



The purpose of the Newsletter¹ is to provide Acceding Governments a summary report of the meetings of the Informal Group on Accessions and to assist them with preparations for meetings and negotiations associated with their accessions. It is one of several practical steps by the WTO Secretariat to ensure transparency on accessions matters.

NEWSLETTER FOR ACCEDING GOVERNMENTS

The 10th and last meeting of the Informal Group on Accessions (IGA) took place today, Friday, 25 November 2011. At today's meeting, the Secretariat consulted with Members on the preliminary evolving calendar of accessions meetings for the first quarter of 2012 (annexed). Twenty-three Delegations attended the meeting, including the GRULAC Coordinator (Mexico); and, the ASEAN Coordinator (Thailand).

On behalf of Director-General Pascal Lamy, the Director of the Accessions Division (Mr. Chiedu Osakwe) thanked Members for their positive engagement, which had yielded record results in accessions in 2011.

The Secretariat briefed the IGA on: (i) the circulation of the Director General's Third Annual Report on WTO Accessions, circulated on 17 November (with the three document symbols: WT/ACC/15; WT/GC/135; WT/MIN(11)/3), and reminded the IGA that Item 11 on the agenda of the 30 November General Council was dedicated to this Report; (ii) the three concluded 2011 accessions (the Russian Federation; Samoa; and, Vanuatu); (iii) the recent developments in the Accession of Montenegro; (iv) the progress in 13 active accession processes (Afghanistan; Algeria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Ethiopia; Islamic Republic of Iran; Kazakhstan - 2012 Accession Priority; Lao PDR - 2012 Accession Priority; Serbia - 2012 Accession Priority; Seychelles; Tajikistan; and, Yemen); (v) Working Party Chairmanship vacancies; and (vi) technical assistance, capacity-building and outreach activities.

On the 2011 LDCs' Accession Priorities, Members commended the completion of the Accession Priorities of: (i) Samoa; and (ii) Vanuatu. Members were informed that the recommendations for both accessions have been forwarded to the Eighth WTO Ministerial Conference for action by ministers. Members took note of the 2011 LDC Accession Priority of Yemen, which registered only little progress in 2011, due to domestic political developments.

On Montenegro, the Secretariat briefed Members that the updated Accession Package was circulated on 21 November. Members were further informed that additional technical edits to the draft Working Party Report, submitted by the Government of Montenegro, and an additional legislation notice were currently being processed by the Secretariat for circulation to Members before c.o.b. today, Friday, 25 November. The Director-General had convened the final formal meeting of the Working Party on the Accession of Montenegro for Monday, 5 December. The purpose of the meeting would be to consider for adoption, *ad referendum*, the updated Accession Package and transmit the Report to the Eighth WTO Ministerial Conference for formal action by Ministers.

Due to the heavy accessions programme of the coming months and the pre-eminence of substantive work and technical advice, the Accessions Division has to continue to scale back on the delivery of technical assistance and outreach. The Director of the Accessions Division thanked Members for the bilateral Technical Assistance provided to Acceding Governments in 2011. He expressed gratitude to the Government of China for "China's LDCs and Accessions Programme".

Members commended the work undertaken by the Accessions Division in 2011 and reiterated that accessions added to the credibility and utility of the World Trade Organization.

¹ Please contact Ms Petra Beslac (Acceding-Government-Newsletter@wto.org; Tel: +41 22 739 60 94; and Fax: +41 22 739 57 76) for all enquiries related to the contents of the Newsletter.

ACCESSIONS MEETING SCHEDULE – EVOLVING CALENDAR²**25 November 2011**

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation		Conf Office Advised
					French Spanish English	Own	
5 December 2011	Montenegro	8 th Working Party	WTO/AIR/3866 refers	D	yes	tbc	√
[February 2012]	Azerbaijan	9 th Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	Seychelles	3 rd Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	The Bahamas	2 nd Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	Belarus	Informal/Formal Meeting	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	Kazakhstan	Informal/Formal Meeting	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	Algeria	11 th Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	Ethiopia	3 rd Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[Date TBC]	Yemen	Informal/Formal Meeting	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
5 December 2011	Montenegro	8 th Working Party	WTO/AIR/3866 refers	D	yes	tbc	√
[February 2012]	Azerbaijan	9 th Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	Seychelles	3 rd Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
[first quarter of 2012]	The Bahamas	2 nd Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	√
30 November 2011	General Council						
15-17 December 2011	Eighth Session of the Ministerial Conference						

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.