

This is an information note to assist Acceding Governments with preparations for meetings and negotiations associated with their accession. It is one of several practical steps by the WTO Secretariat to improve transparency on accessions matters.

NOTE ON ACCESSIONS INFORMATION FOR ACCEDING GOVERNMENTS

The 4th Meeting of the Informal Group on Accessions (IGA) took place today, 28 April 2011. At today's meeting, the Secretariat consulted with Members on the evolving calendar of accessions meetings for 2011.¹ Nineteen delegations attended the meeting.

The Secretariat briefed the IGA on: (i) the progress of the seven 2011 Accession Priorities, namely, the three LDCs of Samoa, Vanuatu and Yemen; as well as Kazakhstan; Montenegro; the Russian Federation; and, Serbia; (ii) the recent developments in nine other active accession processes; (iii) the calendar of meetings; (iv) WP Chairmanships and appointments; and finally (v) technical assistance activities.

Members agreed with the proposed calendar of accession meetings (annexed). However, Members provided guidance that meetings could only go ahead on the basis of inputs received with sufficient time for consideration and review, normally a minimum period of 4-6 weeks.

Consensus had fully emerged to designate/appoint Ambassador Wayne McCook (Jamaica) as Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of The Bahamas. This would be announced at the next meeting of the General Council (3-4 May). Members were informed that the Chairmanships of three Accession Working Parties remained vacant (Algeria, Iran and Uzbekistan).

The IGA was informed that: (i) the first-ever Session on Accessions would take place in the framework of Geneva week, on 5 May; (ii) the Regional Seminar on Accessions for the CEECAC Region would take place from 12 to 14 July 2011, in Vienna; and (iii) the Geneva-based Workshop would take place during the second half of 2011. National activities would continue to be delivered upon request, but priority would be given to substantive work on Accession Working Parties, in Geneva.

¹ Accessions-related meetings are scheduled, based on the submission of substantive and qualitative inputs on the multilateral track of accession negotiations; and, meaningful offers and progress on bilateral market access negotiations.

ACCESSIONS MEETING SCHEDULE – EVOLVING CALENDAR²

27 April 2011

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation		Conf Office Advised
					French Spanish English	Own	
2–6 May 2011	Geneva Week						
2 May 2011	Vanuatu	Formal/Informal re-convened WP Meeting (open to all WTO Members)	WTO/AIR/3732 refers (AM/PM)	D	yes	no	√
3-4 May 2011	General Council						
6 May 2011	Ethiopia	2 nd Working Party	WTO/AIR/3738 refers (AM only)	CRII	yes	tbc	√
[31 May 2011]	Russian Federation	Plurilateral on Agriculture	Convening Notice Pending (AM only)	D	no	no	√
[31 May 2011]		Informal Chair Consultations	Convening Notice Pending (PM only)	D	no	no	√
[1 June 2011]		Informal Chair Consultations	Convening Notice Pending (AM only)	D	no	no	√
[8 June 2011]	Samoa	Informal Meeting	Convening Notice Pending	D	no	no	√
[first half of June 2011]	Tajikistan	6 th Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[second half of June 2011]	Lao PDR	7 th Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[13-14 July 2011]	Russian Federation	Informal/Formal	Convening Notice Pending (AM/PM)	D	yes/no	tbc	√
[After summer break 2011]		Geneva-based Seminar	Convening Notice Pending	tbc			√
[Date TBC]	Yemen	Informal/Formal Meeting	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[Date TBC at any moment]	Montenegro	8th Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√

²Dates are suggested to assist planning by Members, Acceding Governments and the Secretariat. However, meetings will only go ahead on the basis of inputs received with sufficient time for consideration and review by Members, normally a period of 4 to 6 weeks.

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