016)
- Various publications:
 - ✓ «A Handbook on Accession to the WTO» (2008, w/ CUP); «WTO Accessions and Trade Multilateralism: Case Studies and Lessons for the WTO at Twenty» (2015, w/ CUP); «Trade Multilateralism in the Twenty-First Century: Building the Upper Floors of the Trading System through WTO Accessions» (2017, w/ CUP)
 - ✓ Upcoming in 2020: «Accession Handbook – 2nd Edition» (w/ CUP), «Eurasian Perspective on Trade and the WTO: Lessons from Accessions, Regional Integration and Economic Transformation», (w/ CUP), «Acceding to the WTO: An Evidence-based Analysis» (w/ WB)



5. Collaboration with Other International, Regional and Bilateral Partners

- «WTO Accession Forum on Technical Assistance» during the Aid for Trade Review
- «Coherence in WTO Accessions»: Collaboration with IMF and the WB
- «Trade for Peace through WTO Accession», including partnership with Geneva Peacebuilding Platform



Acceding Governments' *Tour de table*

- 1. What are the biggest challenges in your accession?**
- 2. What is needed to overcome these challenges?**