



## CHINA WTO ACCESSION INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ALUMNI STORY

please tell us...



### Where are you from, and what have you studied before joining the China Programme?

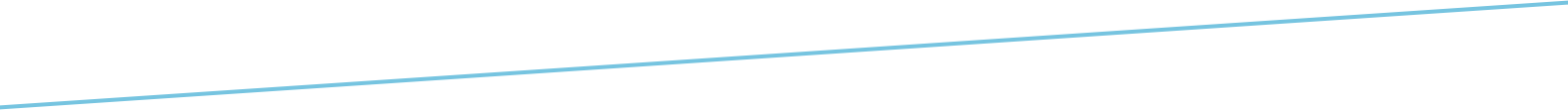
Prior to joining the China Programme, I pursued a Bachelor's degree in Political Sciences at USEK and a second Bachelor's in Economics at NDU in Lebanon. I then went on to complete a Master's in the Political Economy of Capitalism at the University of Geneva. Alongside my academic journey, I also earned a certificate in Visual Studies.

### Why did you apply?

I've always had a strong interest in trade and economics, and with Lebanon still in the process of acceding to the WTO, this programme felt like a rare and valuable opportunity. It allowed me not only to gain hands-on experience within the Organization, but also to better understand the accession process and what it means for countries like mine. I remember walking past the WTO building just a few days after moving to Geneva and thinking, "One day, I'll work there." Applying to the China Programme was a way to turn that aspiration into reality. I wanted to deepen my knowledge of the multilateral trading system and contribute to shaping how Lebanon might one day engage with it.

### What kind of work were you assigned to during your internship?

During my internship, I worked on several WTO accession processes, with a particular focus on Arab accessions. I also supported a range of initiatives and high-level events, serving as co-focal point for the Trade for Peace Programme and contributing to the organization of the 11<sup>th</sup> China Roundtable and Working Party meetings. One of the highlights of my experience was organizing a session during the 3rd Trade for Peace Week titled "*Fragility and Conflict: Building Peace Through Trade and Economic Integration*." I also had the unique opportunity to



contribute to the Trade for Peace podcast, where I engaged with individuals on the ground. These conversations truly opened my eyes to how trade can empower small businesses, expand markets, and serve as a tool for both economic resilience and peacebuilding. I even had the chance to co-host an episode, which was a personal milestone. Throughout the internship, I collaborated with stakeholders from organizations such as the IMF and the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), among others. These experiences provided me with valuable insights into both the technical and strategic dimensions of WTO accessions, as well as the broader role of trade in promoting peace and inclusive development.

### **Looking back, what do you think of your work experience at the WTO, and as participant of the China Programme?**

Looking back, my experience at the WTO, and particularly as a participant of the China Programme, was truly one of the most enriching chapters of my professional and personal journey. The opportunity to work at the heart of the multilateral trading system, contribute to the accession process of several governments, and take part in initiatives like the Trade for Peace Programme gave real meaning to my passion for trade and development.

The China Programme opened the door for me to gain practical insights into WTO accessions, while also connecting me with a diverse and inspiring community of professionals from around the world. I was entrusted with meaningful work from day one, from supporting Working Party Meetings and high-level events like the China Roundtable to drafting podcast episodes and contributing to a joint study on Arab accessions.

What made the experience even more special was the culture within the Accessions Division, warm, collaborative, and intellectually stimulating. I am incredibly grateful for the guidance of my mentors, the encouragement of my colleagues, and the friendships that made every day at the WTO memorable. Participating in the China Programme was not only a dream fulfilled, but a stepping stone that shaped both my outlook and aspirations in international trade.

### **What have you done since?**

Since completing the China Programme, I have continued to build on my experience in international trade and development. I first joined the Permanent Mission of the Lebanese Republic to the United Nations in Geneva, where I supported diplomats and followed key developments in international organizations. I then worked at the International Labour Organization (ILO), contributing to projects focused on value chains and market systems development, with a particular emphasis on economic development and inclusive growth. Currently, I am pursuing further studies in finance to strengthen my analytical skills and expand my expertise in global financial systems and data science.

**Thank you!**

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