



The purpose of the Newsletter<sup>1</sup> is to provide Acceding Governments with 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. This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of Members and to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

## **NEWSLETTER FOR ACCEDING GOVERNMENTS**

The Sixth meeting of the Informal Group on Accessions in 2012 took place on 29 June. Eighteen delegations attended the meeting. The Secretariat consulted with Members on the Evolving Calendar of Accessions Meetings for 2012/2013<sup>2</sup> (as annexed).

The Director of the Accessions Division (Mr. Chiedu Osakwe) briefed the IGA on: (i) the ratification developments concerning the 2011 accessions, namely, the Russian Federation and Vanuatu; (ii) the two 2012 LDC Accession Priorities (Lao PDR and Yemen); (iii) the three 2012 non-LDC Accession Priorities (Kazakhstan, Serbia and Tajikistan); and (iv) the progress in nine active accession processes (Afghanistan, Algeria; Azerbaijan; The Bahamas; Belarus; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Ethiopia; Liberia; and Seychelles).

Mr. Osakwe reported to Members on the ratification status of the 2011 accessions, namely, the Russian Federation and Vanuatu. The IGA was informed that the domestic ratification process of the Russian Federation was well underway. The domestic ratification process in Vanuatu was nearing conclusion.

Regarding the two 2012 LDC Accession Priorities, the IGA was informed that Lao PDR was in the process of finalizing its last outstanding bilateral market access negotiations. It was expected that Lao PDR would sign the bilateral agreement with Ukraine on the margins of the next Working Party meeting (scheduled for 12 July). The draft Accession Package for Yemen was virtually complete subject to the conclusion of bilateral market access negotiations with Ukraine.

On the three 2012 non-LDC Accession Priorities, the Secretariat noted that progress was being made on the accession of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan had submitted the substantial balance of outstanding chapters/sections to the Secretariat at the end of June. The next round of meetings was envisaged for the second half of July. The IGA was also informed that the Accession of Tajikistan was progressing well and that a revised draft Working Party Report was circulated on 19 June.

The Director of the Accessions Division commended the level of commitment by the Government of Liberia to its accession process thus far and encouraged the Membership to attend the first meeting of the Working Party (scheduled for 11 July). A high-level Delegation from Monrovia would be attending. The IGA was also informed that Seychelles had recently established a Geneva-based mission that would facilitate its accession.

The French and Spanish translations of this Newsletter will follow shortly.

<sup>1</sup> For all enquiries related to the contents of the Newsletter, please contact: [Acceding-Government-Newsletter@wto.org](mailto:Acceding-Government-Newsletter@wto.org); Tel: +41 22 739 65 60; and Fax: +41 22 739 57 76.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## ANNEX I

**ACCESSIONS MEETING SCHEDULE – EVOLVING CALENDAR<sup>3</sup>****4 July 2012**

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation		Conf Office Advised
					French Spanish English	Own	
From 9 July to 13 July 2012 - GENEVA WEEK							
Tuesday 10 July 2012	Seychelles	3 <sup>rd</sup> Working Party	WTO/AIR/3967 refers (PM only)	S1	yes	no	√
Wednesday 11 July 2012	Liberia	1 <sup>st</sup> Working Party	WTO/AIR/3969 refers (PM Only)	S2	yes	no	√
Thursday 12 July 2012	Lao PDR	9 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	WTO/AIR/3971 refers (AM Only)	S1	yes	tbc	√
[Tuesday 17 July 2012]	Tajikistan	Agriculture Plurilateral	Convening Notice Pending (AM Only)	CR I	No	Yes	
		8 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending (PM only)	CR II	yes	tbc	√
[Wednesday 18 July 2012]	Kazakhstan	SPS Plurilateral meeting	Convening Notice Pending (AM)	S2	no	tbc	√
		TBT Plurilateral meeting	Convening Notice Pending (PM)	S2	no	tbc	√
[Thursday 19 July 2012]	Kazakhstan	Agriculture Plurilateral	Convening Notice Pending (AM)	S2	no	tbc	√
		TRIMs Plurilateral	Convening Notice Pending (PM)	S2	no	tbc	√
[Friday 20 July 2012]	Kazakhstan	HS 2007 Verification	Convening Notice Pending (AM)	S1	no	-	√
[Friday 20 July 2012]	Yemen	10 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending (PM only)	CR II	yes	tbc	√
[Monday 23 July 2012]	IGA	Informal Group on Accessions	Convening Notice Pending (9 to 10 am)	S2	no	-	√
[Tuesday 24 July 2012]	Kazakhstan	12 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending (AM/PM)	S1	no	no	√
25 July and 26 July - GENERAL COUNCIL							
[Friday 21 September 2012]	IGA	Informal Group on Accessions	Convening Notice Pending (AM)	S3	no	-	√
[Friday 28 September 2012]	Ethiopia	4 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending (AM)	CR I	yes	tbc	√

<sup>3</sup> Dates are suggested to assist planning by Members, Acceding Governments and the Secretariat. However, listed meetings are not automatic and will only go ahead on the basis of inputs from Acceding Governments, received with sufficient time for review by Members, normally a period of 4 weeks.

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation		Conf Office Advised
					French Spanish English	Own	
[After Summer Break]	Bosnia and Herzegovina	10 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	
[After Summer Break]	Algeria	Informal/Formal WP meeting	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	no	
[Last Quarter 2012]	Azerbaijan	10 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	tbc	
[Last Quarter 2012]	Belarus	Informal Consultations	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	no	
[Last Quarter 2012]	Serbia	13 <sup>th</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	no	
[Last Quarter 2012/ First Quarter 2013]	The Bahamas	3 <sup>rd</sup> Working Party	Convening Notice Pending	tbc	yes	no	