

CHINA WTO ACCESSION INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ALUMNI STORY

please tell us...



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

I am Suraya Ahmadi from Afghanistan. Before applying to the China Programme internship, I pursued a dual LL.M/Master's 1 in International Business Law and a dual LL.M/Master's 2 in European and International Trade and Investment Law at the Catholic University of Lyon and Lumière University Lyon 2 in France. My academic background has given me a strong foundation in international economic law, trade regulations, including WTO rules, and investment frameworks.

Why did you apply?

I applied to the China Programme because of my strong interest in international trade and economic development, especially in the context of multilateral cooperation. My experience working with the Ministry of Finance of Afghanistan exposed me to trade-related legislations and policies and international economic negotiations, which I later deepened during my master's studies, where I focused on WTO law and trade-related disciplines. The China Programme offered a unique opportunity to apply my knowledge and contribute to meaningful work in the field I am passionate about.

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

During my internship, I was actively involved in supporting the accession processes of several Central Asian countries, including Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. This included preparing for working party meetings, reviewing accession-related documentation, and providing support to the informal group of acceding governments.

I also contributed to research and documentation related to commitments in trade in services.

In parallel, I was closely involved in the WTO's Trade for Peace initiative. My work focused on conducting research on trade-related policies in conflict-affected countries, exploring how trade can serve as a catalyst for peace and sustainable development. I also supported the organization of key events under this initiative, including the Trade for Peace Week.

Overall, my work provided a meaningful insight into how trade policy intersects with peacebuilding and economic recovery.

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 through the China Programme was truly transformative. It not only deepened my understanding of the WTO's role in shaping global trade but also allowed me to contribute directly to accession and peacebuilding processes. The exposure to high-level discussions, policy analysis, and multilateral cooperation enhanced both my technical knowledge and professional skills. Being part of a global team of experts and young professionals was both inspiring and empowering. I believe the programme provided a solid stepping stone for my ongoing career in international trade and development.

What have you done since?

After completing the internship, I joined the International Trade Centre (ITC) (an agency of the UN and WTO) as an intern in the Office for Africa, where I supported several trade-related initiatives for six months. This experience led to a consultancy position with the same department, which I held for nearly a year. Most recently, I transitioned into a full-time role as an Associate Programme Officer with the same team. In this role, I continue to work on inclusive trade and regional integration initiatives, with a focus on empowering small businesses and cross-border traders in Africa.

Thank you!
